

Reception at the Hong Kong Film Festival in Berlin
To commemorate the 15th anniversary of the establishment of the
Hong Kong Special Administrative Region
5 July 2012
Welcome Remarks by Bryan Ha
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The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region

Sehr geehrter Staatssekretär von Knobelsdorff,

Sehr geehrter Dr Kreft,

Sehr geehrter Geschäftsträger Gesandter Li,

Mary, Ihre Exzellenzen, Meine Dame und Herren,

Guten Abend. First of all, a very warm welcome to our reception and opening night of our Film Festival. Tonight, we gather to celebrate the 15th anniversary of the establishment of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region right in the centre of Europe. With the full support of the central Government and the concerted efforts of the Hong Kong people, the “One Country, Two Systems” principle and our Basic Law have been successfully implemented. During the past 15 years, Hong Kong people have been administering Hong Kong with a high degree of autonomy, consolidating our position as an international financial, trade and maritime centre. The flourishing development of our creative industries is a testimony to the civil liberties and freedom of expression enjoyed by our people.

2. On 1 July, President Hu sworn in the new term of our government under Chief Executive, Mr CY Leung, during his visit to Hong Kong. With the zest and energy of his team, Mr Leung has pledged to safeguard the rule of law, advance democracy, foster social harmony, and build a more prosperous, just and progressive Hong Kong. Together with the latest measures announced by the central government to strengthen cooperation between Hong Kong and the Mainland, we can all look forward to an even brighter future in the years to come.

3. Tonight, we are very honoured to have Mr von Knobelsdorff, Permanent Secretary of Berlin Senate Department for Economics, Technology and Research, with us. Berlin and Hong Kong share much in common, especially as an incubator for our creative talents. With the staunch support of the Berlin Senate and the Federal Ministry of Economics and Technology, Germany showcased its design talents as our partner country last November during Asia's largest design event - Business of Design Week in Hong Kong. Building on the good collaboration, our Ambassadors of Design have led a delegation of young and bright design talents from Hong Kong to join the DMY International Design Festival in June, bringing their latest ideas to Berlin.

4. Ladies and Gentlemen, I cannot come to think of a better medium than films that can connect people from different cultural background together. For this reason alone, there seems to be nothing more fitting for us to celebrate our anniversary than by hosting a Film Festival in Berlin, right in one of the most important, if not the most important, cultural hub in Europe. Together with our German partners, notably the Federal Foreign Office, our office will work towards promoting dialogue and exchange between our people. We are particularly pleased to have Dr Kreft, Ambassador Director for Public Diplomacy and Dialogue among Civilizations of the Federal Foreign Office, to grace us tonight.

5. My German teacher once used the expression *mit Tiefgang* to describe German movies. I cannot agree more with her. Over the years, German masterpieces ranging from Fritz Lang's *Metropolis*, Caroline Link's *Jenseits der Stille* to Wolfgang Petersen's *Das Boot*, to name but a few, have left a lasting impression on audience worldwide, including many in Hong Kong. And not unlike the German film industry, Hong Kong film industry offers much breadth, depth and diversity. Our friends in Germany, especially Berlin, are no stranger

to our creative talents. Back in 1992, Maggie Cheung won the Silver Bear for her role as the leading actress in *Centre Stage* and in 2010, *Echoes of Rainbow* was honoured with the Crystal Bear. Wong Kar Wai's *In the Mood for Love* also won the Best Foreign Film award at the *Deutscher Filmpreis 2001*.

6. We are very proud to present *A Simple Life*, on the opening night of our Film Festival in Berlin. Directed by our acclaimed director Ann Hui, the film centres on the bittersweet bonding between two human beings much divided by age and social position. The film has already won many international awards including the Best Actress award at last year's Venice International Film Festival and was also nominated for the best international film at the Munich Film Festival. To put icing on the cake, we have the great pleasure to have Mr Roger Lee, who is not only one of the producers of the film but the real person behind this touching story, with us tonight. *A Simple Life* is in fact one of Roger's several collaborations with Ann Hui. Their co-production, *Summer Snow*, won the Silver Bear for Best Actress in 1995. Mr Lee has kindly agreed to take the stage after the movie, and share with us on his personal journey in the making of the film.

7. Ladies and Gentlemen, Germany and Hong Kong enjoy excellent bilateral relations and our office look forward to further strengthening them. The celebration today is not only for our 15th anniversary, but also for the flourishing German Hong Kong bilateral relations. Thank you very much for your great support in the past and we look forward to having your continual support to bring German Hong Kong relations to new heights. Last but not least, I would like to thank the *Hackesche Höfe Kino* for providing this excellent venue.

Ends.