

**goEast Competition 2014: Fiction Features**

**IDA / IDA / IDA** (Poland, Denmark 2013, Director: Paweł Pawlikowski, 80 min)

A convent in Poland in the early 1960s. The novice Anna is about to take her vows. At the insistence of the abbess the young woman sets out for the city to visit her only living relative, her deceased mother's sister. Next to each other the two women are like chalk and cheese. Anna is placid, unworldly, but firm with it. Her aunt Wanda is hard, forthright, changes her lovers not infrequently, enjoys a drink. As a judge in the post-war years she was dubbed "Red Wanda", notorious for her harsh sentences. But Anna's visit makes Wanda delve even further back in the past. She reveals that during German occupation her niece was born to Jewish parents subsequently murdered in the Holocaust. Anna learns that her real name is Ida Leibenstein. She wants to see the family grave, and the pair of them set off on a journey at the end of which they will each make a decision with momentous consequences for their lives.

IDA is a Polish road movie of the different kind. Narrated in breathtaking black-and-white images, swept along by the reduced yet intense acting of the two protagonists, and resonating, for all the tragedy, with a certain lightness and the seductive sound of jazz.

*German premiere*

Caligari: April 9 / 9:30 p.m.

Murnau Filmtheater: April 10, / 6:00 p.m.

Kino DFM, Ffm: April 10 / 6:00 p.m.

**BAUYR / KLEINER BRUDER / LITTLE BROTHER** (Kazakhstan 2013, Director: Serik Apymov, 95 min)

"Fetch your father!" – "He's away on business." – "Then fetch your brother!" – "He's studying in the city." – "And your mother?" – "She's dead." This short exchange between Yerkin and his headmaster sums up the nine-year-old boy's situation: he needs to look out for himself, because nobody else will. The stoicism with which he negotiates day-to-day life in provincial Kazakhstan is remarkable. In the morning he goes to school, in the afternoon he sells his home-made bricks. He wants to earn a lot of cash for the homecoming of Aidos, his beloved big brother, when it will be time to slaughter the sheep in the pen and invite all the neighbours. When finally the long-awaited Aidos returns, Yerkin has a brief chance just to be what he is – a little boy who enjoys scrapping with his brother. Together they visit their mother's grave, go to the cinema. Soon, however, Aidos gets interested in other things – and unearths a family secret.

Seric Apymov's tale of a young expert in the art of survival was made with non-professional actors against the picturesque backdrop of a village in the Kazakh steppe. In addition to wonderful images his film offers surrealistic interludes along with several allusions to Truffaut's LES QUATRE CENTS COUPS and Leone's ONCE UPON A TIME IN THE WEST.

*German premiere*

Caligari: April 10 / 8:00 Uhr

Alpha: April 11 / 6:00 p.m.

Kino DFM, Ffm: April 11 / 08:30 p.m.

**ZAPELJI ME / VERFÜHRE MICH / SEDUCE ME** (Slovenia 2013, Director: Marko Šantič, 83 min)

After Luka's mother gave him away he spent nine years in a children's home. His father died in a car accident when he was small. He's 19 now and expected to stand on his own feet. He moves into a tiny flat and finds work in an abattoir, where he meets Ajda. The bubbly, carefree girl is the very opposite of reserved, solemn Luka, who falls for her immediately. Buoyed up by Adja's energy, Luka finds the courage to contact his mother and visit her in the country. But the encounter is upsetting: Luka is not made welcome and learns, after asking to see his father's grave, that the car accident was a fabrication. His father is alive, and has a new family. Troubled and confused, Luka seeks refuge in his

relationship with Ajda. But his happy-go-lucky girlfriend turns out to be harbouring a dark secret of her own. The feature debut of Marko Šantić is both a touching love story and a vivid portrait of a generation negotiating the path to adulthood with no assistance from parents or society.

*German premiere*

Caligari: April 11 / 6:00 p.m.

Alpha: April 12 / 6:00 p.m.

Kino DFM, Ffm: April 12 / 8:30 p.m.

**SHEMTKHVEVITI PAEMNEBI / BLIND DATES / BLIND DATES** (Georgia 2013, Director: Levan Koguashvili, 99 min)

A rain-swept beach in November. Pebbles hastily lined into the shape of football goals, two bodies come together and find love. Sandro, aged 40, tells Manana he's never felt so safe in somebody's arms, and asks her to stay by his side. But in the cold light of day a repeat of their blissful encounter seems questionable: Manana's husband, serving a prison sentence for brutally killing a purported rival, is due for release in a few days' time. Chance will have it that the ex-convict chooses Sandro, of all people, to be his confidant. Increasingly drawn into a complicated web of relationships, Sandro – maintaining an impassive demeanour worthy of Buster Keaton – must decide in favour of love, honour, or compassion.

Levan Koguashvil's tragicomedy is a tender declaration of love for the people of Georgia, and for the optimism with which they overcome the bleakness of sometimes monochrome everyday lives.

Caligari: April 11 / 8:00 p.m.

Kino DFM, Ffm: April 12 / 6:00 p.m.

Alpha: April 12 / 8:00 p.m.

**CÂND SE LASĂ SEARA PESTE BUCUREȘTI SAU METABOLISM / WENN ES NACHT WIRD IN BUKAREST ODER METABOLISMUS / WHEN EVENING FALLS ON BUCHAREST OR METABOLISM** (Romania 2013, Director: Corneliu Porumboiu, 89 min)

A blasé filmmaker, a young actress, an arduous shoot, a producer who is not amused: the plot of Porumboiu's latest film is hardly new, the filmmaking process has been the subject of countless films. But the finely honed formal devices and razor-sharp dialogue produces impressive results. Pleading a stomach ulcer, the director takes time off the set to spend the day with his leading lady. They rehearse one scene until it's verging on the absurd, have some sex, talk about food, cultural differences, Antonioni, and the interplay of form with content. And form, which is always important in Porumboiu's work, plays the lead role in a highly self-reflective film that considers the physicality and impact of cinema. In the poised and clinically structured WHEN EVENING FALLS ON BUCHAREST OR METABOLISM, the camera is static and distanced, the angles rigid, the acting self-possessed. The suspense is subtle, the humour refined, the variations cunning and unexpected. If early Porumboiu films led us to expect laugh-out-loud comedy or nail-biting tension, we now see perfect composition from a stimulating director who creates something quite new with every film.

*German premiere*

Caligari: April 12 / 6:00 p.m.

Alpha: April 13 / 2:00 p.m.

Kino DFM, Ffm: April 13 / 8:30 p.m.

**STYD / SCHANDE / SHAME** (Russia 2013, Director: Yusup Razykov, 90 min)

In her fashionable blue coat, Lena doesn't fit into the forbidding grey world of a dilapidated military base in northern Russia. It's the height of polar winter and the Kola Peninsula a snowy wasteland. Lena is the new wife of a submarine officer who's away at sea on a secret mission. Back at the base, the wives waiting for the return of their husbands form a close-knit community. They spend a lot of time reassuring each other that the submarine crew will come to no harm; some women even offer sacrifices to the sea in the hope of placating its wrath. Lena alone seems indifferent to the fate of the

man she married only recently – and everything else seems to leave her cold as well. As an outsider she enjoys greater freedom and independence than the others, who soon begin to eye her with suspicion and envy. Nobody knows that Lena is preoccupied with a troubled past. When bad news arrives about the submarine, Lena makes a discovery that persuades her to break out of her isolation. Yusup Razykov's new film is an atmospherically dense drama with stunning images of icy wastes seemingly stretching into infinity.

*German premiere*

Caligari: April 12 / 8:00 p.m.

Alpha: April 13 / 4:00 p.m.

Kino DFM, Ffm: April 13 / 6:00 p.m.

**QUOD ERAT DEMONSTRANDUM / QUOD ERAT DEMONSTRANDUM / QUOD ERAT DEMONSTRANDUM** (Romania 2013, Director: Andrei Gruzsniczki, 105 min)

As the title suggests, the drama QUOD ERAT DEMONSTRANDUM displays a certain affinity with academia and advanced mathematics. As such, the film goes against the grain of the Romanian New Wave. The old-school patina, moreover, is deepened by the plain black-and-white that produces grey tones, indeterminate zones in which it is difficult to make (political and ethical) distinctions. The greyness of 1980s life under communism – hardly surprising in a work about the Securitate, an old institution (that has faded into oblivion in neo-capitalist times obsessed with attaining the EU lifestyle). The omnipresent agency set about depriving citizens of any sense of existential security while claiming to provide for the security of the state. It has long been known that the agency dominated professional and private life in Ceaușescu's realm. However, Grzsniczki is interested not only in the irresolvable moral pressures faced by the victims (Sorin, who is uncompromising, Elena, who wants to get out), but also in the biographies of the perpetrators (Lucian, the informal agent, Florin, the careerist), in the unstable, fragile aspects of their lives. Grey (and gruesome) ersatz revenge, the opposite extreme of repressed paranoia – plenty of scope for a psycho-thriller that outdoes *The Lives of Others* in narrative force and intellectual clout.

*German premiere*

Caligari: April 13 / 4:00 p.m.

Alpha: April 14 / 2:00 p.m.

Kino DFM, Ffm: April 14 / 8:30 p.m.

**FREE RANGE – BALLAAD MAILMA HEAKSIITMISEST / FREE RANGE – DIE BALLADE VON DER BILLIGUNG DER WELT / FREE RANGE – BALLAD ON APPROVING OF THE WORLD** (Estonia 2013, Director: Veiko Õunpuu, 104 min)

Fred, a film critic, finds himself out of a job: the editor-in-chief was not impressed by his hatchet job, richly punctuated with expletives, on Terrence Malick's *TREE OF LIFE*. Fred's not overly worried: he needs time for his own writing, having just completed his first novel, a lyrical if deeply pessimistic work. But he's taken aback to learn that his girlfriend Susanna is expecting a baby; she's got very strange fingers, and he's not sure if he can ever love a woman with fingers like that. A night spent drinking with an old flame is enough to send him scuttling back to Susanna. Since the income from his art is not sufficient to keep a family, Fred makes a weary attempt to behave the way society expects. He takes a job as a forklift operator, but the film's subtitle, which cites Brecht, indicates his sense of defeat and resignation.

Underpinned with a magnificent soundtrack, *FREE RANGE* is the story of a rebel poet. Fred's resemblance to Pete Doherty is more than merely physical: he too is fond of drugs, and prodigiously talented as well. His search for the way ahead is littered with excess, inconsistency, and moments of great tenderness: expressed by Veiko Õunpuu with his own strikingly energetic visual means.

Caligari: April 13 / 8:00 p.m.

Kino DFM, Ffm: April 14 / 6:00 p.m.

Alpha: April 15 / 2:00 p.m.

**FREE ENTRY / FREIER EINTRITT – EIN TAG IM LEBEN VON BETTY / FREE ENTRY – ONE DAY OF BETTY** (Hungary 2014, Director: Yvonne Kerékgyártó, 70 min)

Betty and her friend V have a major project: the open-air Sziget festival held every summer on Óbudai, one of the Danube islands in Budapest. Instead of money the teenagers have a stash of grass waiting for a buyer. Food? Nothing wrong with the leftovers from other people's plates. Tent? Why bother when you can sleep under the stars. Sleep? No way: the party goes on all night. V is a pretty girl who knows how to use her charms to the best advantage. Betty, more reserved and shy, never quite knows what to do with her hands, how to hold a cigarette, what to say to the boys they meet. But the tables are turned when the pair go their separate ways after an argument: now it's each girl for herself. Yvonne Kerékgyártó's debut feature **FREE ENTRY**, a fast-paced coming-of-age drama with tender nuances, brings back memories of light-hearted teenage days in which self-doubt was always waiting to pounce.

*World premiere*

Caligari: April 14 / 6:00 p.m.

Alpha: April 15 / 4:30 p.m.

Kino DFM, Ffm: April 16 / 6:00 p.m.

**KOMBINAT NADEZHDA / FABRIK DER HOFFNUNG / THE HOPE FACTORY** (Russia 2014, Director: Natalia Meshchaninova, 90 min)

A harsh Arctic wind blows in the industrial centre of Norilsk in the far north of Russia. The greyish air is chemically contaminated and the outlook anything but bright for the young generation. Local kids often take refuge in what's left of the countryside, where they get out of their heads on drugs or vodka. In the middle of all this we see two young women who couldn't be more different: depression-prone Sveta who's missing her boyfriend, and amoral Nadya, who's in love with someone who's mortally ill. The two deadly rivals share the same dream: to get away at the first opportunity. The path to freedom proves to be anything but easy. Sveta's family is determined to make her stay put, and Nadya is struggling to get the necessary funds together. Natalia Meshchaninova's feature debut is a realistic description of a side of Russian life seldom shown in Russian productions, captured in documentary-like images amply demonstrating the productive potential of provincial Russian life as subject-matter for films.

*German premiere*

Caligari: April 14 / 8:00 p.m.

Alpha: April 15 / 6:00 p.m.

Kino DFM, Ffm: April 16 / 8:30 p.m.