



Wiesbaden, November 14, 2010

**PRESS RELEASE**

**Start of the most important German independent festival:  
exground filmfest 23 offers more than „just“ films**

**Focus Latin America // Homage Ulli Lommel // Numerous German premieres**

exground filmfest 23 started on Friday, November 12, with a bang. The opening film LIFE DURING WARTIME – a very angry family satire by Todd Solondz – was nearly sold out. In spite of rather heavy rain, a great number of interested short film fans participated in the cineastic city stroll A WALL IS A SCREEN. As of 10pm, the motto was „Shake your hips“ at the rousing opening party at the Kulturpalast, which went on into the early morning hours. Saturday, November 13, brought the 6th Wiesbaden youth film contest as part of the YOUTH DAYS program. The audience voted for FREIER FALL, a directorial project of the Helene-Lange-school in Wiesbaden. The winners received a prize money of 450 Euros, sponsored by the State Agency for Political Education. Another highlight was the opening film of the homage to Ulli Lommel, BLANK GENERATION, shown to a packed house with Ulli Lommel in attendance. Further films shown in the homager program: LIEBE IST KÄLTER ALS DER TOD (starring Ulli Lommel as a cold-blooded gangster in Fassbinder's debut), DIE ZÄRTLICHKEIT DER WÖLFE from 1973, (Lommel's international breakthrough as a director) as well as the Andy Warhol-produced COCAINE COWBOYS from 1979 (starring, amongst others, Hollywood star Jack Palance. The homage is rounded off with a reading by Ulli Lommel from his autobiography ZÄRTLICHKEIT DER WÖLFE – BEGEGNUNGEN in the Wartburg Wiesbaden as well as the opening of his exhibition "American FotoNovelas" in the art gallery Wiesbaden.

Film fans from near and far should note down a date in their calendars: Between November 12 and November 21, 2010, exground filmfest in Wiesbaden – one of Germany's most important independent festivals – presents 220 highlights from the current range of independently produced short and feature films. These were selected from more than 2000 submissions from 89 countries, from Algeria to Zimbabwe. Among them are 8 world premieres, 3 international premieres, 8 Europe premieres, and 33 German ones. This year's country focus lies on Latin America's current film scene.



Among the high points of our „American Independents“ program are TETRO by Francis Ford Coppola, a family drama starring Carmen Maura, Klaus Maria Brandauer, and Vincent Gallo, as well as the German premieres of the documentaries FOR ONCE IN MY LIFE (about a band of 29 musicians with mental and physical disabilities), 180° SOUTH (an expedition to Patagonia with awesome images), and DO IT AGAIN, in which a Kinks enthusiast tries to talk the band into a reunion.

The „News from Asia“ program pays special attention to the up-and-coming cinema scene in the Philippines. We present 3 German premieres: the thrilling road movie COLORUM, the big city thriller CARNIVORE, as well as LIMBUNAN (decorated at the Venice Filmfest), in which a 17 year old bride needs to make up her mind between love and tradition.

The Wiesbaden festival acknowledges the steadily increasing international importance of films from Germany by presenting 16 entries in the „News from Germany“ program, including the modern christmas fairytale THE NIGHT FATHER CHRISTMAS DIED (nominated for the student Oscar) and the fascinating documentary KICK IN IRAN about the first Iranian Olympian from the theocracy (in Taekwondo!). Two films about migration are especially close to the festival team's collective hearts: SASCHA by Dennis Todorovic (about a young man from ex Yugoslavia and his problems to come out as being gay) and GURBET – FREMDE HEIMAT by Deniz Sözbir (about a German-Turkish man who is being deported to Turkey). A special within the program is dedicated to award-winning documentary film maker Rainer Komers: B224, KOBE and MILLTOWN, MONTANA impress with their awesome images.

In the „International“ section, the bittersweet love story LES AMOURS IMAGINAIRES by Canadian wunderkind Xavier Dolan (award winner in Cannes) will cause a furore. Additionally, the program introduces 7 German premieres: FRONTIER BLUES from Iran (about bizarre male fates in Turkmenistan border region), CRYING WITH LAUGHTER (a British thriller about a stand up comedian), the documentary WE'RE LIVING ON DOGFOOD as well as the feature film DOGS IN SPACE from Australia (about the „Down under“ Punk scene of the Seventies), the black Russian comedy PYATNITSA.12, the Dutch feature film RU THERE (about a tournament gamer between the virtual and the real world), and the Spanish documentary EL BULLI, HISTORIA DE UN SUEÑO about the famous restaurant of genius chef Ferrán Adrià.

This year's country focus looks at films from Latin America: 13 productions from Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Columbia, Mexico, Peru, Uruguay and - surprise surprise - El Salvador are being presented. After the times of brutal dictatorships and artistic gagging, a blooming film landscape has developed in this region's countries – with a unique handwriting, visual language, and an irrepressible lust for experiments. These are more than enough reasons to offer exciting insights into Latin America's current film productions to extend filmfest's audience. Among this program's highlights are the European premiere for PASEO (a journey through Chile's

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breathtaking landscape – as well as the country's past and present), and the German premiere for SONHOS ROUBADOS from Brazil, about three young female friends from a ghetto in Rio: Sex as merchandise, love as hope and friendship as luck. Also in the program: the documentary UNO, LA HISTORIA DE UN GOL about the sensational qualification of El Salvador for the 1982 soccer world-championship, while the civil war raged in the country.

As a first in its 20-year-history, exground filmfest dedicates a homage to an artist: Raise the curtain for 8 films with internationally acclaimed actor, script writer and director Ulli Lommel, who wrote film history with several of his works. Among these has to be LIEBE IST KÄLTER ALS DER TOD (starring Ulli Lommel as a cold-blooded gangster in Fassbinder's debut), DIE ZÄRTLICHKEIT DER WÖLFE from 1973, (Lommel's international breakthrough as a director) as well as the Andy Warhol-produced cult films BLANK GENERATION from 1978 (starring a fantastic Carole Bouquet in one of he leads) and COCAINE COWBOYS from 1979 (starring, amongst others, Hollywood star Jack Palance). Lommel was genre defining with his horror thriller THE BOOGEYMAN from 1980, his commercially most successful directorial work (e.g. 4 weeks number 1 in the US cinema charts!). The homage is rounded off with a reading by Ulli Lommel from his autobiography ZÄRTLICHKEIT DER WÖLFE – BEGEGNUNGEN in the Wartburg Wiesbaden as well as the opening of his exhibition "American FotoNovelas" in the art gallery Wiesbaden.

The youth film program - the exground youth days – five films will be shown in the „youth days – International youth film contest“, competing for the prize money of 2.500 Euros, sponsored by the state capital Wiesbaden – including the German Hip Hop drama BIS AUFS BLUT – BRÜDER AUF BEWÄHRUNG, the far out Aborigines- musical BRAN NUE DAE from Australia, and the much decorated film J'AI TUÉ MA MÈRE from Canada about a love-hate relationship between a son and his mother.

For the German Short Film Contest, ten entries from all genres could qualify for the audience award. The prize money for first and third place (3000 and 1000 Euros respectively) is being sponsored by the state capital Wiesbaden, and Wiesbaden film production company BEWEGTE ZEITEN sponsors the prize money of 2000 Euros for the second place.

Again, our festival center is located in the Caligari FilmBühne, deep in the heart of Wiesbaden. Further screening locations: Murnau Filmtheater, the Kulturpalast and the Wartburg.

The complete program of exground filmfest 23 can be found online as of November 1, 2010.

As of October 5, 2010, you will find film stills and texts on our press server.

Link: <http://www.exground.com/presseserver>

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This press release in printable form as well as an extensive time table (German only) can also be found as an attachment to this mail.

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exground filmfest is an honorarily organized event of the Wiesbadener Kinofestivals e. V. and is being supported by the following institutions and companies:

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**Festival trailer**

- upstart!media GmbH