

// Media Information – Linz, 15 March 2017 //

CROSSING EUROPE Film Festival Linz – SIX WEEKS TO GO

The 2017 festival opening with five hand-picked film premieres and the facade projection of the CROSSING EUROPE | Art Prize award-winners in the Upper Austrian Culture Quarter, Spotlight on the acclaimed Turkish director Yeşim Ustaoglu, our new festival trailer SUMI, the new partner project SCHOOL @ CROSSING EUROPE, the newly launched CROSSING EUROPE film collection on the VoD platform FLIMMIT, the exciting line-up for this year's Nightline, and the start of the GOLDEN BAG display window competition in the city center of Linz.

Finally, a little reminder: deadline for accreditation is 20 March!

Festival Opening

The festival begins this year in the afternoon of the opening day (25 April) with the **start of films from all program sections**. Then in the evening, the opening of CROSSING EUROPE will be celebrated with five selected film premieres presenting a representative cross-section from this year's festival program and from all program sections – with numerous film guests present.

In the OK Platz, the **outdoor installation “Nähe*Distanz / Closeness*Distance”** by Christoph Frey and Denise Mair (winners of the CROSSING EUROPE | Art Prize of the Energie AG 2017) then lights up the facade of the OK office building, extending across six evenings. “Europastrasse”, the artistic crossing of Europe by the photographer Otto Hainzl, also starts during the opening evening as a video installation. The **Nightline** takes off starting at 10:00 pm in the OK Deck with the electro-punk-rockers CIVIL CIVIC (AU/GB/ES), supported by the Viennese DJ 7 CITIZEN.

The Opening Films 2017

Roughly 160 feature films and documentaries are included in the program of the 14th edition of the CROSSING EUROPE Film Festival Linz, presenting socio-politically aware and artistic-eccentric filmmaking for discussion in Linz. The focus here is on **issues of identity politics** as well as an engagement with the **realities of life in Europe today**, which the five opening films clearly illustrate.

Descriptions of the state of Europe today are all too easily reduced to a common denominator: fear and insecurity dominate our everyday life, the world of media, and political action. It is exactly this “European fear” that is addressed by the five opening films, which are artistically highly diverse in their treatment of the contents in different variations: the **fear of strangers or the strange** dominates in the feature films CHEZ NOUS and SŁOŃCE, TO SŁOŃCE MNIE OŚLEPIŁO, ending in xenophobia and attacks. **Fear of terror attacks** and the accompanying paranoia become the leitmotif of the black thriller-comedy EL BAR. In TEREDDÜT it is the **fear of social upheavals** and of the loss of male dominance that oppresses the heroines of this feature film.

And in the documentary film RODNYE an armed conflict torpedoes trust within the so-called “nucleus of society”, the family, and the **fear of the consequences of war** – social disintegration, fallen sons, and daily violence – is latently palpable.

The special quality of these five films, however, is that they look beyond the horizon of the present or the present emotional state of Europe. This “European fear” can be overcome, specifically with human kindness, solidarity, and hope. There are no magic solutions in this year’s opening films, but at least positive perspectives.

CHEZ NOUS / THIS IS OUR LAND (FR, BE 2017) – Austrian premiere

Director: Lucas Belvaux, 114 min, distributor in Austria: [Filmladen](#)

Program Section: European Panorama Fiction; world premiere: Int. Film Festival Rotterdam 2017

Right at the high point of the real French presidential election campaign, the well-known director and actor Lucas Belvaux has succeeded in creating a riveting political drama about a nurse, highly regarded by everyone, who stumbles more or less unwittingly into a political career. Convinced she is doing the right thing and helping her community, which has economically declined in recent years, she allows herself to be persuaded by a new patriotic “movement” to run for the office of mayor. In the course of the film it only gradually becomes clear to her that there is no social world view behind this party, but rather a closed, xenophobic, and nationalist one. In the end she manages to get out and escape the clutches of the right-wing populist extremists.

// With Lucas Belvaux (director) present // Cinema release in Austria: Fall 2017 // Press inquiries: Doris Hochrieser (d.hochrieser@filmladen.at) // The film will also be shown on 26 April during the [Festival du Film Francophone Vienna](#). //

RODNYE / CLOSE RELATIONS (LV, DE, EE, UA 2016) – Austrian premiere

Director: Vitaly Mansky, 112 min, world distribution: [Deckert Distribution](#)

Program Section: Competition Documentary; world premiere: Karlovy Vary Int. Film Festival 2016

Director Vitaly Mansky is a Russian citizen, born in the Ukraine when it was still part of the USSR; his ancestors came from Poland and from Lithuania. It is therefore not surprising that his extended family cultivates different approaches to the current political situation in the Ukraine and Russia. Mansky sets out on a journey all across the country – from western-oriented Lviv (in German Lemberg), to Odessa, to Donbass dominated by Russian separatists, all the way to Crimea – in search of reasons for the escalation following the end of the Maidan Revolution. Along the way he succeeds in creating a captivating documentary of a family constellation against the background of the simmering military conflict between Russia and the Ukraine.

// Vitaly Mansky (director) is present //

SŁOŃCE, TO SŁOŃCE MNIE OŚLEPIŁO / THE SUN, THE SUN BLINDED ME (PL, CH 2016) – Austrian

Premiere & Tribute Opener

Directors: Anka and Wilhelm Sasnal, 74 min, world distribution: [balapolis](#)

Program Section: Tribute; world premiere: Locarno Int. Film Festival 2016

Symbolic images, a stringent picture composition, little dialogue, numerous omissions, and recourse to a current political topic mark the fifth collaborative film by Anka and Wilhelm Sasnal. Based on Camus’ novel “The Stranger”, this year’s Tribute guests have created an artistically masterful, sometimes almost absurd variation on themes like social isolation and xenophobia. The protagonist Rafat feels like a stranger in the world of his own life; isolated from the outside world he follows his daily routine, until a turning point comes as a “stranger” (in the person of a refugee washed up on the beach) comes into his life, and he has to decide how to deal with that.

// Anka and Wilhelm Sasnal (directors) are present // Details on this year’s Tribute can be found [HERE](#). //

TEREDDÜT / CLAIR OBSCUR (TR, DE, PL, FR 2016) – Austrian premiere & Spotlight Opener

Director: Yeşim Ustaoğlu, 105 min, world distribution: [Beta Cinema](#), rights for Austria: [Real Fiction](#)

Program Section: Spotlight; world premiere: Toronto Int. Film Festival 2016

This film is a poetic parallel study of two women from different social backgrounds, which allows deep insights into the life worlds of Turkish women today, with all their constraints and possibilities. Both the psychiatrist in the midst of modern life and the young housewife in a forced marriage have to struggle with “male privilege” – even though at different levels. This film demonstrates that the private is always also political.

// Yeşim Ustaoğlu (director) is present // Details on SPOTLIGHT can be found below. //

EL BAR / THE BAR (ES 2017) – Austrian Premiere & Night Sight Opener

Director: Álex de la Iglesia, 102 min, distribution for Austria: [Koch Media](#)

Program Section: Night Sight; world premiere: Berlinale 2017 – competition (out of competition)

The growing fear of terrorism particularly in European metropolises is masterfully taken up by the Spanish enfant terrible director Álex de la Iglesia in his current work, a fast-paced tour de force between thriller and coal-black comedy. Mysterious deaths force a random group of bar visitors into a temporary community for survival, which ends where solidarity and paranoia go hand in hand.

// The film will be shown again during /slasheinhalb: NIGHT SIGHT Films 2017 from 4 to 6 May in the Filmcasino in Vienna. //

Spotlight: Yeşim Ustaoğlu

Yeşim Ustaoğlu (*1960) is one of the most **well-known Turkish auteur filmmakers**. Since 1994 she has been writing and directing primarily films about women in search of identity. As she says herself, these are always also stories about men. From the beginning, her films have been internationally successful, have won awards at festivals, and have been praised by critics. This is not only because Ustaoğlu's productions are meticulous and truthful, but also because they deal with **sensitive topics relating to Turkish society and politics**: Turkish-Kurdish relations, the expulsion of the Greeks from Turkey, forced marriages, female sexuality.

Yeşim Ustaoğlu's **films are about home in the opposite sense**: they show people in search of a place where they feel safe, even though they have no clear idea of what it should look like there. Her figures are migrants – like the two young rural emigrant men in GÜNEŞE YOLCULUK or the Greek woman driven from her home in BULUTLARI BEKLERKEN; like the old woman whose children take her from her village to Istanbul in PANDORA'NIN KUTUSU (CE 2009), the two young employees at a highway services stop in ARAF (CE 2013), and finally like the still underage Elmas in TEREDDÜT (one of this year's opening films), who must leave her parents' home to marry a much older man.

What makes up home, what it looks like and tastes like and how it smells there, how people talk to one another and what has influenced their culture, these are themes that Yeşim Ustaoğlu addresses in all her films. *(quoted from the CROSSING EUROPE catalogue text by Daniela Sannwald)*

Five feature-length films in total by Yeşim Ustaoğlu are planned for screening in the SPOTLIGHT – with the director present, who will also hold a masterclass (see below for details).

The following films will be presented in the SPOTLIGHT:

// TEREDDÜT / CLAIR OBSCUR

TR/DE/PL/FR 2016, 105 min, OmeU – Austrian premiere & opening film 2017

// ARAF / ARAF - SOMEWHERE IN BETWEEN

TR/FR/DE 2012, 124 min, OmeU – Austrian premiere at CROSSING EUROPE 2013

// PANDORA'NIN KUTUSU / PANDORA'S BOX

TR/FR/DE/BE 2008, 112 min, OmeU – Austrian premiere at CROSSING EUROPE 2009

// BULUTLARI BEKLERKEN / WAITING FOR THE CLOUDS

FR/DE/GR/TR 2004, 92 min, OmeU

// GÜNESE YOLCULUK / JOURNEY TO THE SUN

TR/DE/NL 1999, 104 min, OmeU

// Masterclass Yeşim Ustaoglu on Saturday, 29 April, 4:00 pm, OK Deck, Moderator: Daniela Sannwald (film critic), admission free – in cooperation with the Art University Linz / Time-based and Interactive Media & FC Gloria //

New Festival Trailer [SUMI](#) (AT 2017, 1 min)

CROSSING EUROPE is pleased to announce that the **new festival trailer** (powered by Energie AG Upper Austria) has been made by the Linz-based **director duo LAS GAFAS (Luzi Katamay and Christian Dietl)**, who have presented numerous short films and music videos over the years at CROSSING EUROPE (including MAYBE PALERMO / CE 2016, DAS BESTE IST NOCH NICHT VORBEI / CE 2015, PATTY / CE 2014 or COUNTABLY INFINITE / CE 2013).

Completely free in its form, SUMI – the eponymous black-brown ink – flows and crawls across the paper, symbolizing the constant changing of the world. Sometimes forming an animal, sometimes a human, it draws sometimes significant lines right across the grained landscape. Although without commentary, it is hauntingly amplified by the atmospheric sound by Enrique Tomás. Just like at the visual level, here analog meets digital. The deep and heavy basses accentuate the main motif, with electrically distorted string instruments highlighting the finely textured nuances in between.

*// The festival trailer 2017, SUMI, is used for **festival promotion** and shown in Austrian program cinemas. It can be seen online here: www.crossingeurope.at/trailer2017. // More detailed media information [HERE](#) //*

SCHOOL @ CROSSING EUROPE

In cooperation with [KulturKontakt Austria](#), for the first time this year CROSSING EUROPE offers two specially arranged film screenings for apprentices and school classes. The central interest here is on direct communication with the filmmakers and an engagement with the medium of film.

Specially prepared school material provides support for teachers in preparing and reflecting on the films. The film shown on 26 April will be the Austrian comedy DIE MIGRANTIGEN (AT 2017) by Arman T. Riahi and on 27 April the street dance documentary MARTHA & NIKI (SE 2015) by Tora Mkandawire Mårtens.

// Further information can be found at www.crossingEurope.at/schule, registration by 19 April at the latest with [Lisa Buchwiser](#) / admission: € 7,- for pupils – no charge for the accompanying teacher //

BORDERLESS EUROPE

The CROSSING EUROPE Film Collection on FLIMMIT

Starting this year, the festival is cooperating with Flimmit, the video-on-demand platform of the Austrian Broadcasting Corporation. Around 7,000 titles (mostly Austrian and European productions) are available, including highlights from European film festivals. With this first selection of ten hand-picked CROSSING EUROPE films from past years of the festival, the life of these works is to be "extended" and also made accessible outside the festival context. One thing is certain: with exceptional films such as HOME (Director: Tribute Guest Ursula Meier), THIS IS ENGLAND (Director: Shane Meadows), BROWNIAN MOVEMENT (Director: Nanouk Leopold and Sandra Hüller in the leading role) or WALHALLA RISING (Director: Nicolas Winding Refn), there is nothing more that stands in the way of a pleasurable engagement with European life worlds.

// The CROSSING EUROPE Collection can be seen at www.flimmit.com. //

Nightline

From 25 to 30 April, the **CROSSING EUROPE Nightline** in the **OK Deck**, programmed by corridor-Bogendorfer/Mayrhofer offers film-lovers, festival guests and night owls an opportunity every evening starting at 10 pm to extend the festival day until late in the night. Once again, the audience can expect an outstanding line-up, from new voices from Austria (**Mavi Phoenix**) to avant-garde from the USA (**Xiu Xiu**); well-known even beyond this region, the Linz electronic club *The Future Sound* presents the hip-hop eccentric **Mndsgn**, and the grand conclusion of the week is the queer party series schmusn!

Bonus track: we can look forward to a newly designed party location – DASGEGENLICHT & LEONARDO (Backlab) will light up the OK Deck in a new look.

// The complete line-up for the Nightline 2017 can be found [HERE](#). //

GOLDEN BAG Display Window Competition 2017

Businesses in Linz are again invited to take part in the GOLDEN BAG Display Window Competition, which now goes into the fourth round from 7 to 17 April. CROSSING EUROPE looks forward to many impressively decorated display windows, which will enhance the image of the city in keeping with the motto "Film.Art.Europe". There are no limits for creativity and originality in designing an interpretation of this motto. All CROSSING EUROPE promotional material will be made available for the decorations. Numerous material prizes await the participating businesses and everyone who takes part in voting.

Registration deadline for participating businesses is 24.3.2017!

// All details on **participation** as well as **prizes** and **registration form** can be found at <https://www.crossingeurope.at/en/information/display-competition.html>. In case of questions, please contact [Lisa Brandstötter](mailto:Lisa.Brandstötter@crossingeurope.at) by email or telephone: 0732/785700-32. //

Upcoming Dates

Deadline for accreditation: 20 March 2017

Program press conferences Linz & Vienna: **12 April 2017**

Festival dates: **Tues., 25 to Sun., 30 April 2017**

Photo Material & Updates

Photos & Film Stills: <https://www.crossingeurope.at/en/xp-presse/pressefotos/>

Festival Impressions: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/crossingeurope/collections/>

Logo & Festival Motif: <http://www.crossingeurope.at/en/xp-presse/logos>

Regular **updates** and **current information** on CROSSING EUROPE 2017 can be found, as ever, on our website: www.crossingEurope.at and our social media channels [Facebook](#), [google+](#), [Flickr](#), [Instagram](#) and [Twitter](#).