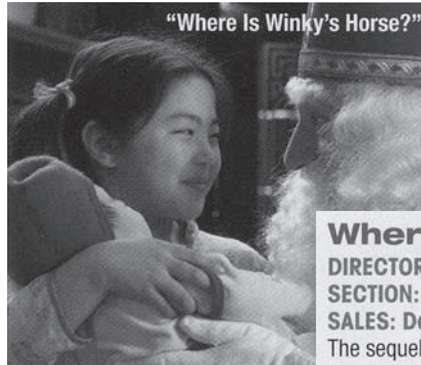




berlin intl. film festival
SPECIAL REPORT

the a-list

Six titles likely to
heat up chilly Berlin



"Where Is Winky's Horse?"

Where Is Winky's Horse?

DIRECTOR: Mischa Kamp

SECTION: Generation

SALES: Delphis Films

The sequel to the 2005 Dutch holiday hit "Winky's Horse," the new tale features the same winning team of director Mischa Kamp, screenwriter Tamara Bos and kid star Ebbie Tam. The original "Winky" sold to more than 30 territories worldwide, and judging by the sequel's warm reception in Holland, this "Winky" could be a Christmas wish come true.



"Where is Winky's Horse?"

This Generation is growing up

Bigger venue, more challenging films mark sidebar

By Charles Masters

It's been four years since the Berlinale's kids film festival added a dedicated section for teenagers and a year since it switched the name to Generation. Now the sidebar is really coming of age.

Generation 14plus, as the teenage selection is known, has outgrown its original locale in one of the lesser theaters at the Zoo Palast and is moving across town to the stylish setting of the

Babylon cinema in Rosa-Luxembourg Platz.

"With around 420 seats at the Zoo Palast, it was completely chaotic; there were just too many people," said Thomas Hailer, the head of Generation. "This is a good problem to have but a difficult one to solve in Berlin. Luckily, we managed to get a venue, and it's a beautiful cinema, a very old, very dignified place. This year we'll have something like 550 seats."

The increased seating is just

one advantage of 14plus leaving the Zoo Palast to younger audiences of the Kplus section for ages 5 and up. "For teenagers, it's much cooler for them to have their own venue and not to have to deal with the smaller ones," Hailer said.

Between the 14plus and Kplus lineups, Generation's films sold nearly 50,000 tickets last year, and organizers expect to top that figure for this edition. "It's tremendous growth," Hailer said.

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SHOOTING STARS – THE BEST OF THE BEST



Maryam Hassouni (left)
(The Netherlands) in *DUNYA & DESIE*

Having made her acting breakthrough with the character of Dana Nechustan's "Dunya & Desie" TV series, Maryam won for her performance as a young terrorist in the director's "Sac" 2005. Combining her acting career with university studies, she "making a film has something magical." Last year, Maryam rej role as Dunya for a theatrical spin-off which will be premier Berlinale's Generation 14plus competition before being re Dutch cinemas in April.

Generation

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The increased numbers — coupled with a high-quality selection of challenging films — has helped Generation gain recognition as a full part of the Berlin International Film Festival and overcome any perception of it as the kiddies' ghetto.

For the first time in its 32-year history, the section this year will screen documentaries. "They had been excluded before under the festival rules, and because we thought the kids' jury would be unable to distinguish the difference," Hailer said. But last year, the documentary "Razzle Dazzle" went down well, and the jury in fact had no problem identifying the genre distinctions.

"We were seeing more and more interesting documentary stuff this year, so we decided to kick out the rule," Hailer said.

This year there are two docu-



mentaries in 14plus: "War Child," from U.S. helmer Christian Karim Chrobog, which follows Emmanuel Jal — a former child soldier who is now a rising star of African hip-hop — on his first trip back to his roots in Sudan; and "Love, Peace and Beatbox" directed by Volker Meyer-Dabisch, about the legacy of one of the central figures of Berlin beat-box scene who died in a knifing incident.

Another addition this year is a short film program in 14plus, mirroring the short film program in the Kplus section.

Overall, Hailer said the lineup is thematically a little more optimistic than in previous editions. "We had quite tough programs in recent years — children in war, children in all kinds of deep shit you don't want to have kids in. This year, many films deal with reconciliation. It's not the pink happy flower world, but the films do consider how (the characters) can contribute to any kind of reconciliation."

Geographically, the mix is a little different this year, with four U.S. features across the two sec-

starring Toni Collette.

Kplus opens with "Where is Winky's Horse?" a sequel to the story of a Chinese girl who has moved to the Netherlands from Dutch director Mischa Kamp. The first installment screened here two years ago.

The younger section includes two animated movies: "A Tale of Two Mozzies," the seventh film by the grand master of Danish animation Jannik Hastrup to screen in Berlin, co-directed by Flemming Quist-Moller; and the French comic-strip adaptation "Go West! A Lucky Luke Adventure," directed by Olivier Jean-Marie.

Generation remains essentially an audience event, but distributors are increasingly recognizing its potential to position a kids or teenage film.

"14plus is becoming a brand, and the foreign industry is considering that this is a good section to enter the world market, so we're getting more offers," Hailer said. "Our film scouts are becoming more aware from year to year and sending us more and more." ●

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