

Press Information

Wiesbaden, March 19, 2013

“Striking 13!”: The goEast Highlights feature suspense-packed genre cinema from the Balkans to the Baltic States

In its 13th edition, goEast – Festival of Central and Eastern European Film presents a non-conformist programme under the motto “Striking 13!”. The Festival, which is hosted by Deutsches Filminstitut, has devoted its Highlights section to genre cinema and from April 10-16 offers moments full of black humour, the fantastical and the eerie to aficionados of the same. Nonetheless, goEast never loses sight of reality and demonstrates that genre film is also capable of sparking political discussion.

goEast Highlights – Successful Cinema from Central and Eastern Europe

In this year’s Highlights, goEast presents six mainstream box office hits from Central and Eastern Europe that were not only received with enthusiasm in their respective countries but at times also with outrage. True to the foreboding motto of “Striking 13!”, the section is devoted to genre cinema and its various forms, something of a rarity seen in goEast up until now. Whether found footage horror or pitch-black comedy with a fear factor; thrills and excitement are guaranteed. The presented films – for the most part independent productions – differ not only in their content but also demonstrate stylistically a unique and exciting character which often makes the lack of budget a virtue.

The Slovakian film EVIL (Slovak Republic 2012, Director: Peter Bebjak) follows in the tradition of successful horror films such as “The Blair Witch Project” and “Rec” and accompanies a young, generation YouTube film crew on their ill-fated search for paranormal phenomena. SHOPPING TOUR (Russia 2012, Director: Mikhail Brashinskiy) plays with genre conventions. The Russian low-budget film turns a mother and son’s weekend excursion into an unexpected horror trip and exposes the usually placid, well-mannered Finns as wolves in sheepskin. DEATH OF A MAN IN BALKANS (Serbia 2012, Director: Miroslav Momčilović) approaches the topic of suicide on a socially critical level but with a perceptible wink by casting a furtive webcam view on the reactions of the surrounding world. The black comedy MUSHROOMING (Estonia 2012, Director: Toomas Hussar) features a politician who tries to find a little distance and peace from his hectic daily routine by going out to gather mushrooms with his wife. In vain, however, for they become lost in the woods as night descends upon them. The successful Russian film WHITE TIGER (Russia 2012) by director and Mosfilm general manager Karen Shakhnazarov focuses on a fictional scenario of the Second World War: Naydenov, a tank driver, sets his sights on taking out the legendary, phantom-like German tank “White Tiger”.

The Breaking of Taboos and the Political Content of Genre Cinema

Władysław Pasikowski’s thriller AFTERMATH (Poland/Netherlands/Russia/Slovak Republic 2012) provided for divided opinions instead of undisputed enthusiasm in Poland. This is hardly surprising, when considering the explosive socio-political topic the film focuses upon: In AFTERMATH, Pasikowski retrospectively brings to light an anti-semitic pogrom in Poland during the 1940s and, based on

the historically documented massacre in Jedwabne, attempts to shed light on Polish perpetration. At the same time, he fittingly presents the story in the form of a thriller and thus employs this tension-filled genre as a medium for his socio-political objectives.

goEast – Festival of Central and Eastern European Film is supported by numerous partners: Main sponsors are the Hessen State Ministry of Higher Education, Research and the Arts and the State Capital Wiesbaden, the Robert Bosch Stiftung, the Foundation “Remembrance, Responsibility and Future”, ŠKODA AUTO Deutschland, the BHF-BANK Foundation, the Sparkassen-Kulturstiftung Hessen-Thüringen and the Nassauische Sparkasse.

The **goEast programme** is now available on the **goEast** website.

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