Festival tips

Inclusivity first

The Visionair Film Festival doubles down on its commitment to gender parity. Back for its third edition, the Visionair Film Festival champions new and emerging auteurs from around the world. This year’s selection includes 9 features and 19 shorts, with more films by female and non-binary directors than by men, a rarity on the festival circuit. One of this year’s highlights is Dominga Sotomayor Castillo’s Too Late Die Young, a stunning coming-of-age tale set in rural Chile in the wake of the Pinochet regime, about a teenage girl navigating the tricky leap from childhood to adolescence. The film saw Sotomayor Castillo become the first woman to be named Best Director at the Locarno film festival. Another standout is Calasantrix Elena Trapé’s brilliantly moody Distances. Set in Sarin at the time of a reunion between university friends, the film explores how time and distance have taken their toll on old friendships. Before the celebration of fresh filmmaking talent begins, the festival opens on April 3 with an homage to Canadian underground legend Bruce LaBruce, and a screening of his incendiary 1993 debut No Skin Off My Ass. — Bell

Home runs

Achtung Berlin turns 15 – alive and kicking!

Since 2004, Achtung Berlin has offered an invaluable platform for the city’s moviemaking community. This year’s edition sees over 80 films, each with a strong Berlin connection, screened in 11 venues across town, from the grand Kino International to fik Kino and the cozy Prenzlauer Berg Lichtblick. Highlights of the competition include Luzie Loose’s assured debut Schwimmen, about two high school outcasts who turn the tables on classmates bullies and Sven Taddicken’s bold four feature Das Schönste Paar, an uneasy meditation on trauma, forgiveness and cathartic revenge. Zombie fans shouldn’t miss Carolina Heilparg’s Endzeit, a post-Apocalyptic tale in a league of its own, in which the kick-ass female leads traverse a beautiful, yet very bloody German countryside. Datsche by Lara Hewitt succeeds in delivering the ultimate Berlin culture clash comedy, as a young clueless New Yorker lands in his late-grandfather’s Kleeigarten in hardcore GDR country with unexpected visitors, while Kida Ramdan’s Berlin–Albania–Israel Kanum tackles blood vengeance and is sure to spark discussion. In competition for best documentary, Christin Freitag’s Let the Bell Ring and Florian Baron’s Stress turn their lens to California’s amateur boxing scene, and Pittsburg’s PTSD-affected Afghan veterans, respectively. Achtung is also marking the 50th anniversary of the Berlinale with a retrospective of 14 features, including Pil Frankenberg’s Nie Wieder Schlafen, an often hilarious account of three West German women exploring a newly reunified Berlin. Expectant will present a handful of fast highlights at Lichtblick Kino from Apr 13–15, all with English subtitles and moderation. Join us for our matteo double-bill on Apr 14, and we’ll throw in a free brunch. — POC, Jurvet Albot

Tales of healing

The 10th Arab Film Festival Berlin offers cause for hope in dark times.

Firmly established as one of Berlin’s most smartly programmed region-specific festivals, ALFILM returns this year with a range of works with unexpectedly optimistic views. The opening night offering is A.B. Shakwy’s Yomeddine, a crowd-pleasing Egyptian road movie about a recovered leper on a trip to reconnect with his family, who forms meaningful bonds with other marginalized figures on the way. Saudi filmmaker Mahmoud Sabbagh, who made a splash in 2016 with his Berlinale romcom Barakat Meets Baraah, returns with Amra and the Second Marriage, a breezy, gently subversive feminist comedy about a middle-aged housewife pressurized by her husband to accept his broken plan to marry a younger woman in the hope of acquiring a male heir. And Nelio Belkadi’s Look at Me is the moving tale of a Tunisian immigrant in Melbourne, who returns to his home country to reconnect with the autistic son he abandoned. A more hard-hitting fare is Meryem Berrn’barea’s Casablanca-set Sofia, an unflinching account of Morocco’s draconian laws regarding sex outside marriage through a young pregnant woman’s harrowing ordeal – and Sara Fatallah’s Chaos is a brazenly intimate doc about the traumatizing impact of the Syrian war on three women in three different cities. — POC

Neues Polnisches Kino

Retrospektive Wettbewerb

Talks Workshop Party

Polish(ed)

Film Polska showcases a new crop of award-winning Polish cinema.

Berlin’s Polish film festival is back with an impressive lineup reflecting the country’s wealth of directing and acting talents, among them Julia Kijowska, Katarzyna Drucka and Agnieszka Malińska. The 11th edition of the Polish Film Festival at the 2018 Cottbus Film Festival. — Ogiar Gômp

APR 24 - May 3: Full programme and venues at filmpolska.de

Achtung Berlin

24.04.–05.05.2019

Neues Polnisches Kino

Retrospektive

Wettbewerb

Talks

Workshop

Party

www.filmpolska.de

APR 9-10: Arsenal, City Kino Wedding, Wolf. Full programme at alfilm.berlin

APR 9-14: Full programme and venue info at achtungberlin.de

APR 10-27 Full programme and venue info at achtungberlin.de

APR 9-10: Arsenal, City Kino Wedding, Wolf. Full programme at alfilm.berlin

APR 9-10: Arsenal, City Kino Wedding, Wolf. Full programme at alfilm.berlin

APR 9-10: Arsenal, City Kino Wedding, Wolf. Full programme at alfilm.berlin
**April 2019**

Picks, highlights and can’t-miss events for this month in Berlin.

**Friday, April 12**

**E158’s English Days**

**Wednesday, April 17**

**Alfilm Arabic Film Festival**

**Thursday, April 18**

**BMI Lost and Found**

**Saturday, April 19**

**Dagobert**

**My Perfect Berlin Weekend**

**Sunday, April 21**

**Kirschblütenfest - Festival**

**Tuesday, April 23**

**DJ Ikek**

**Wednesday, April 24**

**E158’s English Days**

**Thursday, April 25**

**Gypsy Reports**

**Friday, April 26**

**Achtung Berlin - Film**

**Saturday, April 27**

**E 189 Master Bedroom**

**Sunday, April 28**

**Berlin Half-Marathon**

**Monday, April 29**

**Mega Israel - Contemporary Dates**

**Tuesday, April 30**

**My Perfect Berlin Weekend**