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**Ode to films:
Frankfurter film congress
on the future of Europe**

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Press contact
Kenneth Hujer
Press and public relations
presse@lichter-filmfest.de

Ode to films: Frankfurter film congress on the future of Europe

Alexander Kluge, Albert Serra, Lilith Stangenberg, Christoph Hochhäusler, Monika Grütters, Robert Gwisdek, Anders Rune, Ayşe Polat, Jan Bonny, Stavroula Geronimaki, RP Kahl, Susanne Binninger – all of them and many more well-known figures of the German and European film and cinema landscape will be in Frankfurt from 17th to 19th of April, where the Congress *Future German Cinema* will take place for the fourth time. Parallel to the *17th LICHTER Filmfest Frankfurt International* and under the motto “Future Europe”, the Main metropolis will once again become the centre of film policy debates.

Six years ago, around 100 experts came to Frankfurt for the first *Future German Cinema* congress to initiate a fundamental renewal of the German film system. Together, they devised proposals on how to overcome the widely deplored backlog of reforms in German film – which became known nationwide as: *Frankfurt Positions on the Future of German Film* (Frankfurter Positionen zur Zukunft des deutschen Films). Since then, the Frankfurt Congress *Future German Cinema* has established itself as a permanent fixture of the industry.

In view of the upcoming European elections in June, the 4th Congress *Future German Cinema* is dedicated entirely to the topic “Future Europe”. For not only the German film landscape is in an important phase of reform: in many European countries, debates on film funding are being held and the current mechanisms scrutinised. Furthermore, Europe and its cultures are facing major challenges that can only be overcome together. In its panels, the Frankfurt film congress aims to create a transnational discourse.

In addition to European filmmakers, political leaders such as **Monika Grütters**, Member of the German Bundestag and former Minister of State for Culture, and **Bill Anderson**, the Scottish representative of the European Directors' Association FERA, will also attend the congress. Anderson recently spoke in the European Parliament on the AI Act, the EU's AI regulation. Under the title "Hollywood is on strike - Europe is silent", author **Nira Bozkurt** will discuss the existential threat posed by AI to the film and creative industries with Polish festival director **Kazimierz Suwała** and Israeli curator **Uri Aviv**.

The Frankfurt congress was launched early during this year's Berlinale. At the film policy meeting “Mehr Licht!”, the congress management duo, **Gregor Maria Schubert** and **Johanna Süß**, spoke with auteur film legend **Edgar Reitz**, who provided the impetus for the founding of the congress and pleaded at last year's congress for new cinema architecture – in the spirit of a democratic public sphere. This year, under the title “Building Cinemas, Building Europe”, German director **Christoph Hochhäusler** will be talking to Spanish architect **Hugo Herrera Pianno** and his Austrian colleague **Dietmar Feistel** about their extremely ambitious cinema projects to be built in the coming years. Pianno designed the *Camerimage European Film Centre* in Toruń, Poland. Feistel, who was already responsible for the famous *EYE film museum* in Amsterdam, designed the *House for Film and Media* in Stuttgart.

In place of Edgar Reitz, another auteur film legend will help shape the congress this year: **Alexander Kluge**. The filmmaker, television producer, author, and scriptwriter compiled a short film program specifically in honour of the congress. In a subsequent discussion with Kluge and actor **Lilith Stangenberg**, the focus will be on the untapped possibilities of Europe and

thus on the political beyond nation-state thought patterns - in order to forge paths to a common future.

In a masterclass, the Catalan director **Albert Serra** will also be talking about Europe and the associated influences, such as Fassbinder, von Trier, the Nouvelle Vague, but also opera and theatre. Serra is one of the most interesting younger voices in European auteur film.

Further events address among other things the Europe narrative, European coproductions, European television and streaming, European film education and critique as well as Europe's outer borders. With the rise of right-wing populist parties in almost all European countries, the responsibility of cultural professionals has become clearer than it has been for a long time. The 4th Congress *Future German Cinema* aims to provide new impulses and formulate a common position on the future of cinema and the role of European film.

Film series Future German Film

When talking about the future of German film, people usually think of young filmmakers. In order to show and support their works, quite a few young filmmakers are awarded prizes. But what about the future of German film, irrespective of the biological age of its filmmakers? This is precisely what the film series Future German Film is all about. Its curation highlights German film itself! The film series seeks to track down the opportunities and lines of development of German film, strengthen it where it has the most artistic potential in order to show that it is, in its most prolific cases, far better than its reputation.

An overview of all the films in the series: **Zeit Verbrechen: Der Panther** by Jan Bonny, **Verbrannte Erde** by Thomas Arslan, **Ivo** by Eva Trobisch, **Der Junge, dem die Welt gehört** by Robert Gwisdek, **Good News** by Hannes Schilling, **Cuckoo** by Tilman Singer, **Filmstunde_23** by Jörg Adolph and Edgar Reitz, **Sterben** by Matthias Glasner.

Event Location

The 4th Congress *Future German Cinema* will take place at "Massif Arts", one of the most interesting cultural spaces in the Main metropolis – in the centre of the city.

Supporters

The congress is kindly supported by the Kulturfonds Frankfurt RheinMain, the HessenFilm und Medien GmbH, the Filmförderungsanstalt (FFA) and the Cultural Office of the City of Frankfurt am Main.

The complete congress program as well as all tickets and passes can be found on the festival website www.lichter-filmfest.de/en or directly at <https://lichter-filmfest.de/en/congress-future-german-cinema/home-congress-future-german-cinema>