

The Museum of Modern Art

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

TWENTY - NINE RECENT FILMS FROM WEST GERMANY TO BE PRESENTED AT MUSEUM

The Museum of Modern Art will offer a comprehensive survey of the diverse and creative film work produced in West Germany during the past five years, with a month-long film series beginning March 16. "West Germany: Das Neue Kino," a program of 29 films made outside the major German studios, including work from the German "underground," has been assembled by Adrienne Mancina, Associate Curator of Film, who spent several weeks in Germany meeting filmmakers and viewing nearly a hundred films in order to make the selection.

"What can be gleaned from this selection of independent films from the Federal Republic of Germany is that numerous and fertile talents are at work in Hamburg, Munich, Cologne, and Berlin," observes Adrienne Mancina. "Outside of the established major studios, there are young men re-vitalizing the German film tradition, evolving themes and styles consistent with individual and personal visions."

The German cinematic heritage is an awesome one for any young German artist today. Such filmmakers as Max Ophuls, Fritz Lang, F.W. Murnau, Ernst Lubitsch and G.W. Pabst attained a style and distinction that received world recognition. Presently the young West Germans are being acknowledged outside their native land, as their films have been chosen to play at several international festivals. This is the first combined show, however, of German film talent, and three of the directors represented in the series, Reinhard Hauff, Volker Schlöndorff, both 33 years old and from Munich, and Wim Wenders, 26, from Frankfurt, will come to New York for the opening of "West Germany: Das Neue Kino." Klaus Feddermann, who represents the avant-garde filmmakers of the Hamburg Cooperative, will also come from West Germany for the opening.

The films of Hauff and Schlöndorff are re-interpretations of an indigenous German genre, called the "heimat" film. While the heimat genre romanticized and glorified the fatherland, it ignored the deprived, depressive human conditions of rural life. Schlöndorff's "The Sudden Wealth of the Poor People of Kombach" and Hauff's "Mathias Kneissl" are heimat films in reverse. Using the traditional heimat format as a point of departure, they move in the opposite direction, concen-

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trating on desolate living in bleak surroundings under an irrational, ruthless land-owners' society. Incidentally, each director appears as an actor in the other's film.

Wim Wenders' film, "The Anguish of the Goalie at the Penalty Kick," about a young soccer player who has come to the end of his existential rope, was included in the recent "New Directors/New Films" series at the Museum. A earlier film, "Silver City," made when Wenders was 23 years old, will be shown in the West German series.

Similar in spirit to the new heimat film are Uwe Brandner's "I Love You, I Kill You," with its contradictory themes of freedom and tyranny expressed in a contemporary parable, and George Moore's "Lenz," based on a Romantic German short story about a mad poet in the 18th century. "Lenz" is, according to Variety, "one of the most thrilling films created by this cineastes' generation. . . . it's one of the most beautiful too."

The vampire film is another familiar genre re-examined by the younger generation of West German filmmakers. "Jonathan," by 30-year-old Hans W. Geissendörfer, who began his career making documentaries, is a fairy-tale thriller about vampirism in the mid-19th century.

The most prolific of the narrative filmmakers is Rainer Werner Fassbinder, three of whose films will be shown at the Museum. "The American Soldier" concerns an American returned from Vietnam who visits his family's original home in Munich and becomes a professional killer. "Recruits in Ingolstadt" presents, in a stylized, early Brechtian manner, the boredom and aimlessness of soldiers and residents in a small German village. A comfortable, middle-class man who, without warning, goes berserk and kills his wife, child and neighbor before finally hanging himself, is the subject of "Why Did Herr R. Run Amok?" This film was co-directed by Michael Fengler.

Werner Herzog and Werner Schroeter are each represented by two films. Herzog's "Fata Morgana," an evocative, surreal film about the encroachment of technological civilization on Africa, was shot in and around the Sahara Desert, while his "Land of Silence and Darkness" makes a compassionate statement about the physically and psychologically handicapped.

High Camp parodies of opera and musical comedy characterize Schroeter's "Neurasia," while his "Salome" is an innovative interpretation of the Oscar Wilde play. Schroeter distributes his films through the Hamburg Cooperative, the outlet for the West German equivalent of the American "underground."

Contemporary social, sexual and political issues are the focus of such films as "Sisters of

Revolution, " "Suppression of Women" and "How I Became Black." Stylistically and thematically, the West German cinema is varied and growing. As Adrienne Mancina notes: "The body of work that has been produced is impressive indeed, and one may safely state that young West Germans can now be included in the vanguard of filmmakers engaged in the creative evolution of the language of cinema." The complete schedule of the series follows:

- MATHIAS KNEISSL by Reinhard Hauff. 1971. 95 min. (Thursday, March 16, 2:00 and 8:00).
- JONATHAN by Hans W. Geissendörfer. 1970. 110 min. (Thursday, March 16, 5:30; Monday, March 20, noon; Tuesday, March 21, 5:30).
- FATA MORGANA by Werner Herzog. 1970. 78 min. (Friday, March 17, 2:00 and 5:30).
- NEURASIA by Werner Schroeter. 1968/69. 41 min. SALOME by Werner Schroeter. 1971. 80 min. (Saturday, March 18, 3:00 and 5:30).
- THE SUDDEN WEALTH OF THE POOR PEOPLE OF KOMBACH by Volker Schlöndorff. 1971. 102 min. (Sunday, March 19, 3:00 and 5:30).
- LAND OF SILENCE AND DARKNESS by Werner Herzog. 1971. 90 min. (Wednesday, March 22, 2:00 and 5:30).
- S. P. Q. R. by Volker Koch. 1971. 129 min. (Thursday, March 23, 2:00 and 8:00).
- WHY DID HERR R. RUN AMOK? by Michael Fengler and Rainer Werner Fassbinder. 1969. 88 min. (Thursday, March 23, 5:30; Monday, March 27, noon).
- STORIES OF KUBELKIND by Ula Stöckl and Edgar Reitz. 1970. Tales 1-13, ca. 100 min. (Friday, March 24, 2:00). Tales 14-26, ca. 100 min. (Friday, March 24, 5:30).
- RECRUITS IN INGOLSTADT by Rainer Werner Fassbinder. 1971. 84 min. (Saturday, March 25, 3:00; Sunday, March 26, 5:30).
- THE AMERICAN SOLDIER by Rainer Werner Fassbinder. 1970. 80 min. (Saturday, March 25, 5:30; Sunday, March 26, 3:00).
- LENZ by George Moore. 1971. 125 min. (Wednesday, March 29, 2:00 and 5:30).
- MALATESTA by Peter Lilienthal. 1970. 80 min. (Friday, March 31, 2:00 and 5:30).
- HOW I BECAME BLACK by Roland Gall. 1969. 103 min. (Saturday, April 1, 3:00 and 5:30).
- WINDSTILL by Franz Winzentzen. 1969. 12 min. (Sunday, April 2, 3:00 and 5:30; Monday, April 3, noon).
- SISTERS OF REVOLUTION by Rosa von Praunheim. 1969. 18 min. (Sunday, April 2, 3:00 and 5:30; Monday, April 3, noon).
- SELF - PORTRAIT by Lutz Mommartz. 1967. 7 min. (Sunday, April 2, 3:00 and 5:30; Monday, April 3, noon).
- ACH, VIOLA by Rainer Boldt. 1971. 35 min. (Sunday, April 2, 3:00 and 5:30; Monday, April 3, noon).
- BLUE VELVET by Matthias Weiss. 1970. 57 min. (Tuesday, April 4, 5:30; Thursday, April 6, 5:30).
- POLLY by Rolf Wiest. 1969. 10 min. (Tuesday, April 4, 5:30; Thursday, April 6, 5:30).
- RED WAS ADVENTURE - BLUE WAS REGRET by Klaus Wyborny. 1971. 50 min. (Tuesday, April 4, 5:30; Thursday, April 6, 5:30).
- SILVER CITY by Wim Wenders. 1969. 20 min. (Wednesday, April 5, 2:00 and 5:30).
- JUM - JUM by Werner Nekes. 1967. 10 min. (Wednesday, April 5, 2:00 and 5:30).
- KALDALON by Dore O. 1970/71. 45 min. (Wednesday, April 5, 2:00 and 5:30).
- IT IS NOT THE HOMOSEXUAL WHO IS PERVERSE, BUT THE SITUATION IN WHICH HE LIVES by Rosa von Praunheim. 1971. 90 min. (Thursday, April 6, 2:00 and 8:00).
- ADOLF WINKELMANN, KASSEL by Adolf Winkelmann. 1967. 8 min. (Saturday, April 8, 3:00 and 5:30).
- THE SUPPRESSION OF WOMEN IS RECOGNIZABLE ABOVE ALL BY THE BEHAVIOR OF THE WOMEN THEMSELVES by Hellmuth Costard. 1969. 64 min. (Saturday, April 8, 3:00 and 5:30).
- I LOVE YOU, I KILL YOU by Uwe Brandner. 1971. 94 min. (Sunday, April 9, 3:00 and 5:30).

Additional information available from Lillian Gerard, Special Projects Coordinator, and Mark Segal, Department of Public Information, The Museum of Modern Art, 11 West 53 Street, New York, New York 10019. Tel: (212) 956 - 7296.