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German Cinema: return with colorful selections

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Movie night: An audience watches *Labyrinth of Lies* during the German Cinema festival opening night in Jakarta. (Courtesy of Goethe-Institut Indonesien-Ramos Pane)

Seventeen internationally acclaimed and award-winning German film productions will be screened in Indonesia's big cities, showcasing the constantly changing German movie scene. The fourth edition of German Cinema returns to Indonesian theater screens, with screenings until Sept. 20 at GoetheHaus in Jakarta and in selected theaters in West Java's Bandung, Yogyakarta, Makassar in South Sulawesi, Surabaya in East Java, Denpasar in Bali and Medan in North Sumatra.

Heinrich Blömeke, director of Goethe-Institut Indonesia, said the festival showed that the contemporary German movie scene was continuously changing — offering a lot of exciting and fresh views as the topics of the films ranged from family issues, love to religion and history.

"With a colorful cross-selection of the German film landscape, the festival, which attracted more than 12,000 visitors last year, seeks to continuously inspire the

Indonesian audience and raise interest in German cinema," he said during the opening night at Epicentrum XXI in South Jakarta.

The festival opened with Giulio Rcciarelli's *Labyrinth of Lies*, a fact-based drama that tells the story of a young prosecutor who unravels a massive conspiracy to cover up the dark Nazi past of prominent public figures in the country. *Labyrinth*, which premiered last September at the Toronto Film Festival, set in 1958 centers on prosecutor Johann Radmann, who is handling a case that is brought up by journalist Thomas Gnielka about a former Auschwitz guard who becomes a teacher.

When Radmann begins the investigation, he finds documents that lead to other perpetrators, and the attorney general, Fritz Bauer, immediately recognizes the highly sensitive political subject in the matter.

The 123-minute film captures the look of the economic miracle years in Germany when people wanted to forget the past and would rather look toward the future instead of digging out their dark history.

Other highlights of the festival include the German box office hit, *Fack Ju Göhte* (*Suck me Shakespeer*), which centers on a criminal who just gets out of prison and is forced to become a teacher in a school building where he hid his loot. Through the movie, director and screenwriter Bora Dagtekin attacks playfully and with a lot of humor, the smugness in German school rooms.

The festival also screens the latest film of Andreas Dresen, released earlier this year, which transforms the 2006 multi award-winning debut novel of German author Clemens Meyer into a cinematic narration about friendship and betrayal, hope and illusion, as well as brutality and tenderness. It tells the story of a lost youth in Leipzig and at the same time features a tale of rebellion and the perpetual Utopian dream of happiness.

For documentary film lovers, German cinema also presents a number of documentary projects, including a project by Win Wenders and Juliano Ribeiro Salgado, *The Salt of the Earth*. The documentary portrays the journey of Brazilian photographer Sebastião Salgado, who has traveled to over 100 countries for his photographic projects, capturing the fates of human beings in different countries. He has witnessed major events that are part of the world's recent history before embarking on his journey to discover pristine territories, wild flora and fauna, and breathtaking landscapes with his camera.

German Cinema this year is part of the German Season — a three-month economic and socio-cultural festival that began on Sept. 5 in several cities. The festival will showcase numerous programs that highlight the partnership between Germany and Indonesia in various sectors, including collaborations between German and Indonesian musicians, actors, puppeteers, dancers and soccer player. Economic seminars, as well as social discussions on religious matters and antiterror efforts, will also be held and participated by a number of German officials and experts.