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Berlin Days, NYC 09

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A few weeks back, Berlin was the focus of a series of events at the New Museum in New York's East Village.

Opened the end of 2007 in its present location, The New Museum is yet another addition to the gentrification of the Bowery – a street that used to be known for its soup kitchens, homeless missions and the famous music club, CBGB's, which closed at the end of 2006 and now houses designer John Varvatos' fashion store. Slowly but surely, the Bowery is making way to new apartment buildings, restaurants, bars, fashion shops and high culture, like the New Museum.

Many miles away, today's Berlin offers something for everyone—established, emerging, experimental, and everything in between, there is an abundance of culture and creativity in Berlin. For three days in April, some of these offers were on display at New York's New Museum – dedicating one day to fashion, one to visual arts and design, and a third to film.

Berlin has and continues to be an attractive film location throughout its turbulent and unique history. To name but just a few examples, *BERLIN: SYMPHONIE OF A METROPOLIS* (1927) by Walter Ruttmann, *THE MORDERERS ARE AMONGST US* (1946) by Wolfgang Staudte, the first feature film after World War II, *WINGS OF DESIRE* (1987) by Wim Wenders, Wolfgang Becker's *GOOD BYE LENING* or the 2008 Academy Award winning *LIVES OF OTHERS*, by Florian Henkel von Donnersmark; all of these films are inspired and informed by the changing history and landscape of Berlin.



Therefore, the round table discussion at the New Museum did not need any time to introduce the city of Berlin to the audience – and was able to jump right ahead presenting and discussing two new film projects that prominently feature the city and its unique status.

Moderated by German Films NY representative Oliver Mahrtdt, Producer Ann Carolin Renniner of Berlin based production house Zero One Film, and communications consultant Robert Eysoldt of Triad Berlin presented *24H BERLIN--ONE DAY IN LIFE*, a 24 hour portrait of Berlin and its people, broadcast this September to celebrate and commemorate the fall of the wall, 20 years ago.

Conceived, developed and produced by award winning filmmaker Volker Heise and producer Thomas Kufus last September on Friday the 5th, 80 film-teams set out to record the city of Berlin and its people over the course of 24 hours. Heise and his team are currently in the process of editing the 800 hours of HD material down to a 24 hour all-day program that French-German TV station ARTE will air exactly one year later this Saturday, September the 5th. In addition to the TV broadcast, the team at Zero One plans to turn the entire city of Berlin into one big media event – with outdoor broadcastings on big screens and numerous additional events and happenings throughout the city.

Already, this one-of-a-kind film project is accompanied by an innovative media and web campaign that is worth checking out at www.24hberlin.tv.



24h Berlin

24H BERLIN is a unique idea to feature and promote a city – and an interesting model that could work for many other places around the world, too.

In addition to the 24H BERLIN presentation, filmmaker Hannes Stoehr and music producer and actor Paul Kalkbrenner traveled to NY to discuss and screen *BERLIN CALLING*. Stoehr's latest feature film plays in Berlin and is the story of fast and furious techno musician Ickarus and his rise, fall and return as an innovative talent in the international music scene. *BERLIN CALLING* is an energy charged film that takes a critical look at the music scene and its temptations, trials and tribulations. Besides playing the lead, Kalkbrenner also effectively features his own enigmatic and engaging music throughout the film.

Laurence Kardish, senior curator of the department of film and media at MoMA - who has been curating MoMA's annual survey of new German cinema for the past three decades – was also present to talk about trends and developments in German filmmaking over the years. He linked Berlin to New York for its dry humor and sophistication, and confirmed Berlin's prominent and vital place in the history of cinema.

The lively presentation and discussion was followed by a screening of *BERLIN CALLING*, and closed with a music session by musician Paul Kalkbrenner—offering the NY audience some visual and auditory taste of today's Berlin.

For more information on BERLIN DAYS and the city of Berlin, please visit www.be.berlin.de