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Berlin Film Fest International Jury Press Conference

Description

Posted by Larry Gleeson

The 67th Berlin International Film Festival International Jury held its opening press conference Thursday, February 9th, at the Berlin Grand Hyatt Hotel to introduce this yearâ??s Berlinale festival goers to its panel. As previously announced, Director and Screenwriter, Paul Verhoeven is serving as this yearâ??s Jury President. Other members of the Jury include; producer Dora Bouchoucha Fourati (Tunisia), artist Olafur Eliasson (Denmark), actress Maggie Gyllenhaal (USA), actress Julia Jentsch (Germany), actor and director Diego Luna (Mexico), and director and screenwriter Wang Quanâ??an (Peopleâ??s Republic of China). After a warm Berlinale welcome and very brief introductions, the panel opened for questions from the floor.

Interestingly, a Kurdistan/Iraq news agency reporter popped the first question with all the zeal of a U.S. White House Press Briefing first informing the press conference her agency would be reporting live for ten days. From there, she set the tone for her question stating â??traditionally the Berlinale is quite political with its selection of films. What political message do you want to transmit with this yearâ??s festival?â?• Verhoeven coolly replied as the International Jury President his focus is on a filmâ??s qualitative nature rather than any specific ideological or political message.

Quickly, the Boston Herald took the floor next delivering a two-pronged inquiry for Ms.Gyllenhaal and Verhoeven into the courageous nature of creating film roles and insider casting details of Elle.

Taking the lead, Verhoeven affirmed the Heraldâ??s line of questioning telling the room he and the Elle producers tried to make Elle a Hollywood film with a profit motive. However, after several unsuccessful pitches to A-listers, the Elle team returned to France moving forward with a French film production. French starlet Isabelle Humbert had made it known through various channels she was very interested in the film. She thoroughly studied the characters from Phillipe Dijanâ??s novel â??Ohâ?¦â?• With hat-in-hand, Verhoeven offered to Humbert. She accepted. And she delivered according to Verhoeven with a courageous performance.



American Actress Maggie Gyllenhaal, third from left, at the 67th Berlin Film Festival International Jur
Larry Gleeson/HollywoodGlee)

Gyllenhaal interjected â??Isabelle was meant to play that role and was very courageous.â?• Continuing Gyllenhaal remarked most often actors choose roles they can identify with as a person versus as an actor and when a collaboration between a director such as Verhoebven and Humbert works together something special is created.

A handful more of questions came forth ranging from why Russian films werenâ??t in the festival to Lunaâ??s feelings about a border wall to what does the jury expect from the festival. In reverse order, the jury has high hopes of learning more about film, while Luna artfully and quite diplomatically said he is still investigating the wall issue. However, he plans to be a part of the solution as he has several love stories with the United States and to sever such beauty makes no sense. Verhoeven reminded the audience, the jury does not select films.

Coming full circle, the press conference concluded with how Gyllenhaal was introduced as the brother of Jake Gyllenhaal. Jake served on the jury five years ago. As inquiring minds want to know, Maggie was asked if she called Jake to ask about being on the jury. She did and Jake told her it was an amazing experience seeing films from all over the world from filmmakers he didnâ??t know existed. Wrapping up and putting the finishing touch on the morning, â??What an amazing time to be an American at an international film festival,â?• said Ms. Gyllenhaal. Without further adieu, the 2017 Berlin Film Festivalsâ??s International Jury Press Conference concluded.

The festival runs through February 19th.

Category

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