

9th Press Release

April 29, 2008

sehsüchte.08 has ended: A brilliant five days and four nights, 137 films from thirty-four nations from five continents, fifteen award winners, purses totaling just under 60,000 euros, excellent visitor numbers despite sunshine and a great deal of satisfaction among everyone – guests, participants and organizers.

Five days long, everything in Potsdam revolved around cinema. Whether feature film, animation, documentary, children's film, experimental cinema or music video – this year too, *sehsüchte* had something for everyone. The program's broad spectrum provided for excellent numbers of visitors at this year's festival and an all-round positive media reception.

“We have the impression that *sehsüchte.08* has arrived where we intended it to,” says festival director Tobias Falke. “We had two goals: On the one hand we wanted to attract more international attendees and on the other hand appeal to a broader target group from the entire industry through new award categories. I am extremely pleased that we succeeded at both.” General Festival Manager Aurore Giraudon is also pleased at the success: “The response to our program was larger than ever this year and not just in the traditional competition categories but also the innovations such as the children's film award and the music video award.” Giraudon also extends special thanks to the organizers of *sehsüchte.08*: “We are a very small team but on the other hand we didn't have any problem putting Europe's biggest student film festival together. My colleagues work and the way they live this festival as volunteers full of enthusiasm is what made it what it is!”

Cinematographer Amos Katz (*Wianbu - Comfort Woman*) also expressed himself absolutely positively, “The festival was fantastic. There were so many positive impressions and things one won't forget. Great praise goes to all the organizers who made *sehsüchte.08* possible. The interpersonal exchange and the loving care that went into everything were very impressive. There's so much to tell when I'm back in the State.”

Director James Bang (*Wianbu - Comfort Woman*) expressed himself similarly: “A really marvelous festival put on with so much work and love. A great program, many interesting films and outstanding supporting organization. I was thrilled and will definitely return. Many thanks for inviting us.”



sehsüchte.08 Award Winners¹

Bester Feature Film: *A Few Simple Words* by Anna Kazejak-Dawid, Poland. **5,000 euros** donated by the BMW GROUP

DEFA children's film legend Rolf Losansky held the laudation for the film *A Few Simple Words* by Anna Kazejak-Dawid. He praised the finely rendered family portrait accompanied by aesthetic images and extremely authentic dialog. An overall masterly work that can't be distinguished from reputable film productions. In the same breath, the jury also gave James Bang honorable mention for his film *Wianbu - Comfort Woman*. "All in all, selecting the best feature film was so difficult, we would have liked to have recognized five works," according to Losansky.

Bester Documentary Film: *Sonbol* by Niko Apel, Germany/Iran. **5,000 euros** donated by rbb Fernsehen

"The director's sensitive as well as original view of a world that frequently remains closed to us in the media made *Sonbol* convincing. The politically timely documentary establishes an astonishing closeness to a protagonist who, as a race care driver in present day Iran, struggles to fulfill herself personally as a woman and an autonomous individual.

We witness her fight against her own family and the traditions of a patriarchal society without any sense the director is wagging a finger morally.

Refreshingly humanely, this film makes this world more accessible to us and helps us develop an understanding for the problems of Iranian culture. With dramaturgical elegance and confidence, Nico Appelt employs a joke at the start of the film to make the protagonist approachable and generate a kind of identification with her. Despite the serious subject matter, the strong protagonist is full of life and lust for life. The film leaves us with a sense of hope and relates a story that is new and something special."

Best Animated Film: *Tir Nan Og - Forever Love* by Fursy Teyssier, France. **2,000 euros** donated by Filmpark Babelsberg GmbH

"This film captivates viewers with a story that addresses a not very easy subject with ease. Also impressive are the strengths of composition, the style and the realization, which support the dramaturgy superbly. Even if one is not familiar with the mythological allusions, it still tells a wonderful story."

¹ in part with the jury's reasons in detail

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Best Editing: *Roads* by Amit Ginton, Israel. Avid Media Composer Academic editing software valued at **3,000 euros** donated by the Avid Technology

“*Roads* is impressive in the form and aesthetic of its editing, which makes the film particularly suspenseful and fascinating...”

Producer’s Award: *Seven Days Sunday* by T. Bartl, A. Dierbach, N. Laupert, Germany. Postproduction goods and services valued at **15,000 euros** donated by PICTORION das werk

“The actors’ performances, the cinematography, the editing, the screenplay and the sound editing make *Seven Days Sunday* captivating as a whole. This year’s Producer’s Award goes to this film because of this exceptionally successful interplay...”

Award Against Marginalization: *How I Am* by Ingrid Demetz and Caroline Leitner, Germany. **2,500 euros** donated by the Federal Government Commissioner for the Interests of the Disabled

“In their documentary *How I Am*, director Ingrid Demetz and co-director Caroline Leitner accompany Patrick who is imprisoned in his body by autism. “With an “adult’s” wisdom, the boy expresses himself in writing and shares his fears, longings and hopes with us. The filmmakers have produced a moving portrait in which we approach the boy’s emotional world. The carefully selected text passages written by Patrick and the poetically realistic images provide deep insight into the autistic boy’s life and his sense of “being different”. Even though Patrick is growing up in a loving environment, he feels marginalized.”

Best Emerging German Film: *Teenage Angst* by Thomas Stuber, Germany. Film material including development valued at **2,500 euros** donated by Kodak GmbH und Babelsberg Postproduction GmbH/Elektrofilm

“*Teenage Angst* captivates viewers right from the start. Sonnen Bassermann’s first-rate camera work brings the protagonists closer and communicates the coldness of the manor boarding school just as well as the musty dustiness of the alcove. The actors are consistently convincing. Unfiltered outbursts of violence are paired with poetically quiet moments. Every actor displays great breadth in a thoroughly believable performance.

The screenplay tells a story in which the youthful protagonists test the boundaries between torturing schoolmates and murder. These youths really want to feel the boundaries and these get crossed. Thanks to the believable performances and the

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excellent camera work, one follows the story into its most extreme turn, is swept away emotionally and shudders at the human soul's depths as well as its helplessness. Just as the little known cast, the direction, screenplay and cinematography have a potential we can look forward to. Thomas Stuber deservedly received the Best Emerging German Film Award for his one hour film."

Focus Dialog Award: *Chill Pill* by Ehiz Ojesebholo, Nigeria. **1,000 euros** donated by the Federal Foreign Office.

"With its combination of images and sounds, the film presents an extremely impressive look at the major city of Lagos ..."

Music Video Award: *Geboren im Winter* by Andreas Mühe and Christopher Wendland, Germany. **1,000 euros** donated by MTV NETWORKS Germany

"Since winter, particularly in Berlin, is cold and gray, this video was apparently shot in the summer. Riding a bike is much more pleasant. And precisely that is what happens in this clip. Flanked by an armada of friends, our heroes boldly ride their BMX bikes through Berlin. That only sounds moderately exciting at first, for there are many videos in which people ride around. Yet this one is different because seldom does a clip impart such a feeling of happiness with story told so simply and linearly. In fact, one wants summer to get here immediately in order to imitate the protagonists in the video. The ease, lightheartedness and all-round positive message of this video nearly transform an already excellent pop song into a hymn. Easily an A plus."

Best Acting: *Ou quoi* by Gilles De Schryver, Belgium. **5,000 euros** donated by Ready Bank AG

"The actor Gilles De Schryver finely and very precisely portrays a figure who understands how to enthrall viewers and make them accomplices. He knows how to use effective methods to be convincing in *Ou Quoi*. He virtuously illuminates his character's depths without blinding viewers with pyrotechnics. He succeeds in keeping the audience curious – one wants to discover more about Stefan. The viewers' empathy doesn't extinguish at the end of the film either. One desires to see more of Gilles."

Best Cinematography: *Teenage Angst* by Peter Matjasko, Germany. Equipment rental for film shoots valued at **5,000 euros** donated by CINEGATE

"It deserves special mention here that the camera manages to draw viewers into the midst of events so that they really sympathize with the situations and it always finds

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the right focus with confident style. It is a skilful combination of static and moving shots ... not too much, not too little ... the camera fully supports the film's story, never takes on a life of its own. Extremely successful collaboration between cameraman Peter Matjasko and director Thomas Huber.”

Best Children's Film: *The Little Poison Mixer* by Alex Schmidt, Germany. **5,000 euros** donated by Kinderfilm GmbH Erfurt

Pitch! Award: *Vergiss mein nicht, Machu Picchu* by Markus F. Adrian, Germany. Final Draft Screenwriters Suite valued at **200 euros** donated by Final Draft

Best Screenplay: *Baby Daddy* by Marc Oliver Seng, Germany. **1,500 euros** donated by Boje Buck Produktion

People's Choice: *Silent Spring* by Nico Sommer, Germany. **2,000 euros** donated by The Mayor of the City of Potsdam

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