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BERLIN TODAY AWARD 2005 – The jury has convened!

The BERLIN TODAY AWARD, an international award for short films by Medienboard Berlin-Brandenburg and the film industry in cooperation with the Berlinale Talent Campus, enters its second year.

A photographer turned blind by love, imaginary elephants taking us through Berlin, a documentary on the wedding of one's best friends, a bizarre horror story of a stuck head – the entries for the BERLIN TODAY AWARD were many-sided, varied, unusual and most of all numerous.

It was no easy task for this year's BERLIN TODAY AWARD jury which consisted of the three mentors, Hans-Christian Schmid (director), Maria Köpf (X Filme creative pool) and Michael Verhoeven (Sentana Filmproduktion GmbH), and Doris Zander (Studio Hamburg Produktion Berlin GmbH) as a representative of the film industry, Dr. Ernst Ludwig Ganzert of the production company Eikon Media and Frank Stehling of Medienboard Berlin-Brandenburg. "All in all, the quality of the entries has clearly improved compared to last year. While a lot of last year's projects merely used Berlin as a backdrop to their stories, this year's entries include a number of quite original and innovative takes on the topic 'Berlin Today'. Apart from the diversity of the projects we have also had the impression that most of the talents have arrived at the Campus coming from Tegel airport". Frank Stehling said smiling. "A remarkable number of the projects submitted begin with the protagonist's arrival at Tegel airport."

116 ideas from 47 countries

The organizers of the BERLIN TODAY AWARD have received a total of 116 entries from 47 countries. One out of three of this year's 510 Berlinale Talent Campus participants has applied with a digital short film project. For the first time, entries were possible only in teams of two – a "creative mind" and a "producer". A 2004 Campus alumnus could form a team with a 2003 talent though. "With the BERLIN TODAY AWARD we want to take up the basic concept of the Campus and promote the creation of a globally networked community of filmmakers," the organizers of boxfish films said. With a specially created communication tool at the website www.berlintoday.de all talents were able to enter their profiles and thus search and find corresponding (team) partners for their projects all around the world.

And the nominees are...

And finally, on June 18, 2004, the jury nominated the three most promising film projects submitted for the BERLIN TODAY AWARD 2005.

„Alright Love“ by Samuli Valkana (Finnland) and Roman Sorger (Austria)

Every day they meet on the subway without noticing each other – a young man and a young woman in the middle of Berlin. But then the city takes the matter into its own hands and makes the two find each other through signs and advertising billboards. „Look to your right“, the young man reads on a poster, he turns right and for the very first time sees the beautiful young woman next to him...



„**Bucuresti – Berlin**“ by **Anca Miruna Lazarescu (Germany)** and **Cristian Mungiu (Romania)**
Iona, a young Romanian woman, wants to try her luck in Berlin. But her luck is hiding. First, she is being stood up by her friend Tomescu, and then she learns that Gartenstrasse – where Tomescu is supposed to live – is a name that exists 11 times in the city. She gives all of her savings to the Turkish cab driver Kürün, and together they start the search.

„**Workers from Poland**“ by **Tomasz Wolski (Poland)** and **Karina Griffith (Kanada)**
For many Polish people Berlin is a symbol for a better life and better opportunities. This documentary follows two very different Poles who come to Berlin for the first time as construction workers – a Polish view of the metropolis Berlin in the course of the recent EU enlargement to the East and at the same time an ironic look at the Polish mentality.

The jury states that the choice of two projects from the new EU countries shows that the topic of EU enlargement to the East is of great topical importance to Berlin and its European neighbors.

Teaching week and production of the nominated short films

This year, the production of the three nominated films will be carried out by the production company Eikon Media GmbH. In addition to the 50,000 Euro funding per short film by Medienboard the nominees will also receive substantial support by the film industry in the Berlin-Brandenburg region. Each of the three short film projects will also receive up to 20,000 Euro of payments in kind (mostly post production) from the region. The sponsors include the four largest studios Berliner Union-Film, Parkstudios, Studio Babelsberg and Studio Berlin Adlershof as well as cine plus Media Service, Das Werk, Elektrofilm, Film- und Video Untertitelung Gerhard Lehmann, Gruppe 3, KOPPFILM and VCC Perfect Pictures. The German collecting society representing the film and television producers GWFF supports the BERLIN TODAY AWARD as a nationwide sponsor; and Deutsche Welle, DW-TV is the award's media partner. "We think that it is also up to us to support the international newcomers, and we are happy to present the wide range and potential of Berlin-Brandenburg as a film region. It is a huge opportunity for the young talents to benefit from the know-how of the industry's best experts. And for me, as a producer, it is always fun to meet new filmmakers. You never know, you might meet the next big thing in directing who will later be loyal to the region ", says producer Doris Zander, Studio Hamburg Produktion Berlin GmbH.

The nominated teams have been invited for a one-week teaching workshop in Berlin in early September to do some in-depth work on their projects with the mentors Maria Köpf, Hans-Christian Schmid and Michael Verhoeven and the production company Eikon Media GmbH and to meet the sponsors. The production of the three digital short films will start directly after the teaching week and should be finished by mid-November.

The **premiere** of the nominated films and the **award ceremony** of the BERLIN TODAY AWARD 2005 will take place during the Berlinale Talent Campus at the Berlinale 2005.

For updated information go to www.berlintoday.de.

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