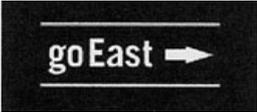


FESTIVAL OF CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPEAN FILM WIESBADEN 05.04. TO 11.04.2006



Press Release

Wiesbaden, March 31 2006

Life In The Post-Communistic Era

In the Competition of goEast – Festival of Central and Eastern European Film 10 feature films and 6 documentaries shall be competing for four awards amounting to €29,500 / 13 film screenings in Germany for the first time / wide-ranging sidebar programme / release-concert for the Russian cult band “Leningrad” featuring their new album which has been distributed outside of Russia for the first time

A film-maker is looking for a story and ends up finding it in the same place where his former professor used to convert written concoctions into cheap wrapping paper: at the market in Tiflis. A young Polish couple wants to marry. The up-coming celebration causes generations with differing views on life to clash. An engineer loses his job after Slovenia enters the EU. As a result, his family collapses. An old man's health is failing in Romania, but there's no place for him at the hospital. Life after the fall of communism: The fight for dignity continues – despite difficult conditions – and also the pursuit of personal happiness. These are the central themes, which preoccupy the sixth round of **goEast – Festival of Central and Eastern European Film** in Wiesbaden.

goEast will be presenting more than 150 short and full-length films from 17 Central and Eastern European countries as well as a wide-ranging sidebar programme **from April 5 - 11 2006**. The week-long festival begins on Wednesday, **April 5 at 7pm** with the **opening ceremony** hosted by the Hessian Minister of Science and Art, Udo Corts, at the Caligari FilmBühne in Wiesbaden. To mark the beginning of the festival, there will be a short film programme including **THE OFFICE / URZAD** by Krzysztof Kieślowski (Poland 1966). During the following six days, more than **400** guests, film professionals and journalists shall be looking to the East to obtain an overview on current tendencies in Central and Eastern European cinema – with seven programme sections at their disposal. Together with the diverse audience of the festival they will have a chance to converse and establish contact with each other during numerous events as a part of the supporting programme. The festival will end on **Tuesday, April 11. At 7pm** award winners shall be honoured at the Caligari FilmBühne.

goEast is organized by the Deutsches Filminstitut - DIF, especially through the state – initiative “Hessen-Media” of the Hessian state government and the state capital of Wiesbaden.

16 Films from 12 countries in the Competition

In **goEast's** film competition 10 feature films and 6 documentaries shall be competing for four awards amounting to €29,500 as well as the International Film Critic's Prize. 13 of the films presented shall be having their premières in Germany, five come from the great film nations of Russia and Poland. Countries such as Romania and Georgia are present as well, whose films rarely make it to the box office in Germany. Bulgaria, the Czech Republic and Slovenia shall also be represented with two films. The latter country is the home of Martin Šulik, to whom **goEast** dedicated its Portrait section in 2005. Martin Šulik has already become well-known to a large audience in Germany. He will be entering the competition with **CITY OF SUN / SLUNEČNÍ STÁT** (Czech Republic/ Slovenia 2005), a film about four work colleagues who must overcome all kinds of obstacles in an attempt to become self-employed.

The ten feature films in the competition shall be competing for the main award of **goEast**, the €10,000 Škoda Award the “Golden Lily” for the best feature film. Škoda Auto Germany is donating the main award of the festival for the second time and is also providing the festival with the shuttle service. The Hertie Documentary Award, likewise worth €10,000 goes to the documentary which most impressively outlines the ongoing transformation process in Central and Eastern Europe, and is bestowed by the Hertie-Foundation which has been the main private sponsor of **goEast** since the beginning of the festival. The award for best director (€7,500) is donated by the State of Wiesbaden. Wolfgang Herber, head of the Department of Culture shall be presenting the prize in person at the award ceremony. A new award is highlighting artistic innovation and the

support of young professionals: The €2,000 award for “artistic originality which creates cultural diversity” is being sponsored by the Federal Foreign Office.

This year, the president of the five-person international jury is the German film historian **Ulrich Gregor**, who, among other things, directed the Berlin Film Festival (Berlinale) from 1981 to 2000 together with Moritz de Hadeln (also a guest at goEast). Jury member **Boris Mitić** comes from Serbia and should be fresh in our memories as the winner of the Hertie Documentary Award. **Mirsad Purivatra**, director of the art center Obala, directed theatre productions in Sarajevo, brought “War Cinema” to life and founded the Sarajevo Film Festival. **Éva Vezér** is the manager of the Hungarian Film Union and member of the executive committee of the European Audio-Visual Information Center, the European Film Academy and the board of directors of the European Film Promotion (EFP). **Elena Yatsura**, a Russian, has produced over 20 films, a couple of which have formed part of the goEast programme, among others **THE GODDESS / BOGINJA: KAK JA POLJUBILA** (Russia 2004) by Renata Litinova.

goEast is also presenting two additional films out of competition: **GRBAVICA**, by Jasmila Žbanić (Bosnia and Herzegovina/Croatia/Austria/Germany 2006), the surprisingly successful winner of this year’s Golden Bear at the International Film Festival in Berlin, and **LUNACY / ŠILENÍ** (Czech Republic /Slovenia 2005) by Altmeister Jan Švankmajer, from the Czech Republic.

Exhibition and Film Series on Krzysztof Kieślowski / Guest appearance by Jerzy Stuhr

One of the highlights of goEast’s sidebar programme this year is a film series marking the tenth anniversary of Krzysztof Kieślowski’s untimely death at age 55, featuring the Polish filmmakers early films and the exhibition “Krzysztof Kieslowski – Signs and Memories” at the Wiesbaden Museum. The exhibition shall open on **Sunday, April 09 at 5pm** and may be visited until May 7, 2006. It was curated at the film museum in Łódź and presents numerous photographic portraits and film posters as well as a collection of photographs shot by Kieślowski when he was a student in Łódź.

Jerzy Stuhr, a star of the Polish screen and stage who played in six Kieślowski films, shall be making a guest appearance at goEast on **Thursday, 6 April**. During the follow up of the screening of **CAMERA BUFF** (Caligari FilmBühne, **5pm**) he will reminisce on his co-operation with Kieślowski in a discussion held by film journalist Martin Blaney (Screen International). Jerzy Stuhr shall also be present at the screening of the competition film **THE PERFECT AFTERNOON / DOSKONAŁE POPOŁUDNIE** (Poland 2005) by Przemysław Wojcieszek, in which he plays the role of the groom’s father. (Caligari FilmBühne **8pm**). Jerzy Stuhr is available for interviews. Please register first.

Portrait: Film Artist Šarūnas Bartas from Lithuania

The Portrait section introduced in 2005 is dedicated to the Lithuanian director Šarūnas Bartas this year. The sparse films of this uncompromising director, shot in black-and-white or muted colours, often abstain from using specific narration or dialogue. They develop their own poetic form which leaves a lasting impression on the viewer. Bartas shall be making a guest appearance at goEast from April 5 to 9. On Friday, April 7 he shall be taking part in a film discussion at the festival center in the Villa Clementine which begins at 5pm. (Šarūnas Bartas films will primarily be shown at the Kino Alpha from April 6 to 11)

Šarūnas Bartas is available for interviews. Please register first.

Symposium “Mainstream Made in Russia”

Russia is traditionally well represented at goEast, and the 2006 programme includes not only works by auteur directors but also genre films. The extensive showcase series begins with **VOLGA, VOLGA** (USSR 1938), the most successful musical comedy of the Stalin era, and ends with **DEAD MAN’S BLUFF / ŽMURKI** (2005), the latest film by Alexej Balabonov, the director of **BROTHER**. Running under the title “Mainstream Made in Russia” for three days from 6 to 8 April 2006, the goEast Symposium will investigate the fast-moving transformation of the Russian film industry, the impact of which became clear in Germany with the success of **NIGHT WATCH / NOČNOJ DOZOR** (Russia 2004). (Bellevue-Saal, Wilhelmstraße 32).

Viktor Jerofejew: “Good Old Stalin”

Among this year’s symposium members is the prominent romance novelist, essayist and culture critic Viktor Jerofejew. He will be investigating the development of Russian cinema “**From Auteur Cinema to Blockbusters**” with regard to its social impact (Symposium, **Friday, April 7, 11am**). In addition Jerofejew shall be a guest writer at goEast: He will be reading from his book “Good Old Stalin” (Literature House, Villa Clementine, **Thursday, April 6 at 7pm**). He will also be appearing at the Mousonturm in Frankfurt as a guest for the Hessian Literature Forum, presenting his new book “The Moon isn’t a Saucepan - A Russian Traveler”.

(Mousonturm, Frankfurt am Main, **Friday, April 7, 8pm**). Jerofejew is one of the most prominent contemporary writers in Russia. In "Good Old Stalin" he depicts the story of his father as well as a faithful follower of Stalin. **Viktor Jerofejew is available for interviews. Please register first.**

Musical Highlight: Release concert of the new album ХЛЕБ / BREAD by cult band Leningrad at the Kulturzentrum Schlachthof

Once again, Eastern European beats are on the **goEast** agenda. After the enormous success of the well-known musician and writer Wladimir Kaminer in 2005, the festival is happy to present a musical debut: The Russian cult band Leningrad, which by now has also attracted the masses at an international level, shall be making a guest appearance at **goEast**: their release concert shall take place on **Friday, April 7** at the Kulturzentrum Schlachthof (**begins at 10pm**; admission at 9) in Wiesbaden.

For a long time Leningrad was considered an underground band by Russian intellectuals. Now the group -13 musicians strong- regularly makes the charts and fills huge concert halls with their unconventional mix of rock, ska, rave and blues. In Germany, the band became known by its appearances in Wladimir Kaminer's highly successful "Russian Disco" and will certainly pick up where Wladimir left off. After Leningrad's concert the party will go on to the Eastern tunes of "La Bolschevita".

The Band Leningrad is available for interviews. For further information contact Eastblok Music, Telephone: 030-62 90 42 05; E-Mail: info@eastblokmusic.com.

Eight viewing rooms for journalists and professional visitors shall be available this year at the Stadtmuseum Wiesbaden (Friedrichstraße 7, diagonally across from the Villa Clementine). Nearly all competition entries and films from the goEast programme can be watched here. (The viewing room is open from 11am to 4pm on the opening day of the festival and from 10am to 8pm during the festival. You may reserve a viewing booth on location). In addition, during the same opening times two working areas with internet access shall be provided for journalists).

The catalogue of the film festival includes comprehensive summaries of all competition films in German and English as well as biographical information and the filmographies of film directors. **Sarūnas Bartas'** film-making career is presented extensively. An essay which forms part of the framework of the symposium is dedicated to the development of popular Russian film from the 1930s to the present day. Special programmes and other sections of the festival are briefly presented in German and English. The catalogue contains numerous photos and encompasses 136 pages. It can be purchased for € 4 at the ticket counter of the cinema and at the festival center.

For the complete goEast 2006 film programme please visit our site at www.filmfestival-goeast.de

To download press material and festival photos please visit the press section of our site at www.filmfestival-goeast.de

Beta-Material (The festival trailer, film extracts) are accessible upon request.

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