



PRESS RELEASE
September 29th 2016

exground filmfest to Celebrate Opening of 29th Edition in Wiesbaden with Iranian Indy Feature VALDERAMA

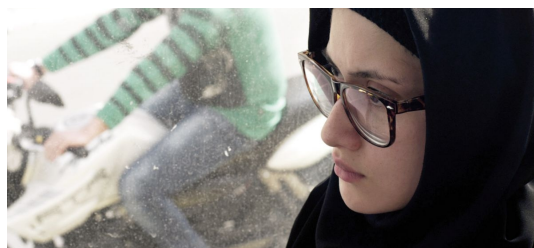
First Highlights // Focus Iran // Introducing New Prison Inmates' Jury
Award DAS BRETT

The 29th edition of exground filmfest is set to open on November 11th 2016 with the Iranian drama VALDERAMA by Abbas Amini. The film, which is being shown in this year's festival Focus section concentrating on Iran, will celebrate its Rhine-Main premiere at Wiesbaden's historic Caligari FilmBühne at 7 PM on the opening night of the festival.

Football god Carlos Valderrama is the undying idol of the film's young protagonist, who styles his own ample mane into a tribute to his role model's mop and also insists on using his hero's name as his own. With neither family nor papers, Valderama lives by himself out in the Iranian countryside, until he is forced to flee following a dramatic incident. Transplanted to the capitol city Tehran, he struggles to get by and encounters other individuals living at the margins of society in his search for identity and a safe place to lay his head.



VALDERAMA



PARADISE (Photo:Port au Prince Film / Kultur
Produktion GmbH)

Focus Iran

In addition to a film program and accompanying discussions, the Focus Iran section will host an exhibition of video works by Iranian artists as well as a concert by the Iranian indie rock band **LANGTUNES**, who are not allowed to perform their music in their home country.



“With our dedicated Iranian short film program and our many special guests from the country, we’ve been celebrating Iranian cinematic art here at exground filmfest for a number of years now,” explains Andrea Wink of the festival’s organizational team. “By providing insight into Iranian culture and opportunities for building networks between our filmmaking guests, our audience and local film students in the scope of our Focus Iran section, we would like above all to contribute to the understanding among nations.”

Several other Iranian titles in addition to **VALDERAMA** have already been announced for the festival line-up. These include Mani Haghighi’s **A DRAGON ARRIVES!**, in which the director employs fantastic imagery in his staging of protagonist Detective Hafizi’s journey to an island in the Persian Gulf, where he is charged with investigating the suicide of a political exile. The viewer becomes immersed in a world of riddles and bizarre occurrences, one in which the lines between reality and illusion are increasingly blurred. Also among the first Focus selections is **PARADISE** by Sina Ataeian Dena. This gripping film tells the story of Hanieh, who is forced as a teacher in a girls’ school in suburban Tehran to pass on the repression from above to her students. Hanieh becomes increasingly disgusted by her work in this male dominated, misogynist system and longs to be transferred elsewhere. Above all of this tension hangs the suspicion that a crime has been committed. This haunting first outing from Sina Ataeian Dena was honored at both the Locarno International Film Festival and the Marrakech International Film Festival.



NERUDA



HANDS OF A MOTHER

Award-Winning Highlights

The films of the extraordinary Chilean director Pablo Larraín have also been the object of widespread praise. After the Academy Award nominated **¡NO!** and **EL CLUB** (which received the Grand Prize of the Jury at the Berlinale) exground filmfest is delighted to present his most recent work **NERUDA**. The film tells the story of Nobel prizewinning poet Pablo Neruda, who was blacklisted by the government in his native country at the onset of the Cold War and subsequently forced to go into hiding. With an exceptional ensemble cast (featuring Gael García Bernal, Luis Gnecco,



Alfredo Castro and Mercedes Morán) Larraín weaves a tense crime thriller with adept nods to film noir.

The German fiction feature **HANDS OF A MOTHER** by Florian Eichinger received no less than two awards at this year's Filmfest München. The film depicts a patriarch who is no longer willing or able to keep his memories of sexual abuse at the hands of his mother to himself. The resulting open confrontation with his mother at a family gathering sets off a crisis. With **HANDS OF A MOTHER**, Eichinger, whose film will be screened at exground filmfest in the series Made in Germany, completes his trilogy treating the consequences of domestic violence, which he began with **WITHOUT YOU I'M NOTHING** and **NORDSTRAND**.

Xavier Dolan's most recent work **IT'S ONLY THE END OF THE WORLD** also deals with a family in crisis. The successful author Louis returns to his family after an absence of twelve years in order to inform them that he is mortally ill. Alas, before he is able to deliver his awful news, old conflicts rear their ugly heads and Louis' dream of peaceful coexistence seems to recede quickly into the distance. For his sixth film, which was honored in Cannes with the Jury Gran Prix, Dolan has assembled the crème de la crème of French cinema in front of the camera, including Gaspard Ulliel, Nathalie Baye, Léa Seydoux, Vincent Cassel and Marion Cotillard.

A very special prize was bestowed upon Jim Jarmusch's most recent outing **PATERSON** in Cannes: the "Palm Dog Award" for the best film appearance by a canine. Marvin the pug is the faithful companion of bus driver Paterson (Adam Driver), who leads an uneventful life in a small provincial city. But Paterson's true calling is verse, a personal poetry inspired by fragments of his passengers' conversations. This look at his life takes the viewer along on a journey through the city and the creative process itself.



PATERSON



IT'S ONLY THE END OF THE WORLD



New Prize: Prison Inmates' Jury Award

This year, for the first time, exground filmfest will be presenting the Prison Inmates' Jury Award **DAS BRETT** for the best film in the series Made in Germany. The award includes prize money in the amount of 1,000 euros, endowed by "DIE WERFT – Kulturbühne in der JVA Wiesbaden" (a cultural platform active in Wiesbaden's correctional facilities). DIE WERFT is supported by the Federal Ministry of Family, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth as a model project in the framework of the federal program "Living Democracy!". Since its inception in 2008, DIE WERFT has produced a number of plays for theater featuring casts composed of prison inmates – the organization added film projects to its core program in 2016.

The complete program for exground filmfest will be announced on October 15th 2016 and available at www.exground.com.

For more information please contact:

((((NOISE)))

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exground filmfest 29 will be supported by the following institutions and companies:

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