

## 22. PROTEST

Dear Dr. Bauer, thank you for your invitation, but I won't be coming to Berlin:

—since I have no desire to place myself before a court that only three years ago at the same location (in an executive session) sentenced my last film *Not Reconciled, or Only Violence Helps Where Violence Rules* to death<sup>1</sup>—in a closed session;

—and since I don't like the police and criminal police (even in civilian clothing) and the whores who hang around such festivals in droves (mostly journalists, unfortunately!), and the parasites and pimps of an industry that demonstrates ever less imagination (even the capitalist kind) and ever more cynicism. And yet I am glad (despite the absurdity of every competition) that *Chronicle of Anna Magdalena Bach* will be shown within the framework of the festival:<sup>2</sup>

—so that Berliners can see it on a large screen (although the film has neither a *Prädikat*<sup>3</sup> nor a distributor);

—and because I believe that this film is (also) a protest, even a strike, against film support and the Emergency Acts,<sup>4</sup> and an appeal to those social and economic structures that will make films available to everyone.

Kind regards,  
Jean-Marie Straub  
June 28, 1968

1968

Original language: German

Letter sent to Alfred Bauer, the director of the Berlin International Film Festival, whose eighteenth edition ran from June 21 to July 2, 1968.<sup>5</sup>

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“Chronik der Anna Magdalena Bach”) al direttore del Festival di Berlino,” trans. Adriano Aprà,<sup>6</sup> *Cinema & Film*, nos. 5-6 (Summer 1968): 56-57.

English translation in Wolfgang Jacobsen's *50 Years Berlinale: Internationale Filmfestspiele Berlin*, trans. Catherine Kerkhoff-Saxon and Robin Benson (Berlin: Nicolai, 2000), 158 [used here with emendations by Barton Byg and Sally Shafto].