

# The Museum of Modern Art

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## FASSBINDER RETROSPECTIVE OPENS WITH A HISTORIC EVENING OF TRIBUTES AND PERFORMANCES AND THE WORLD PREMIERE OF A RARE DOCUMENTARY

**Readings, Songs, and Testimonials  
by Several of Fassbinder's Closest Collaborators  
Hosted by Udo Kier**

**Special Screening of Florian Hopf's 1977 Documentary  
Showing Fassbinder as an Actor and on the Sets of His Films**

*A Celebration of Rainer Werner Fassbinder*  
**Thursday, January 23, 1997  
The Roy and Niuta Titus Theater 1**

The first complete retrospective in the United States of the film and television works of Rainer Werner Fassbinder opens Thursday, January 23, at The Museum of Modern Art with a historic evening of live tributes and performances by several of Fassbinder's closest collaborators and the world premiere of the rare 1977 documentary *Rainer Werner Fassbinder*.

Guests for *A Celebration of Rainer Werner Fassbinder* include Hanna Schygulla, who first met Fassbinder in acting school and who, in eighteen films, embodied some of his most memorable characters—among them Effi Briest, Maria Braun, and Lili Marleen; Margit Carstensen, the lead in the two lacerating films *The Bitter Tears of Petra von Kant* (1972) and *Martha* (1973), and a cast member in numerous other films; Irm Herrman, the third player, with Carstensen and Schygulla, in the painful love triangle of *The Bitter Tears*

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of *Petra von Kant* and a key actress in *Katzelmacher* (1969) and *The Merchant of Four Seasons* (1971); Barbara Sukowa, the lead in *Lola* (1981) and a principal in *Berlin Alexanderplatz* (1979/80); and Rosel Zech, who played Veronika Voss in the eponymous 1982 film.

The master of ceremonies for the evening will be Udo Kier, who is best remembered for his roles in Fassbinder's *The Stationmaster's Wife*, *The Third Generation* (1978/79), and *Lili Marleen* (1980), among other films, and has appeared recently in Lars von Trier's *Breaking the Waves* (1996).

Harry Baer, who was in six of Fassbinder's first seven feature films, in addition to *Recruits in Ingolstadt* (1970) and *Jail Bait* (1972), will also appear as a special guest, as will the cinematographers Dietrich Lohmann and Michael Ballhaus, Fassbinder's invaluable collaborators who between them shot more than half of his films; Barbara Baum, the costume designer for, among other films, *Lili Marleen*, *Lola* (1981), and *Querelle* (1982); and Juliane Lorenz, the editor on Fassbinder's last twelve films and his companion from 1977 until his death in 1982. Lorenz is the director of the Fassbinder Foundation, Berlin, and co-organizer of the retrospective.

"The apparent effortlessness of Fassbinder's work was achieved in part by his working on several films with the same technical crew and a group of talented, protean actors," says Laurence Kardish, Curator and Coordinator of Film Exhibitions, Department of Film and Video, The Museum of Modern Art, who co-organized the retrospective with Lorenz. "We are deeply honored to have so many of these wonderful artists with us for this unique event."

The world premiere of *Rainer Werner Fassbinder* will follow songs, readings, and tributes by these guests. Completed in 1977, this 35-minute documentary by Florian Hopf includes clips of Fassbinder in his numerous acting roles and rare footage of him on the sets on his films. Hopf was a celebrated German film critic and a friend of Fassbinder's, who conceived the idea of making a series of documentaries about the key figures of the New German Cinema. He conducted a number of interviews with Fassbinder and secured the clips of Fassbinder acting, but died before he could complete the film. Following his death, the film remained among his effects, where, after a time, it was discovered by his widow. This is its first theatrical screening.

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*Note to the Press:* This is not a complete list of guests. A notice announcing additional, as-yet-unconfirmed guests appearing in *A Celebration of Rainer Werner Fassbinder* will be released in mid-January. A photo tip sheet with a list of final guests will be sent to the media immediately prior to the event.

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