

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**RENOWNED GERMAN FILM DIRECTOR WERNER HERZOG TO APPEAR IN PERSON AT
THE AMERICAN CINEMATHEQUE FOR A SNEAK PREVIEW OF HIS LATEST FILM
INVINCIBLE AND A RETROSPECTIVE OF HIS WORK**

Presented in association with the Goethe Institut and the Los Angeles German Cultural Center

Sponsored by Werner Herzog Films

September 5-8, 2002

HOLLYWOOD – German filmmaker **Werner Herzog** (NOSFERATU, THE VAMPYRE, AGUIRRE, THE WRATH OF GOD) will appear in-person each night of the **American Cinematheque's** presentation of **POET OF DOOM: A TRIBUTE TO WERNER HERZOG (September 5 - 8, 2002)**. This four night retrospective features eight of his films, including a **Sneak Preview** of his latest, **INVINCIBLE**, and the **Los Angeles Premiere** of **WINGS OF HOPE**. All film directed by Werner Herzog unless noted. Guests are subject to their availability. **All screenings are at the newly renovated Lloyd E. Rigler Theatre at the historic Egyptian (6712 Hollywood Boulevard between Highland and Las Palmas) in Hollywood.**

The films of director Werner Herzog are a mesmerizing combination of spiritual rebellion and cosmic slapstick – EVERY MAN FOR HIMSELF AND GOD AGAINST ALL, as one title put it. Notorious for his own acts of Ahab-like defiance – dragging a ship across a mountain for FITZCARRALDO, hypnotizing the cast of HEART OF GLASS -- Herzog has written and produced nearly all of his own films, defying not only nature but (more impressively) the industry.

Born Werner Stipetič in Bavaria in 1942, Herzog studied literature and history at the University of Munich, and made his first short film HERAKLES (1961) with a purportedly-stolen 35 mm. camera. Herzog's first feature, SIGNS OF LIFE (1968) established the themes that would re-occur through-out his career: a dreamlike, dessicated landscape (Greece); mythological references; and the increasing terror of a man at odds with himself and his environment. Hailed by critic Lotte Eisner as "a romantic spirit inspired by German silents" (he would later walk a healing pilgrimage from Munich to Paris when Eisner fell sick), Herzog emerged with Fassbinder and Wenders at the forefront of the New German Cinema movement in

the 1970's. Alternating between epic historical dramas (AGUIRRE, THE WRATH OF GOD; FITZCARRALDO) and brilliant, unnerving documentaries (LITTLE DIETER NEEDS TO FLY, MY BEST FIEND – KLAUS KINSKI), Herzog has produced a body of images unmatched for their audacity and surreal beauty. With his latest feature INVINCIBLE (soon to be released theatrically by Fine Line), Herzog continues to embrace life at its most apocalyptic extremes.

"Herzog is a darkly comic poet with a cawing inner language that seems to have been learned from vultures, beggars, prophets, clowns, deaf genius musicians." - *The New Yorker*, 1978

"A consummate poet of doom" - Janet Maslin, NY Times, 1995

Thursday, September 5, 2002

The **Thursday, September 5th** program begins at **7:30 PM** with a **Sneak Preview** of **INVINCIBLE**, (2002, Fine Line, 150 min.) With his latest film, Werner Herzog crafts a compelling pre-WW II drama based on a true story. INVINCIBLE follows the life and career of Zishe Breitbart, a Jewish blacksmith's son who travels from Poland to Germany to make his name as a strongman. Engaged by the legendary impresario Hanussen (Tim Roth) in a cabaret show in Berlin, Zishe becomes an instant sensation -- but Hitler's rise to power convinces him that his true calling is to warn his people of the dreadful danger to come. **Discussion following with director Werner Herzog.**

Friday, September 6, 2002

The program begins at **7:00 PM** on **Friday, September 6th** with **MY BEST FIEND – KLAUS KINSKI**, (1999, New Yorker, 95 min.) An actor adept at molding the public's perception of his bigger-than-life 'madman' persona, the late **Klaus Kinski** behaved like a violent satyr-cum-superego unchained from the niceties of civilized society. What better man to helm this amazing documentary relating the behind-the-scenes rampages than director Herzog, himself, who collaborated with Kinski on five films, among them AGUIRRE, FITZCARRALDO and NOSFERATU. Never less than riveting, MY BEST FIEND gives an extraordinary insight into the insanity and sensitivity, the misanthropy and poetry that co-existed in the hearts of both these phenomenal artists. **Discussion following with Werner Herzog.**

Following at **9:45 PM** is **AGUIRRE, THE WRATH OF GOD**, (1972, New Yorker, 93 min.) **Klaus Kinski** is Aguirre, a power hungry lunatic who leads a Spanish military expedition down the Amazon in hopes of finding El Dorado, the legendary city of gold. From the opening images of conquistadors snaking their way through the jungle, director Herzog's epic achieves a rare, operatic delirium. Laced with surreal humor – "spears are getting longer this year," notes one skewered soldier -- AGUIRRE is the first of the

great Kinski -Herzog collaborations (the two reportedly met when their families shared a house together in Munich). With Helena Rojo, Del Negro. **Werner Herzog to introduce screening.**

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Saturday, September 7, 2002

The program begins on **Saturday September 7th** at **5:00 PM** with a **Double Feature**. First up is the L.A. Premiere of **WINGS OF HOPE**, (1999, Werner Herzog Film, 70 min.) Director Herzog returns with German biologist Juliane Koepcke to the scene of her 1971 Peruvian jungle plane wreck, of which she was the only survivor. Herzog and members of his crew had originally been scheduled for the flight on the way to film **AGUIRRE**, and this adds a fascinating dimension of intertwined destinies to one of his most poetic documentary meditations. **Next on the same bill** is **LITTLE DIETER NEEDS TO FLY**, (1997, Werner Herzog Film, 80 min.) A superb example of Herzog's marvelous "real-life" storytelling ability, and his spectacular gift to go beyond the ordinary documentary into realms of transcendental art. Herzog travels with German/American pilot Dieter Dengler as he relives his nightmarish ordeal as a prisoner of the Viet Cong and his miraculous escape through the jungles of Laos. Spellbinding! **Discussion following with Werner Herzog.**

Following at **9:15 PM** is **NOSFERATU, THE VAMPYRE**, (1978, Werner Herzog Film, 107 min.) An homage to Murnau's 1922 classic, Herzog's **NOSFERATU** achieves its own hypnotic power by evoking a Romantic past of waterfalls and mist-filled valleys, and through the eerie sensuality of **Klaus Kinski's** performance. Like **Aguirre** and **Fitzcarraldo**, Kinski's **Nosferatu** is driven by the need for an unknowable spiritual ecstasy – in this case, **Isabelle Adjani's** ethereal Lucy. With Bruno Ganz. **Werner Herzog to introduce screening.**

Sunday, September 8, 2002

The **Sunday, September 8th** program begins at **4:00 PM** with a **Newly Restored Print** of **BURDEN OF DREAMS**, (1982, Flower Films, 94 min.) directed by Les Blank. When Herzog set off to make **FITZCARRALDO**, Les Blank tagged along to document what became a torrential downpour of difficulties: the loss of actors Jason Robards and Mick Jagger; native Indian revolts; and the sheer logistics of dragging an entire boat through the jungle. Herzog has called **BURDEN** "a blemish on my soul to this day" – join us for a rare opportunity to hear Herzog discuss **BURDEN OF DREAMS** and the production of **FITZCARRALDO**. **Discussion following with Werner Herzog.**

Following at **7:00 PM** is **FITZCARRALDO**, (1982, Werner Herzog Film, 158 min.) Rubber baron and music fanatic **Fitzcarraldo** (**Klaus Kinski**) journeys down the darkest byways of the Amazon to build an opera house at the rain forest's heart. Like his title character, director Herzog reaches an ambitious pinnacle of achievement here – the staggeringly impossible odds that seem to weigh against **Fitzcarraldo** ever reaching his goal were mirrored by Herzog's own attempts to complete the film. A must-see! **Werner Herzog to introduce screening.**

All films are separate admission except those listed as Double Features which are one ticket price for both films. There is a five minute break between films on double bills.

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*** BLACK AND WHITE and COLOR FILM STILLS ARE AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST.
PLEASE SEND YOUR REQUEST TO publicity@americancinematheque.com***

WE DO NOT HAVE GUARANTEED PRESS PASSES TO PUBLIC SCREENINGS. IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT YOU TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE ADVANCE PRESS SCREENINGS.

A complete calendar/flyer listing of these films has been mailed to you.

MOST OF THE FILMS ARE AVAILABLE ON VIDEOTAPE (NTSC) COMMERCIALY AT LOCAL VIDEOSTORES. SEE LIST BELOW FOR COMPLETE DETAILS. FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CALL MARGOT GERBER AT 323.461.2020, ext. 115. THANK YOU.

Eddie Brandt's Saturday Matinee (Burbank) Walk in only no phone.

VideoActive (2522 Hyperion, SilverLake – 323.669.8544)

Jerry's Video (1904 Hillhurst, Los Feliz - 323.666.7471)

Rocket Video (726 N. La Brea - 323.965.1100)

Cinefile (11280 Santa Monica Blvd. - Corner of Sawtelle Ave. - 310.312.8836)

Vidiots (302 Pico Blvd, Santa Monica – 310.392.8508)

INVINCIBLE – Call Grace Niu at Fine Line. See below for details.

WINGS OF HOPE (Cinematheque Offices)

MY BEST FIEND – KLAUS KINSKI (Vidiots)

AGUIRRE, THE WRATH OF GOD (Rocket Video and Vidiots)

NOSFERATU, THE VAMPYRE (Rocket Video and Vidiots)

LITTLE DIETER NEEDS TO FLY (Rocket Video and Vidiots)

BURDEN OF DREAMS (Rocket Video and Vidiots)

FITZCARRALDO (Rocket Video and Vidiots)

REQUESTS FOR PRESS TICKETS TO PUBLIC SCREENINGS AND INTERVIEW REQUESTS:

- TICKET REQUESTS MUST BE IN WRITING AND SHOULD BE FAXED TO 323.461.9737 ATTN: MARGOT GERBER, 24 HOURS PRIOR TO SHOW TIME. THURSDAY AT 6 PM IS THE ABSOLUTE DEADLINE FOR REQUESTS FOR WEEKEND SCREENINGS. PLEASE INCLUDE INFORMATION ABOUT WHEN YOUR COVERAGE WILL APPEAR AND A DESCRIPTION OF YOUR MEDIA OUTLET. JOURNALISTS WISHING TO AUDIO OR VIDEOTAPE DISCUSSIONS MUST ALSO SEND A FAXED REQUEST. IF YOUR REQUEST IS ACCEPTED, YOU WILL PICK UP YOUR TICKETS THE NIGHT OF

THE SHOW AT THE BOX OFFICE. Details at:
<http://www.americancinematheque.com/pressreleases/pressticketpolicies.htm>

INTERVIEW REQUESTS

For press screening information or materials on INVINCIBLE and Interview Requests for Werner Herzog, contact: Grace Niu at Fine Line (310) 967-6985

THE PROGRAM IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT NOTICE.

- **Ticket Prices: \$8 General; \$6 Cinematheque Members. \$7 Seniors (65+ years) and students with valid ID card. Must be shown at box office at time of purchase.**
- **If you would like to receive press screening notices, schedule changes and press releases by e-mail, please e-mail publicity@americancinematheque.com and you will be added to our e-mail list.**
- **Our permanent daily attraction film FOREVER HOLLYWOOD is screens Saturdays & Sundays at 2 PM & 3:30 PM. For press passes to see it for review purposes, please call Margot Gerber at 323.461.2020, ext. 115.**

Please note that Margot Gerber will be out of the office from August 5-14. Please call my assistant Mary McIlwain at 323.461.2020, ext. 115 with any questions.

Other press releases also available are:

SCIENCE FICTION FANTASY & HORROR FESTIVAL (thru August 25)

DOWN UNDER SHORTS (August 20)

ANDY WARHOL DOES HOLLYWOOD (thru August 28)