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Berlin Film Festival 2017: Screen's top 11 movies

21 February, 2017 | By Screen staff



Screen critics recommend the top films at this year's Berlinale.

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[Berlin Film Festival 2017: winners revealed](#)

A FANTASTIC WOMAN



Dir: Sebastián Lelio

Our critic said: "Driven by a powerhouse performance by mesmerising transgender actress Vega, the fifth feature from Sebastián Lelio combines urgent naturalism with occasional flickers of fantasy to impressive, and wrenchingly emotional effect."

International sales: Funny Balloons contact@funny-balloons.com

[Read the full review HERE](#)

HAVE A NICE DAY



Dir. Liu Jian

Our critic said: "Liu Jian's stunning animation is both a visceral thriller and astute political statement about China's place in the modern world."

International sales: International sales: Memento Films International sales@memento-films.com

[Read the full review HERE](#)

SUMMER 1993



Dir. Carla Simón

Our critic said: "Entered in the Berlinale's Generation Kplus sidebar but winner of the festival's overall best first feature award, Catalan director Carla Simon's debut is both tender and determined as it relates a tale of a young orphan trying to fit in with a new family."

International sales: New Europe Film Sales, jan@neweuropemfilmsales.com

[Read the full review HERE](#)

THE OTHER SIDE OF HOPE



Dir. Aki Kaurismaki

Our critic said: "All the familiar Kaurismaki trademarks are here in this story of a Syrian refugee in Helsinki, be it the dry, laconic humor, the spare unadorned images, the old-fashioned tuners sprinkled all through the picture and even a brief guest performance by his favorite star, Kati Outinen."

International sales: The Match Factory (info@matchfactory.de)

[Read the full review HERE](#)

THE PARTY



The Party

Dir. Sally Potter

Our critic said: "While ostensibly decidedly mainstream – or at least, affecting a mainstream guise – *The Party* is a crisp, energetic, highly compact (at 71 minutes) comedy, and the most enjoyable film yet from a director whose conceptual seriousness has often seemed daunting."

International sales: Great Point Media, info@greatpointmedia.com

[Read the full review HERE](#)

INSYRIATED



Dir: Philippe Van Leeuw

Our critic said: "Set entirely in a Damascus apartment under siege from a world in conflict, this tautly-constructed, intensely claustrophobic drama offers a sometimes nerve-shredding depiction of what happens when conflict impinges on domestic space."

International sales: Films Boutique, contact@filmsboutique.com

[Read the full review HERE](#)

HOSTAGES



Hostages

Dir: Rezo Gigineishvili

Our critic said: "It's a breathlessly tense piece of work, which suggests that Gigineishvili is developing into a talent to watch in the arthouse circuit."

International sales: WestEnd films info@westendfilms.com

[Read the full review HERE](#)

TIGER GIRL



Dir: Jakob Lass

Our critic said: "With its nervy, caffeinated camerawork; saturated palette of dayglo and neon, stylised violence and the good-girl-gone-bad trajectory, this feels like an adrenalised blend of Celine Sciamma's *Girlhood*, *Thelma And Louise* and just a touch of *Tank Girl*."

International sales: Picture Tree International pti@picturetree-international.com

[Read the full review HERE](#)

CHAVELA (DOCUMENTARY)



Chavela

Dirs: Catherine Gund, Daresha Kyi

Our critic said: "This depiction of the Mexican singer Chavela Vargas' chequered life turns out intensely celebratory, and will send fans and newcomers alike rushing to the back catalogue of a great vocalist."

International sales: Latido Films, latido@latidofilms.com

[Read the full review HERE](#)

DEVIL'S FREEDOM (DOCUMENTARY)



Dir: Everardo Gonzalez

Our critic said: "The full horrors of life in modern Mexico are revealed in *Devil's Freedom (La Libertad del diablo)*, a gripping documentary filled with vivid eye-witness testimony from a country where violence is commonplace, corruption is endemic and life is so cheap that it can be terminated for as little as ten dollars."

International sales: Films Boutique contact@filmsboutique.com

[Read the full review HERE](#)

LOVING PIA



Dir: Daniel Borgman

Our critic said: "Daniel Borgman's slow no-budget hybrid plays like a documentary as it explores the subtle rhythms of attachment and the fear of loss."

International sales: Adomeit Film katja@adomeitfilm.com

[Read the full review HERE](#)

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