

[DL9]

The 9th Berlin International Directors Lounge

the contemporary media and film festival Feb 7-17, 2013
at **Naherholung Sternchen**, behind the Kino International

And then there were nine.

Directors Lounge, Number Nine. Nine years of genre-straddling slices of cinematic art and cuts of media experimentation, rearranged into viewable excursions into worlds new and challenging. As well, nine years of non-festival festival atmosphere, more circus than film space. With commingling of filmmakers and film-goers, without velvet barriers and cordoned-off areas for visiting visionaries. And with Number Nine on the way. This is the festival that provides the backdrop and erases the lines. Here, you can meet anyone.

And exactly this is the concept. Starting as an expected one-off affair in 2005, Directors Lounge presents first and foremost cutting edge cinematic visions, but is acutely aware that the atmosphere surrounding the screenings is a good portion of its mandate. Last year, DL moved to a venue truer to this core idea: Naherholung Sternchen. The onetime GDR actor hangout, now cult club, was not built for, but rather revamped to present films and installations. This was actually a selling point, as the raison d'être of Directors Lounge is the fusing of two heretofore separate domains, that of the filmmaker and the film-goer. This is implied in the name itself, bringing creative and recreative to sidle up to each other. The response was greater than ever, the pleasure clear to see. In digestible facts, DL8 showed some 230+ films from 36 countries, giving it every right to continue carrying the word "international" in its full-length title. Highlights included special retrospective presentations in attendance of the directors themselves, e.g. Sundance International Jury Prize winner Simon Ellis ("Soft") and Cinema of Transgression originator Nick Zedd (in from the UK and New York respectively), as well as homegrown European Photography publisher and media artist Andreas Müller-Pohle. Additionally, there were occasional feature film screenings (e.g. Yony Leyser's "William Burroughs: A Man Within," with the director in attendance), Q&A's with visiting artists, live performances and DJ/VJ sets, plus myriad short films of every cut and dimension: vertical, looped, non-objective, stop-animation, concentric and more. Beyond film, singers, musicians, poets, electronic improvisors, VJ's and DJ's did their respective things around the screen presentations. This is more than simply a film festival, more than simply a lounge.

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Although there are no red carpets, there are premieres aplenty, generally a good number every night during the ten-day extravaganza, whether German, European or World. Among these have been legendary film composer Michael Nyman's first screen works (with "NYMan With a Movie Camera" subsequently being screened at the MoMA). The numerous World Premieres have included Ajitesh Sharma's "Visible Bra Straps," later a Cannes selection and FFI and NFDC nominee chosen to represent India at the Asian Pacific Film Awards.

As mentioned, the presentations do not stop at films. Revolving around these are the live performances, such as German Film Prize winner Birol Ünel's roughshod reading of Miron Zownir's hard-edged poetry (inspiring a later film treatment) and Czech avant-garde composer Vladimir Hirsch's electronic sound paintings, or the more physically infectious rhythms of VJ Chuuu of Japan and shellac-spinner DJ Grammophon, all at [DL8] in 2012. In addition, [DL8] hosted during its run the Festiwelt Party, a heady coming-together of many thematic films festivals, jamming film folk of every stripe into every conceivable corner of Sternchen, above and below ground. There was hardly a place to stand (or dance); hardly a language not heard.

The special challenge is to make Nine follow Eight, not just chronologically but in terms of growth. Here, Directors Lounge is not aiming to take over the world, but to bring it more colour and scope. The kaleidoscope atmosphere of [DL8], fluidity without chaos, diversity without confusion, should remain, but not static. There will be a broad mix of offerings from the worldwide Open Call, equalling or exceeding the spectrum of the last outing. Creators, performers and viewers will rub shoulders. This is not a place where projects end, but where they begin.

As such, the festival is the central, but not only part of Directors Lounge activities. DL's function has grown to continue all year around, as an art platform (presenting film, installations, paintings, live multi-media performances and more) travelling the globe in one form or another. Sojourns to St. Petersburg, Rome, Los Angeles, Paris, Seoul and more have taken place, intertwined with homeland junkets to Munich, Cologne, Düsseldorf and further stops between, either single-handedly or in cooperative efforts. Directors Lounge indeed has its fingers in many pots.

The 9th Berlin International Directors Lounge will not be a further walk down well-trodden ground, but rather a unique safari into the terrain of cinematic and media-art wildlife. Vogue and other reporting press from last year grappled for words to praise the goings-on. Better to come yourself and put your own stamp on it.

kt/DL

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• Directors Lounge, A.Werner, Petersburger Platz 2, 10249 Berlin, Germany

• Directors Lounge is the brainchild of A&O-gallery, Designhof e.V., Cinema Desaster and the gallery KMZA with outstanding support from the art resort, Berliner Licht & Silber and many other friends. Directors Lounge is an independent project and not associated with the Berlinale.

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• The quick rundown

The Berlin International Directors Lounge is: the annual film and media festival in February

Directors Lounge is: actually the year-round art platform; also short for the February festival

DL is: short for Directors Lounge (February festival and year-round art platform)

[DL9] is: logo short form for The 9th Berlin International Directors Lounge (Feb. 7-17, 2013)

First festival: 2005

Artistic Director: André Werner

Team DL: André Werner, Julia Murakami, Klaus W. Eisenlohr, Kenton Turk

International relations: Alexei Dmitirev, Nadya Cazan

Frequent curators / special contributors: Thomas Zandegiacomo Del Bel, Shaun Wilson et al.

Mandate of DL: film and media festival as ambient meeting point and pleasure den

Venue of [DL9]: Naherholung Sternchen, Berolinastr. 7, U-Schillingstr., behind Kino International

Scope of last year's festival: 230+ films from 36 countries, plus installations, numerous live acts

Connection to Berlinale: none beyond the parallel time frame

Significance to the Berlin cultural scene: (!)

• Some notable recent participants:

Michael Nyman (British BAFTA Award winning composer of "The Piano" and more; German public premiere of "NYMan With a Movie Camera" at DL, 2011)

Guy Maddin (Canadian filmmaker, Berlinale jury member; provided selection of films for retrospective, 2011)

Anton Corbijn (Dutch photographer and filmmaker, contributed filmwork in 2012)

Simon Ellis (British Sundance International Jury Prize winner, attended a retrospective of his films, 2012)

Nick Zedd (US originator of "Cinema of Transgression," attended a retrospective of his films, 2012)

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- **[DL9], the 9th Berlin International Directors Lounge**
- **Feb 7-17. 2013** (parallel to the 63. Berlinale)
- **Naherholung Sternchen** Berolinastraße 7 10178 Berlin / Mitte
U-Bahn Schillingstraße, behind the Kino International / Rathaus Mitte
map: (google) <http://goo.gl/maps/LEUPR>
- **daily from - ?** screenings, bar, lounge, DJs, live acts, installations, specials, concerts and much more

- **Contact** • e-mail film@directorslounge.net
- mobile +49 1577 1577 332 • land line +49 30 427 805 69
- press releases/logos <http://directorslounge.net/press>



- Directors Lounge Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/DirectorsLounge>
- [DL8] program day-by-day write-ups: <http://directorslounge.tumblr.com/tagged/DL2012/chrono>
- Naherholung Sternchen: <http://www.naherholung-sternchen.de/>

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