

All about the NRW films at the Berlinale:

Competition – Out of Competition: „The Operative“ by Yuval Adler

Diane Kruger and **Martin Freeman** play the leads in the espionage thriller by writer-director **Yuval Adler**, which was shot in Cologne as well as Israel, Bulgaria, Leipzig and Rheinbach. The German-Israeli-French co-production was produced by **Match Factory Productions, Spiro Films, Le Pacte, Black Bear Pictures, Archer Gray Productions** and **Mountain Trail Films**. The co-producers are **KNM, Bord Cadre Films, Neue Bioskop Film** and **Little Shark Entertainment**. The Film- und Medienstiftung NRW backed the production with 750,000 Euros, additional funding came from DFFF, FFA Minitraité, MDM and IFF. Weltkino will release the film theatrically in Germany in 2019. In „The Operative“, Diane Kruger plays the Mossad agent Rachel who vanishes without a trace while attending her father's funeral. The only clue to her whereabouts is a cryptic phone call she places to her handler Thomas, played by **Martin Freeman**, in Germany, who is then summoned by Mossad. Thomas is given the task of determining whether Rachel poses a threat to the organisation, while trying at the same time to protect her from the intelligence force .

Berlinale Shorts: „Umbra“ by Johannes Krell and Florian Fischer

The Filmstiftung-backed short film „**Umbra**“ by **Johannes Krell** and **Florian Fischer** will have its world premiere in the Berlinale Shorts programme. The experimental documentary deals with rare and common optical phenomena that occur in nature. These phenomena evoke familiar images such as shadows or reflections on a water surface; but also unusual ones like the so-called „Brocken spectre“ or the pinhole effect during a solar eclipse. „Umbra“ is a production of **Rosenpictures Filmproduktion** in co-production with the **Academy of Media Arts Cologne (KHM)** and Johannes Krell. MDM and BKM also supported the film alongside the Filmstiftung.

Panorama: „All My Loving“ by Edward Berger

Edward Berger's drama „**All My Loving**“ with **Hans Löw, Nele Müller Stöfen** and **Lars Eidinger** will be shown in the Panorama. The production by Cologne-based **Pandora Filmproduktion** was made in co-production with **Port au Prince Film** and in association with the broadcaster **WDR**. Principal photography was primarily done in NRW. **Port au Prince Pictures** will release the film in German cinemas. The Filmstiftung backed the film with 600,000 Euros. Edward Berger wrote the screenplay together with Nele Müller Stöfen. The story of a family: a man doesn't know whether he can be a good father. A woman can't live without her dog. The brother doesn't want to be a househusband any more. And their parents ask themselves whether their path was always the right one. Yet, perhaps they've found what they are looking for in the midst of chaos: their family, their love, their happiness.

Panorama: „The Miracle of the Sargasso Sea“ by Syllas Tzoumerkas

„**The Miracle of the Sargasso Sea**“ is a drama by the director **Syllas Tzoumerkas**, who also wrote the screenplay together with **Youla Boudali**. The production of Cologne-based **unafilm** was made as a co-production with **Homemade Films (GR), PRPL B.V. (NL)** and **Drago Films (SWE)** and in association with the broadcasters **ZDF** and **Arte**. **Real Fiction** will distribute. DFFF and Eurimages backed the film alongside the Filmstiftung. In a small lagoon town in the west of Greece, two women are living dreary lives while dreaming of escaping from this dump. Elisabeth was once an ambitious policewoman before being forced to relocate from Athens. Now she is lonely and mostly hung-over; Rita is the quiet, mysterious sister of a lounge singer who spending his days in the local disco. When his sudden death upsets the town and turns the local community upside-down, the two women who had previously been ignoring each other's existence begin drifting towards each other. As the secrets hidden in the swamps begin coming to the surface, the two women are provided with the opportunity of becoming each other's saviour. Angelikki Papoulia and Youla Boudali are cast in the leads.

Panorama: „Monos“ by Alejandro Landes

The Filmstiftung NRW-backed drama „**Monos**“ by the director **Alejandro Landes** was co-produced by **Cologne-based Pandora Filmproduktion** with **Mutante Cine (UY), No Franja (CO), Campo Cine (AR), Lemming Film (NL)** and **Snowglobe (DK)**. World sales are being handled by **Le Pacte (FR)**. On a faraway Colombian mountain top, eight children with guns watch over a human hostage and a milk cow. Starring

Julianne Nicholson, Miguel Angel David Camayo, Julian Giraldo Ruiz and Deiby Alejandro Ruedo. „Monos“ is the second feature film by director Landes whose first feature „Porfirio“ was shown in Cannes in 2011. He wrote the screenplay together with **Alexis Dos Santos**. „Monos“ has its world premiere in the World Cinema Dramatic Competition of the 2019 Sundance Film Festival.

Panorama: „O Beautiful Night“ by Xaver Böhm

„O Beautiful Night“ by **Xaver Böhm** is a production of **Komplizen Film** (incl. „Toni Erdmann“) in association with the broadcasters **ZDF** and **Arte** and was backed by the Filmstiftung with 180,000 Euros. Other funders BKM, DFFF, FFA and MBB. „O Beautiful Night“ features performances by **Noah Saavedra**, **Marco Mandic** and **Vanessa Loibl**. Böhm wrote the screenplay together with **Ariana Berndt**. The film tells the story of the neurotic musician Juri. Although Juri is young, he is constantly afraid of dying. Nightly panic attacks are routine – but then one night he meets a dark figure who claims to be Death incarnate. A bizarre Faustian trip through the night begins with Juri falling in love with Nina and one of them having to die in the end.

Panorama: „Searching Eva“ by Pia Hellenthal

The documentary „**Searching Eva**“ by **Pia Hellenthal**, whose screenplay she co-wrote with **Giorgia Malatrasi**, tells the story of a young woman who grew up in the Internet and turned the search for herself into a public spectacle: Eva is 25, a model, poet, Virgo, sex worker, feminist, and musician. She gave herself her name at the age of 14, declared privacy an outdated concept and then put her first diary entry online. Since then, she has been sharing her life down to the most intimate detail with kids around the world. Pia Hellenthal received the Film- und Medienstiftung's Gerd Ruge Bursary in 2016, the production by **Corso Film** in association with the broadcaster **ZDF**, in cooperation with **VICE**, was supported by the Filmstiftung with 120,000 Euros.

Panorama: „Talking about Trees“ by Suhaib Gasmelbari Mustafa

„Talking about Trees“ is a documentary by **Suhaib Gasmelbari Mustafa**, about the struggle and passion of a group of humorous old Sudanese filmmakers who have stayed young at heart. After years in exile, they have come back together to finally make their old dream a reality and revive cinema in Islamic and totalitarian Sudan. Their own films as well as those images which have been lost and ones which will only ever remain a desire, reveal the beautiful, yet shocking sides of their country. „Talking about Trees“ is a production of **Made in Germany** Filmproduktion in co-production with **Agat Films & Cie** and **Goï Goï Productions**. The Filmstiftung backed the postproduction with 30,000 Euros.

Berlinale Special: „Brecht“ by Heinrich Breloer

„**Brecht**“ sees **Heinrich Breloer** now moving his attention from Thomas Mann to another legendary literary figure. Over the course of 40 years and in two parts, the film recounts the eventful and moving life of the most played German dramatist of the 20th century who has not lost any of his relevance even to the present day. The young Bertolt Brecht is portrayed by **Tom Schilling**; **Burghart Klaußner** was cast as Brecht in the post-war years. Other lead roles feature **Lou Strenger** and **Adele Neuhauser** as Helene Weigel in younger and later years, **Mala Emde** as Brecht's first love Paula Banholzer, **Franz Hartwig** and **Ernst Stötzner** as the younger and older Caspar Neher, **Trine Dyrholm** as Brecht's Danish lover and collaborator Ruth Berlau as well as many other prominent actors. „Brecht“ is a production of Bavaria Fiction, Bavaria Filmproduktion Cologne, and Satel Film, in cooperation with the Czech service producer MIA Film, in co-production with WDR, BR, SWR, NDR and Arte, backed by the Film- und Medienstiftung NRW and the Czech State Fund for Cinematography. The Filmstiftung backed the project with 1.1 million Euros. „Brecht“ can be seen in selected cinemas throughout Germany from 14 to 20 February after the world premiere at this year's Berlinale. The two-parter will be broadcast on Arte on Friday, 22 March, and on ARD Das Erste on Wednesday, 27 March, from 20.15.

Berlinale Special: „You Only Live Once – Die Toten Hosen On Tour“ by Cordula Kablitz-Post und Paul Dugdale

The documentary about the Düsseldorf band „**You Only Live Once – Die Toten Hosen on Tour**“ will be presented as a Berlinale Special Gala in the Friedrichstadt-Palast on 15 February. The director is **Cordula Kablitz-Post** (also screenplay) who has regularly accompanied „Die Toten Hosen“ with the camera for more than 10 years. The acclaimed music film director **Paul Dugdale**, who has worked in the past with Coldplay and The Rolling Stones, could be enlisted as the co-director for the concerts. „You Only Live Once“ was produced by **avanti media fiction** (Cordula Kablitz-Post) in cooperation with Benjamin Hoeller and Christian Jantscha of **Opus R**. Theatrical distribution is being handled by **NFP** who will be releasing the film nationwide on 28 March, 2019. The Filmstiftung backed the film with 150,000 Euros, with additional funding coming from the **DFFF** and the **FFA**. Die Toten Hosen are a phenomenon of superlatives. No other German-speaking rock band has sold as many sound carriers – over 19 million. The „Laune der Natur“ tour, which attracted almost 1 million people, saw the band appearing in 2018 at various stadiums and open-air locations in Germany and Switzerland as well as travelling to Argentina where Die Toten Hosen have had their most enthusiastic and faithful fans outside of the German-speaking area for the past 26 years. The film accompanies the band during one of the biggest tours of their career on stage and behind the scenes and tells their story by way of their greatest hits. The film shows the band during the tour on stage, backstage and in the tour bus: „access all areas“.

Berlinale Special: „It Could Have Been Worse – Mario Adorf“ by Dominik Wessely

In „**It Could Have Been Worse – Mario Adorf**“, the director **Dominik Wessely** looks back on Mario Adorf's career and wants to find out how he became an actor, how he chose his roles, why he played villains so many times, what is still the enduring attraction of his profession for him, and why he never became a sculptor. Dominik Wessely provides unprecedented insights into the landmarks of Mario Adorf's 60-year career: his private life, his relationships, his view of the world, politics, love and aging. The screenplay for the documentary was co-written by Wessely with **Herbert Schwering**, with **Coin Film** producing. **NFP** will release the film in German cinemas. The Filmstiftung supported the film with 150,000 Euros, additional backing came from nordmedia, BKM, DFFF and Stiftung Rheinland-Pfalz für Kultur.

Opening film: Perspektive Deutsches Kino: „easy love“ by Tamer Jandali

Produced by Cologne's **Lichtblick Film- und Fernsehproduktion**, the documentary feature film **easy love**“ was made in association with the broadcaster **WDR** and will be released in German cinemas by **mindjazz pictures**. The film was shot completely in NRW, the Filmstiftung supported it with 250,000 Euros, with additional funding coming from DFFF, BKM and FFA. In **Tamer Jandali's** debut, seven women and men act as braver versions of themselves. Struggling with their desires, they set off on the quest for a balance between emotional security and sensual fulfillment. Individualism and freedom rub up against loneliness and disillusionment. Yet the thirst for adventure and search for self-fulfilment is unbroke. Their urges often lead them onto the wrong tracks, sometimes to the therapist, but also to love with a capital L. Featuring **Stella Vivien Dhingra**, **Niclas Jünger**, **Niclas Jünger**, **Sophia Seidenfaden**, **Lenika Lukas**, **Pina Felizitas**, **Amelie Liebst** and **Sönke Andersen**.

Perspektive Deutsches Kino: „Oray“ by Mehmet Akif Büyükcatalay

„**Oray**“ is the graduation film by **Mehmet Akif Büyükcatalay** (direction and screenplay) at the **Academy for Media Arts Cologne** (KHM), produced by **Filmfaust Filmproduktion** and in association with **ZDF – Das kleine Fernsehspiel**. Principal photography included locations in Hagen and Cologne. Oray utters 'talaq', the Islamic pronouncement for divorce, during a quarrel with his wife Burcu. The Imam of his home community informs him about the consequences: Oray must to split up with her for three months. He takes advantage of the enforced break - and moves to Cologne to establish a new life for Burcu and himself. He establishes contact to the new community in Cologne and begins preaching. But the Imam, Bilal, follows a stricter interpretation of the Islamic law, meaning that the man must divorce his wife. Oray is torn between his belief in love and his love for his faith. Featuring **Zejhun Demirov**, **Deniz Orta**, **Cem Göktaş**, **Faris Yüzbaşıoğlu**, **Fırat Baris Ar**, **Mikael Bajrami**, among others. Zejhun Demirov, who plays Oray, was named „Best Actor“ at the 2018 First Steps Award.

Opening film: Generation Kplus: „Cleo“ by Erik Schmitt

The feature film debut „Cleo“ by **Erik Schmitt** is opening Generation Kplus. The production by **Detailfilm** was made in association with broadcaster **ZDF**. The author Autorin **Stefanie Ren** was responsible for the screenplay. As with Erik Schmitt's very successful shorts, the film is a declaration of love to Berlin. **Marleen Lohse** plays the shy Cleo who is looking for a magical clock steeped in legend. She wants to use the clock to turn back time and undo the tragic death of her parents. When the adventurer Paul turns up one day holding mysterious treasure map, it looks as if Cleo is close to reaching her goal. They set off together on a crazy treasure hunt across the city, which eventually lead them deep into Berlin's dark underground. **Jeremy Mockridge, Max Mauff, Heiko Pinkowski, Andrea Sawatzki, Fabian Busch, Ben Münchow, Max Befort and Jean Pütz** also appear in front of the camera. In 2014, Erik Schmitt received the Wim Wenders Grant of the Film- und Medienstiftung for this project. He used the grant of 20,000 Euros to develop the film's original idea and then received 100,000 Euros in production funding from the Film- und Medienstiftung in 2016. Additional backing came from MBB, BKM, Nordmedia, FFA, DFFF and ZDF „Das kleine Fernsehspiel“.

Generation Kplus: „Armed Lullaby“ by Yana Ugrehelidze

The animated short „Armed Lullaby“ by KHM graduate **Yana Ugrehelidze** shows four routes that children had to take in order to escape from their home town. The escape scenarios correspond with actual events during the massacre of Sukhumi which the Georgian civil population of the Abkhazian capital had to endure in 1993.

Generation 14plus: „Ringside“ by André Hörmann

The documentary by the director **André Hörmann** is a production of Cologne-based **Sutor Kolonko** and **Motto Pictures** (Brooklyn, New York) in association with the broadcaster **WDR**. The Filmstiftung backed the film with 50,000 Euros, with additional funding coming from the **Blue Ice Film Fund, Catapult Film Fund, Tribeca Film Institute** and the **International Documentary Association** (IDA Pare Lorentz Documentary Fund). „Ringside“ follows two gifted boxers and their fathers as they try to break out of the vicious circle of violence and drugs on Chicago's South Side. Kenneth Sims has sacrificed everything in the interest of achieving his great goal of making his son Kenny Jr. into a boxing champion and so lift his family, against all odds, out of the all-pervasive poverty. The former drug dealer and boxing fanatic Destyne Butler leaves no stone unturned to see his son triumph in the ring. But he first has to get Destyne Jr. out of jail. The film follows the two hopefuls over the course of eight years as they meet with success and failure in their struggle for a better future.

Forum: „Progress in the Valley of The People Who Don't Know“ by Florian Kunert

Florian Kunert has been invited to the forum with the graduation film from the **Academy of Media Arts Cologne** (KHM), co-produced by **The Story Bay**. MDM, SLM and the Kulturstiftung Sachsen supported the film along with the Filmstiftung. In the shadow of racist demonstrations in Dresden, former East German factory workers meet with Syrian refugees in a self-taught integration course in the ruins of the former „Progress“ factory in order to revive memories of their lost homeland.

Berlinale Classics: „The Invincibles“ – Director's Cut by Dominik Graf

Director **Dominik Graf's** action-thriller „*The Invincibles*“ returns to the big screen 25 years after its first release in a new, lavishly restored director's cut that is nine minutes longer than the original. In the film, the head of a police special forces unit becomes caught up in a net of corruption, with treachery and lies stretching from top politicians down into the ranks of his fellow cops. The restoration crew from Bavaria Film took three scenes that had not survived on 35mm from a videotape of the longer rough cut and incorporated them into the original theatrical release version. The challenge was to match these scenes with the high-quality 4K digital material. The audio restoration required particular attention from the director and restorers since the additional scenes had never been mixed before. The restoration was supervised by **D-Facto NXT**, the distribution rights are being handled by **Bavaria Media**. Director Dominik Graf accompanied the process at the crucial stages. The cast included **Herbert Knaup, Hansa Czipionka, Heinz Hoenig, Katja Flint** and **Hannes Jaenicke**.

Homage Charlotte Rampling: „The Look“ by Angelina Maccarone

The Filmstiftung-backed portrait „**The Look**“ by **Angelina Maccarone** from 2011 will be shown in the Homage to Charlotte Rampling. „The Look“ was produced by **Tag/Traum Filmproduktion** in co-production with **Prounenfilm** and **Les Films d’Ici** (F) in association with the broadcasters **ZDF** and **3Sat**. **Piffel Medien** was the distributor. MBB, FFHSH and DFFF backed the film alongside the Filmstiftung.

The **Lola@Berlinale** section is the one where the Berlin Film Festival presents productions that are in the preselection for the German Film Awards. This year's line-up includes 15 films which have received funding from the Film- und Medienstiftung NRW.

Overview: NRW films at the 2019 Berlinale

Competition – Out of Competition	„The Operative“
Berlinale Shorts	„Umbra“
Panorama	„All My Loving“ „The Miracle of the Sargasso Sea“ „Monos“ „O Beautiful Night“ „Searching Eva“ „Talking about Trees“
Berlinale Special	„Brecht“ „You Only Live Once - Die Toten Hosen auf Tour“ „It Could Have Been Worse – Mario Adorf“
Opening film: Perspektive Deutsches Kino Perspektive Deutsches Kino	„easy love“ „Oray“
Opening film: Generation Kplus Generation Kplus Generation 14plus	„Cleo“ „Armed Lullaby“ „Ringside“
Forum	„Progress In The Valley of the People Who Don's Know“
Berlinale Classics	„The Invincibles“ – Director's Cut
Homage Charlotte Rampling	„The Look“

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Fiction films	„25km/h“ „Eleanor & Colette“ „Happiness Sucks“ „Gundermann“ „That Boy Needs Fresh Air“ „The Most Beautiful Couple“ „Styx“ „Never look Away“ „In the Middle of the River“
Children's films	„Meine teuflische gute Freundin“ „Pettson and Findus – Findus Moves Out“
Documentaries	„Shut Up and Play the Piano“ „draußen“ „Little Germans“

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