“Cinema is always involved in world making, and queerness promises to knock off kilter conventional epistemologies,” write Karl Schoonover and Rosalind Galt. In this lecture, I will attend to those conventional epistemologies — of religion, whiteness, the nation, and capital — that are re-configured in selected works of queer German cinema from the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. I will take as a starting point an understanding of queer studies that is inherently intersectional, that is, as offering an interpretative framework that attends to social and political phenomena beyond the traditional confines of gender and sexuality. I will then consider how representations of queerness as well as ‘queer’ aesthetic practices have been mobilised by filmmakers in order to critique other regimes of exclusion in the German context, as well as to lay claim to alternative futures.

Image: The three protagonists of Futur Drei (2020), dir. Faraz Shariat