

EVENT LISTINGS FOR SIDEWALK HOUSTON CITY GUIDE

By Connie L. Schmidt & Ron Kaye

The Goethe Institut of Houston

The following events are sponsored by, and, unless otherwise indicated, take place at
Goethe-Institut Houston
German Cultural Center
3120 Southwest Freeway, Suite 100
Houston, Texas 77098
(713) 528-2787
FAX (713) 528-4023
e-mail: program@goethe-houston.org
Home page: <http://www.goethe.de/uk/hou>

Events are free unless otherwise indicated.

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Kai-Olaf Hesse: *After* images of America

Photography Exhibit

Through April 3

(Co-sponsored by the Houston Center for Photography, part of Houston Fotofest 98)

- American pop culture through the eyes of an avant-garde photographer
- German shutterbug turns camera on America

Forget the spacious skies, the amber waves, the alabaster cities gleaming. America through the eyes of up-and-coming German photographer Kai-Olaf Hesse is a cluttered visual landscape of politics, industry and, of course, movies. A subjective and personal approach, to be sure, but also a reminder of how the rest of the world sees us.

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Otto Boll: Sculptures, Drawings, Photography, Film

April 16-May 28

Opening reception with short presentation by artist: 7 P.M., Wednesday, April 15

- Floating sculptures and more at the Goethe-Institut
- Herr Boll hits Houston (no cats involved)

He's an artist, photographer, and filmmaker, but Otto Boll, who's also been working as a sculptor for 20 years, is particularly well-known for his "floating" sculptures. These sculptures, we're told, "contain moments of specific experience which can only be gained by seeing them," which is artsy talk for, "Look, you just have to *be* there." Be there at

7 P.M. on April 15, and Herr Boll might reveal the secrets of just how he gets the darned things to float.

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"Contemporary Curating: Three Approaches"

Panel Discussion

2 P.M. Sunday, March 29

Glassell School of Art

5101 Montrose Boulevard, Houston 77006

For more information call (713) 639-7500

- Three Curators to perform at Glassell School (but could they fill the Astrodome?)
- Arty types engage in slide war

What's the best way to curate? Beats the heck out of us; personally, we prefer pecan wood smoke. Okay, we know. This is highbrow art we're talking about, and it's serious, and we really shouldn't joke about it. Rather, we should make our way to the Glassell School, where we can watch and listen as this panel of ace contemporary curators fights it out using slides of recent contemporary art exhibitions in their respective institutions. We'll hear from Brigette Kölle of Portikus in Frankfurt, Peter Doroschenko of Inova in Milwaukee, and Kim Davenport of Rice University Art Gallery. All three institutions focus on internationally active artists who are just bursting onto the scene or are in the prime of their careers. Following their presentations, the three curators will conduct a panel discussion on their shared concerns.

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(NOTE: This film series is an out-of-towner)

Experimental Films of the 1990s

April 13-17

Radio, Television and Film Department at The University of Texas, Austin

For additional information, including actual details on the films, call the Goethe-Institut or Mr. Tom Schatz at The University of Texas at (512) 471-6652.

OVERVIEW

When you think of German experimental film, do images of Mike Myers and "Sprockets" on the early-90s *Saturday Night Live* sketches come to your mind? Do you visualize Myers' character Dieter, dressed in black and wrestling with his various demons and dominatrices, his nuns and whores, his nightmares of grotesque human-animal hybrids? Well, that shows what you know. German experimental film is nothing like that. Take this description of a scene from a 1920s flick, an early example of the genre:

"A strange kind of violet worm transforms into a bent cob of corn; rolls itself into an Edam cheese; into a moon; a small orange. Fish-like, or like magical beasts, all kinds of colorful forms slide soft as ribbons in elegant curves over the flickering surface... Something green and glittering swells, drifts, and disappears." (*Berliner Tagblatt*, June 26 1921).

Or this recounting of techniques employed in a German experimental film of the 1960s:
"Particles of dirt, hair, ashes, tobacco, fragments of cinematic images, sprocket holes and perforated tape are glued onto clear film. This is then projected and re-photographed from the screen, since the conglomeration of strips and glue technically allow only one projection."

(from "Collective Movements and Solitary Thrusts: German Experimental Film 1920-1990" by Christine Noll Brinckmann, Printed in *Millennium Film Journal* No. 30/31 (Fall 1997) Deutschland/Interviews)

Obviously we're talking about a respected art form here. In any case, there's no doubt experimental filmmaking in Germany has undergone a renaissance since the early 1980s, reviving interest in a genre that actually originated in the 1920s in Berlin, Paris and Munich, with international avant-garde artists such as Walther Ruttmann, Hans Richter, Viking Eggeling, and Oskar Fischinger. A thriving alternative-film subculture exists in the Germany of today, finding a voice in traditional venues as well as Berlin's Super-8mm cinemas, various European film festivals, and even niche programming on TV.

This series presents the best of the new stuff. Offered by the Goethe-Institut in collaboration with UT Austin's Radio, Television and Film Department, this program demonstrates the active and vibrant condition of German experimental film. It's divided into five different thematic chunks, all of which promise to explore alternative points of view, personal styles and innovative forms. Works by renowned masters are juxtaposed with those of young up-and-coming directors. German film producer and professor Stephen Sachs will be the special guest on Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday (April 15-17).

Take that, Dieter.

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I. *The Wall, the New Era, the Revolution*

Monday, April 13

-- German filmmakers explore life after The Wall, and the New Germany (should the rest of the world be scared yet?)

"Give me back the Berlin Wall," sang Leonard Cohen in *The Future*, which was just another way of saying that most of us would rather deal with the demons we're familiar with than grapple with the Great Unknown. In this session, filmmakers deal with the *angst* of life after reunification. Watch for subliminal messages revealing secrets of Germany's plans for world dominance in the next Millennium. You won't find any, but it's something to do.

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II. *(Found Footage) Material, Structure, Form, Animation*

Tuesday, April 14

-- Filmic odds and ends that were just too good to throw away

We're not sure just *where* all this footage was found, perhaps in the rubble of The Wall, or in various attics and cellars around the country. At any rate, this is sure to be an intriguing hodge-podge, particularly the "Animation" segments.

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III. *Feeling and Severity*

Wednesday, April 15

-- Filmmakers anguish over life

"Feeling and Severity" is just what it sounds like. In this series we see rare footage of Hitler being spanked, interspersed with tender scenes of Dieter and his dominatrix friend. Or perhaps not. Anyway, expect these works to be infused with feeling, but a little on the severe side. It's sure to be good for you.

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IV. *Discovery and Reflection*

Thursday, April 16

-- Reflections on life through the eyes of Germany's most daring filmmakers

Avant-garde German filmmakers plumb the depths of discovery, and then reflect on what they've plumbed.

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V. *Wounds, Wonders and Visions*

Friday, April 17

-- "Beat me till I see God"?

Filmmakers explore the wonders that exist despite, or perhaps because of, all the anguish.

== END EXPERIMENTAL FILM SERIES LISTINGS ==

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Composition Workshop

Hans-Jürgen von Bose

Goethe-Institut in collaboration with Houston Composers Alliance

Mid-May

Call Goethe-Institut for more information

-- Famous German composer shares secrets of his art
-- Get some Hans-on experience in modern composition

Hans-Jürgen von Bose's works include *Schlachthof V* (1995), based on Kurt Vonnegut's *Slaughterhouse V*. He's a real big deal in the composing world, and he'll

be landing in Houston for the world premier of his new commissioned orchestral work with the Houston Symphony May 23-25. While in our city, he'll be hopping around various workshops and seminars in conjunction with the Houston Composers Alliance. Call the Institut if you're interested in being an "active attendee" (composing) or a "passive attendee" (reposing?).

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Axel Zwingenberger, Germany's King of Boogie Woogie Piano

June (tentative)

Call the Goethe-Institut or visit their website for more information

- German bluesman makes rare visit to Houston
- Das Boogie at the Goethe-Institut

Some time in June, if all goes as planned, the Goethe-Institut will welcome back Germany's very own king of Boogie Woogie Piano, Axel Zwingenberger. This will be his second trip to Houston, during which he plans to be part of the Blues Festival, and perhaps to record a new CD. He's not just another lounge lizard in *Lederhosen*; this guy really cooks.

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Die Lange Nacht des Erzählers (III)

Thomas Brussig

8 P.M. Friday, April 3

Cost: \$4 donation

Students free (*Studenten gratis*)

In German

- Serious literary event at the Goethe-Institut
- If you have to ask for a translation, you don't belong here

Thomas Brussig, 1965 in Berlin geboren, Charles Bukowski-, Philip Roth- und John Irving-Verschlinger, wuchs im Ostteil der Stadt auf und arbeitete nach dem Abitur u.a. als Möbelträger, Museumspförtnr und Hotelportier. Ab 1990 Studium Soziologie an der FU Berlin, 1993 Dramaturgie an der Filmhochschule in Babelsberg.
Buchveröffentlichungen: *Wasserfarben* (1994) und *Helden wie wir* (1995). Soben ist die Übersetzung von *Helden wie wir* bei Farrar, Straus & Giroux (New York) erschienen: *Heroes Like Us.* Richten Sie sich auf eine lange Nacht ein: Erzählen, Diskutieren, Unterhalten, Essen und Trinken. Wir bitten um telefonische Anmeldung, um einen Platz zu reservieren.