

Brazilian-German Media Exchange: Speakers & Panellists

November 29, 2011



Ansgar Ahlers, Berlin

Ansgar Ahles was born in Germany, in 1975. His professional experience includes working as an assistant director with Eric Till on "Luther", with Don Michael Paul on "Half Past Dead" and with Jean-Jacques Annaud on "Enemy at the Gates". His first short film, "Covered with Chocolate", was a Golden Bear nominee at the Berlin Festival 2001 competition program. "Wedding Daydream" won the Friedrich-Wilhelm-Murnau-Award and was the first film from his international multimedia project "Daydreams" (www.WeNeedYourTalent.com). It was followed by the 2007 film "Taxi to Daydream" (shot in Brazil and Germany). The Brazilian-German co-production "Bach in Brazil" is his first feature-length film. With his Berlin-based production company forseeesense he has shot in India, Germany, Poland, Brazil and in the USA. Forseeesense (www.forseeesense.com) produces around 30 shorts/medias for science centers (BMW, Danfoss, Airport Hannover et al.) each year.



Christine Berg, Berlin

Since January 1st 2007, Christine Berg is project director of the German Federal Film Fund (DFFF), which was introduced by the Federal Commissioner for Culture and Media (BKM) and is coordinated by the German Federal Filmboard (FFA).

Born in Hamburg in 1966 she started her career in the film business in 1992 as head of the film commission in Hamburg. She worked as a production manager for several feature films before she joined the film production company Kinowelt in 2000 as a producer. In 2002 she started working as a consultant for feature film funding at the FFA where she then became the personal assistant of the CEO. From 2004 to 2005 she was provisional head of the film funding department of the FFA. She then moved on to Lübeck, where she became the managing director of the Film Fund Schleswig-Holstein.



Arne Birkenstock, Cologne

Arne Birkenstock, born in 1967, is a writer and filmmaker, based in Cologne, Germany. Birkenstock studied Economics, Spanish and Portuguese Language and Literature, History and Political Science in Germany and Argentina. He received his Masters Degree in Latin American Studies from Cologne University. Birkenstock directed numerous documentaries for public broadcasters. Birkenstock also worked as an instructor and consultant for several film- and media-schools in Germany such as the Hochschule für Film und Fernsehen Konrad Wolf in Potsdam and the CIAM-Centre for International Art Management, a collaboration of the Cologne University of Music with the Robert Schumann Hochschule Düsseldorf, the Kunstakademie Düsseldorf and the Kunsthochschule für Medien Köln. He also wrote several non-fiction books and scientific studies for the publishing houses Deutscher Taschenbuchverlag, Adolf Grimme Institute, Staatskanzlei North Rhine Westphalia and the German Federal Family Ministry. Arne Birkenstock is a member of the German Documentary Association AG DOK, the European Documentary Network EDN, the German Film Academy and the European Film Academy.



Luciana Dolabela, São Paulo

Born in Brazil, Luciana Dolabela works as a film producer, specialized in international co-productions. After graduating with a degree in German Literature and Linguistics from the University of São Paulo she went to Germany for a post graduation in Film and Literature before studying Film Production at the Deutsche Film- und Fernsehakademie Berlin (dffb). Since the beginning of her studies in Berlin she worked for productions all over the world (including France, Spain, England and Turkey) in different production areas of the film industry: from working on-set, to line producing, creative producing and executive producing. Among her film experience there are 18 short films, 4 feature films (among them "Esperanza", which premiered at Berlinale in 2006, and "Entre Vales e Montanhas" produced in Brazil, Germany and Uruguay in 2011) and 3 long feature documentaries (such as "Abenteuer des Kaffees" produced in Germany, Brazil and Guatemala for ARTE in 2005 as well as "Borders of South America" produced in Brazil, Chile, Venezuela and Germany in 2011/2012).

In October 2012 Luciana is organising the 'FilmCup: A friendly game between Germany and Brazil', in association with the International Film Festival of São Paulo. The event is a financing forum for production and distribution of film projects between both countries as well as a networking market. It aims to increase the collaboration between these two markets, to draw them closer together and to promote these industries in each other's country.



Leo Edde, Rio de Janeiro

Leonardo Edde was born in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in 1975. He studied Civil Engineering and has previously worked as a graphic designer for L'Oreal, Globo newspaper and Unibanco. As the owner of Fogo-Fátuo Expeditions and Urca Filmes he has made audiovisual projects as director and as a producer. Among these are "Out of Tune" by Walter Lima Jr., "Elite Squad 2" by José Padilha and "Juventude" by Domingos Oliveira. He has also directed, produced, edited and post-produced the documentary "In search of Dinosaurs" which was released as a feature-length documentary, a TV version and on home video and which also resulted in a book and an exhibition. Leo also produces commercials and offers services such as editing and post-production for third parties with the company Urca Filmes. Urca Filmes has recently co-produced the documentary "A Letter to the Future" together with the Berlin-based company Lichtmeer Film. Leonardo also runs two cinemas in Rio de Janeiro.



Marc Jan Eumann, Düsseldorf

Marc Jan Eumann has been State Secretary in the Ministry of Federal Affairs, European Affairs and Media since 2010. In September 2010, he also became a member of the ZDF Television Council. Eumann is chairman of the media commission of the SPD party executive in Berlin. From 1995 to 2010, Eumann was directly elected representative in the parliament of North Rhine-Westphalia (NRW) and a member of the WDR Broadcasting Council. From 2000 to 2010, he acted as deputy chairman of the SPD parliamentary group in North Rhine-Westphalia. From 1993 to 1995, he was Head of the Department of Communication, Information and Analysis at NRW's Ministry for Labour, Health and Social Affairs. In 1990, he began his career as an advisor on journalistic activities in the office of the Mayor of Cologne. Eumann was born in Hamburg and studied Modern History, Anglo-American History, and International Law at the Universities of Bonn and Cologne.



Karin Knöbelspies, Cologne

Karin Knöbelspies was born in southern Germany in 1964. She was a foreign exchange student in Virginia/USA, where she graduated from high school.

After school, she travelled and lived extensively in Portugal and the United States. In 1992 she received her master's degree in journalism from the University of Dortmund; part of her curriculum was a one-year-internship at the public broadcasting station WDR - Westdeutscher Rundfunk in Cologne. During and after her university studies she worked as a free lance journalist concentrating on Brazil, where she lived for a longer period of time.

Until 1995 Karin taught radio journalism in Dortmund before she became the media policy advisor for the Green Party's group in the German parliament. In 1999 she left politics and became a media consultant in Cologne. In 2001 and 2002 she was responsible for the media development of Cologne at the office of the Lord Mayor. Since then she has been working as a media consultant again.

She was a member of the Administrative Council of the Federal Film Funding (FFA) for more than 10 years until 2009. Since 1997 she also belongs to the Broadcasting Council of the WDR - Westdeutscher Rundfunk and is a member of the Board of Trustees of the International Film School in Cologne (IFS).



Renato Fagundes, Rio de Janeiro

Renato Fagundes is the Creative & Development Manager for the TV and Multiplatform unit of Conspiração Filmes, one of Brazil's biggest cinema, TV and advertising production companies. He is responsible for the creation and development of original content for TV and other platforms, and a creative consultant for Conspiração's other units – cinema, advertising and branded content. He writes, coordinates and oversees the work of screenwriters, format developers and writers for projects for both fiction as well as non-fiction productions for national and international channels, such as Discovery Channel, Multishow, GNT, VH1, TV Brasil and HBO.



Prof. Dr. Thomas Kirsch, Cologne

Since 2004 Thomas Kirsch is a professor for International Media Markets, Media Research, Media Economy and Political Economy at the Rheinische Fachhochschule Köln. Since 2005 he is the senior project manager 'International TV- and Advertisement Research' with IP Network, which consults the companies belonging to the international RTL Group. He is responsible for the yearly reference book "International Key Facts – Television". From 2000 to 2004 he functioned as head of the project 'International TV- and Advertisement Research' for IP Germany. From 1997 to 1999 he was the coordination director at the European Institute of Media. Among other things he was head of the project 'Network European Media Competence' and 'European TV Producers'. From 1992 to 1996 he was academic advisor at the Hans-Bredow-Institute for Broadcasting in Hamburg, heading several projects related to media in the northern region of Germany. From 1991 to 1992 Thomas Kirsch worked as a lecturer of Political Economy and Business Administration at various institutions, including the Institute for Advanced Training (FAW).



Hank Levine, Berlin / São Paulo

Hank Levine was born in Bonn, Germany and graduated from Film Academy, as well as from Freie University in Berlin with a degree in Economics and Media. His first short film, "The Flying Dutchmen", which he wrote and directed, premiered at the Berlinale in 1991. In the early 90's, he moved to Los Angeles and then New York. In Brazil since 2000, he co-produced the feature films "Cidade de Deus" ("City of God") by Fernando Meirelles, ("The Constant Gardener", "Blindness"), as well as "Deus Jr." ("God's Jr.") by Mauro Lima. "City of God" was nominated for four Academy Awards including Best Director in 2004. Between 2002 and 2009 he had joined Brazil's largest and most acclaimed production company, o2 Filmes, founded by Fernando Meirelles, as a partner. International productions include hundreds of commercials, as well as video clips, documentaries, TV programs and feature films. Together with Fernando Meirelles, Hank wrote, co-directed and produced the documentary "Ginga, A Alma do Futebol Brasileiro" ("Ginga, the Soul of Brazilian Soccer"), a co-production with Nike, which was released worldwide in 2006 during the Soccer World Cup. Over the past years he has been directing and producing the feature length documentary "Abandonados" ("Abandoned"), his first own directing effort of a feature film, which was released in 2011. The film centres on a dramatic sociological portrayal of adoption of children and teenagers abandoned by their families and by Brazilian society.



André Saddy, Rio de Janeiro

André Saddy is a partner of Canal Brasil, a pay TV channel dedicated to Brazilian film, music and culture. He is also the channel's Marketing and Project Manager, a position he has held for the past 13 years. Executive Producer of the feature documentary "Loki – Arnaldo Baptista", which won the audience award for Best Documentary at the Rio International Film Festival (2008), São Paulo International Film Festival (2008), Fest Cine Petrobras New York (2009), Brazilian Film Festival of Toronto (2009) and the official jury prize for Best Documentary at the Brazilian Film Festival of Miami (2009). He also produced the 35mm short films "45% Cinema Urbano", "Os Filhos de Nelson" and "A Incrível História da Mulher que Mudou de Cor" in addition to acting as Commercial Supervisor for feature films such as "O Quatrilho" (Oscar nominee in 1996), "Four Days in September" (Oscar nominee in 1998), "Bela Donna", "Uma Aventura do Zico" and "Bossa Nova".



Angela Spizig, Cologne

Angela Spizig studied Comparative Literature and Foreign Languages at the University of Cologne. After graduating she taught English and French literature at Cologne Schools. In 1997 she joined the Green Party because of her interest in ecological issues and questions of sustainable city development. In 1999 she was elected to the Cologne City Council, where she became the speaker in the cultural committee. One year later, the council elected Ms Spizig Vice-Mayor of the City of Cologne. Together with three other Vice-Mayors, she represents the Lord Mayor and the city. Ms Spizig's work focuses on culture, the media, ICT and international relations. She speaks English, French and some Portuguese. Cologne is a very internationally minded city with partner cities such as Beijing, Istanbul, Lille, Rio de Janeiro, Liverpool, Tel Aviv, Esch-sur-Alzette, so Vice-Mayor Spizig represents the Lord Mayor not only locally, but also abroad and in numerous international networks. After the local elections in 2004 as well as 2009, the new council re-elected Ms Spizig Vice-Mayor for another five-year-term. Ms Spizig is Vice-President of the European Cultural network 'Les Rencontres' and is often invited as chairperson or speaker at conferences all over Europe. Since 2000 she has been an active member on the board of the 'Global Cities Dialogue' (GCD), a worldwide network of cities which deals with the new technologies and their application in city administrations, with e-government, and with the possibilities of the information and knowledge society.

Ms Spizig is a politician who feels that it is necessary to network, cooperate and exchange ideas and experiences on all levels – locally and internationally - in order to deal with the complex issues of our globalized world of today.



Vera Zaverucha, Rio de Janeiro

In June 2011 Vera Zaverucha was appointed by the Brazilian President for four years to become one of the four directors of the board of the National Cinema Agency- ANCINE.

During her career in various government institutions (Embrafilme, Brazilian Cinema Foundation and the Secretariat for the Development of Audiovisual) she was responsible for public policy for the audiovisual sector; her work was marked by her close collaboration in the preparation of tax incentive laws and their implementation.

Vera Zaverucha collaborated with the creation of ANCINE. She worked at ANCINE since 2002, when it was created, as Chief Advisor to the CEO, assisting in its institutional design and its implementation.

Later, from 2006 until February 2010, she served as Superintendent of Market Monitoring, managing a staff analysis of information on the audiovisual sector. Under her supervision ANCINE created the Brazilian Observatory of Cinema and Audiovisual Arts - OCA.

Today, as director, she supervises the Superintendents of Financing and Fiscalization.



Meinolf Zurhorst, Mainz

After studying History of Art, Film and Television and Anthropology Meinolf Zurhorst worked as a film critic and author of almost 20 books on cinema and actors. As a student in the 80's he co-founded a production company which produced special interest programs for German TV, in particular for 'Voice of Germany'. In the late 80's Zurhorst co-founded of a second company for film- and post-production. He is the co-author and director of several documentaries, the most known ones about two German stars, Götz George and Mario Adorf. Since 1992 Zurhorst has been working as a commissioning editor in the cinema department of ARTE in Strasbourg, France. In 1994 he became head of the department. In the year 2000 he moved to German TV broadcaster ZDF to direct their ARTE film department (ZDF is one of ARTE's shareholder and in charge of acquisition and co-production of movies for the French-German cultural channel).

Since then he has been involved as an associate or co-producer in about 100 films from Europe and all over the world, in particular from Latin America. Zurhorst is also a tutor and expert for ACE (Ateliers du Cinéma Européen), EAVE (European Audiovisual Entrepreneurs) and the Mediterranean Film Business School. Additionally, Meinolf Zurhorst has been a jury member at several film festivals for example in Sarajevo, Guadalajara or Sao Paulo.