

A record number of 18,500 sold tickets, numerous positive feedbacks from both festival guests and jury-members as well as an amazing award ceremony full of cheerful and personal moments made a very special festival issue, which goes down as one of the best events in history of the FILMKUNSTFEST MV.

During the award ceremony on Saturday evening, award winners and jury members praised the warm atmosphere and hospitality they experienced during their stay in the city of Schwerin. They also put emphasis on the high standard of the festival program. The charming and witty presenter of the evening was **Frank Breuner**, who filled in for Knut Elstermann.

Even Iris Berben, this year's winner of the Honorary award "Golden Ox", was moved to tears, not only by listening to the warm-hearted laudation of her friend and colleague **Carmen-Maja Antoni**. "Every time I would tell people about my invitation to this festival here in Schwerin, their eyes would start shining. Now I know why!"

Cheering standing ovations filled the hall with more than 600 guests at the festivals' closing night when Iris Berben was awarded with the Golden Ox of the FILMKUNSTFEST MV, and promised to come back to Schwerin soon. As the president of the German Film Academy, she did not hesitate calling on her audience upon more socio-political commitment. Her speech addressed citizens and filmmakers especially to defend democratic rights and freedoms as well as the idea of the European unification. In addition to that, she encouraged her audience to make a stand against "backward-looking, right-wing populist, anti-Semitic and misogynistic attempts. The recent course of the world does not allow staying silent."

Considering the low representation of female filmmakers in Germany, Iris Berben was blessed „to see such a huge number of women on stage tonight“. Fortunately, the festival competitions showed a high percentage of female participants, with almost 50%, which led to a high number of female awardees too. Almost all awards were given to debut films, which demonstrates the importance of the FILMKUNSTFEST MV for young German filmmakers. Many of the competition films had been low budget productions, so the awardees were thankful to receive the donated prize money, in a total amount of more than 40,000 Euros.

**Prime minister Erwin Sellering** and **Dr. Rico Badenschier**, the mayor of Schwerin put emphasis on the cultural impact of the festival on the city and its region. In addition to that, Sellering announced the reinforcement and support of Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania as a filming location by involving public service broadcasters and improve configurations.

The festivals artistic director, Volker Kufahl himself, was satisfied by the work of his team that made it possible to present a diverse program that was both, politically involved and continual intense.

The variety of events such as concerts, exhibitions, readings, lectures or public discussions attracted wide interest. As an example, due to the focus on Denmark as the guest country 2017, composer and musician **Michael Riessler and Corinna Fuhrmann** backed the classic „Hamlet“ (1920) with Asta Nielsen by bass clarinet and synthesizer.

Many filmmakers joined the festival and took part in film talks after their presentations. Festival Guests 2017 were for example director **Mirjam Unger** („Maikäfer, flieg!“, children’s and youth film competition) and **Tereza Kotyk** („Home is Here“, feature film competition) from Austria, **Astrid Schult** („Winterjagd“, feature film competition) and **Mia Spengler** („Back for Good“, feature film competition) from Berlin and **Signe Astrup** from Denmark („Die vergessene Armee“, Documentary competition). Othr guests of the festival were screenwriter **Wolfgang Kohlhaase**, costume designer **Stefanie Bieker** (European Film Award 2016), producers **Malte Grunert**, **Sebastian Sawetzki** and **Peter Hartwig**, lenders **Torsten Frehse** (Neue Visionen), **Manuela Stehr** and **Martin Kochendörfer** (X Filme) as well as a couple of actors an actresses like **Sylvester Groth**, **Jaeckie Schwarz**, **Andreas Lust**, **Karsten Antonio Mielke**, **Viktoria Trauttmannsdorff**, **Liv Lisa Fires**, **Elisabeth Degen**, **Kim Riedle**, **Carolyn Genzkow** and **Artemis Chalkidou**.

All in all, 110 filmmakers, 35 journalists and 41 professional visitors had accredited for the 27<sup>th</sup> FILMKUNSTFEST MV 2017.