

# CONFERENCE OF THE BIRDS

by Amin Motallebzadeh

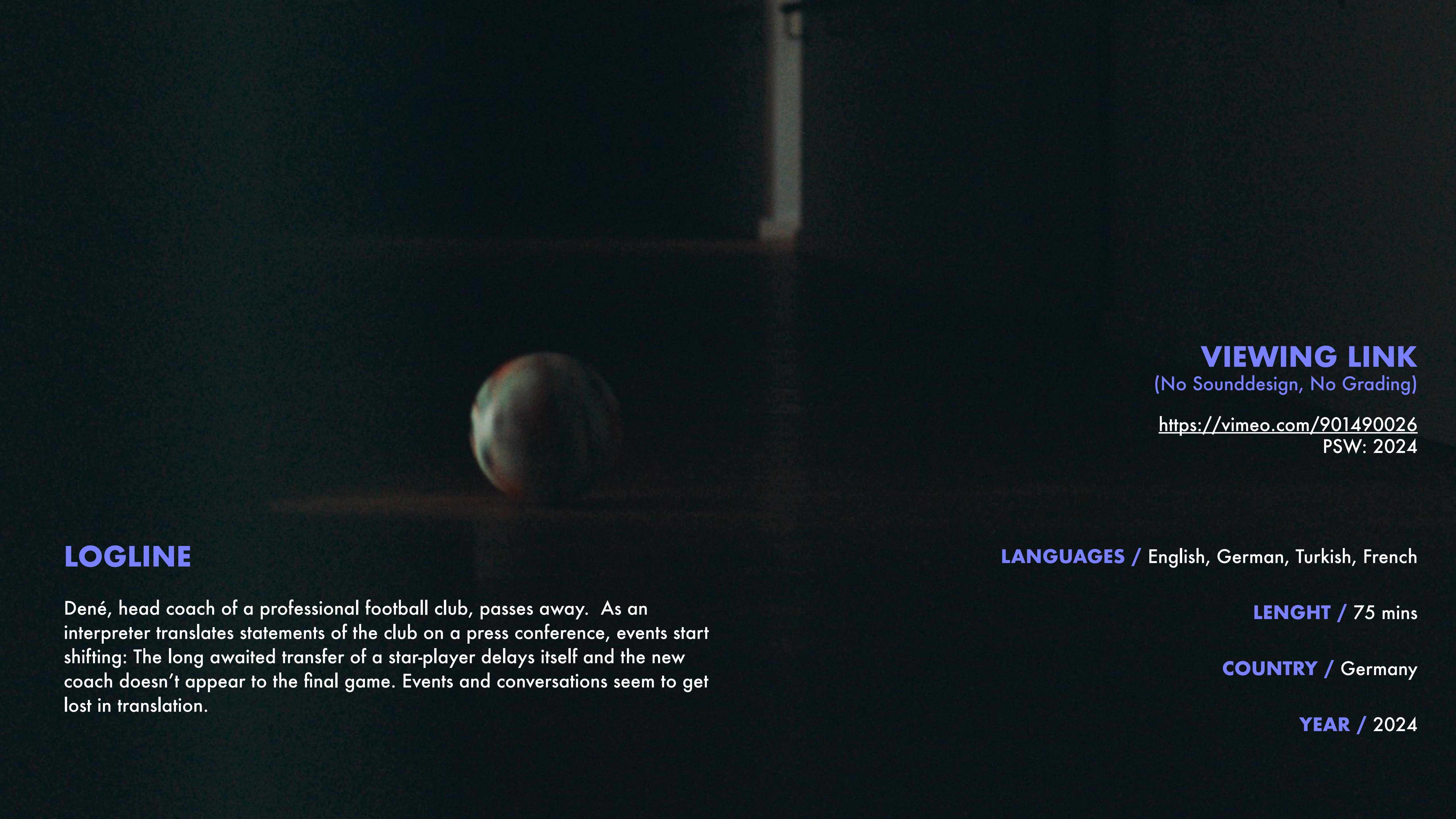


HFBK  
Hamburg









## VIEWING LINK

(No Sounddesign, No Grading)

<https://vimeo.com/901490026>

PSW: 2024

## LOGLINE

Dené, head coach of a professional football club, passes away. As an interpreter translates statements of the club on a press conference, events start shifting: The long awaited transfer of a star-player delays itself and the new coach doesn't appear to the final game. Events and conversations seem to get lost in translation.

**LANGUAGES** / English, German, Turkish, French

**LENGHT** / 75 mins

**COUNTRY** / Germany

**YEAR** / 2024











# SYNOPSIS

Love, loss and deception find their way into a major football club as things begin to change in the personal lives of those around it.

Interim coach Yurdaün licks his team's wounds after a heavy defeat, while club officials take steps to turn the tide. Backroom conversations turn into unusual encounters as things seem to get lost in translation:

The scout fails to complete a long-awaited transfer of a star player, and the new head coach tries to hide in his apartment before the final game.

The various storylines develop separately, only to meet again in different constellations. Familiar traces lead to unfamiliar encounters.

The question arises as to what is part of oneself and where it is in danger of disappearing.









## DIRECTOR'S NOTE

As someone who has grown up in different cultures and is a stranger in both, I am drawn to stories that take place in the most unlikely places, where the known intersects with the unknown and the question of what belongs to you is raised. These very contemporary questions of identity in a globalised age are very much condensed in the world of professional football: many cultural backgrounds, nationalities and languages come together in a natural way around a game.

In the midst of this, there is a sense of loneliness among the people involved. The world of football provides a setting in which these feelings can be experienced: with clubs that thrive on the exchange of people, and tactic boards that show ways of finding each other on the pitch.

The characters in the film find solace and connection in an alien and unfamiliar

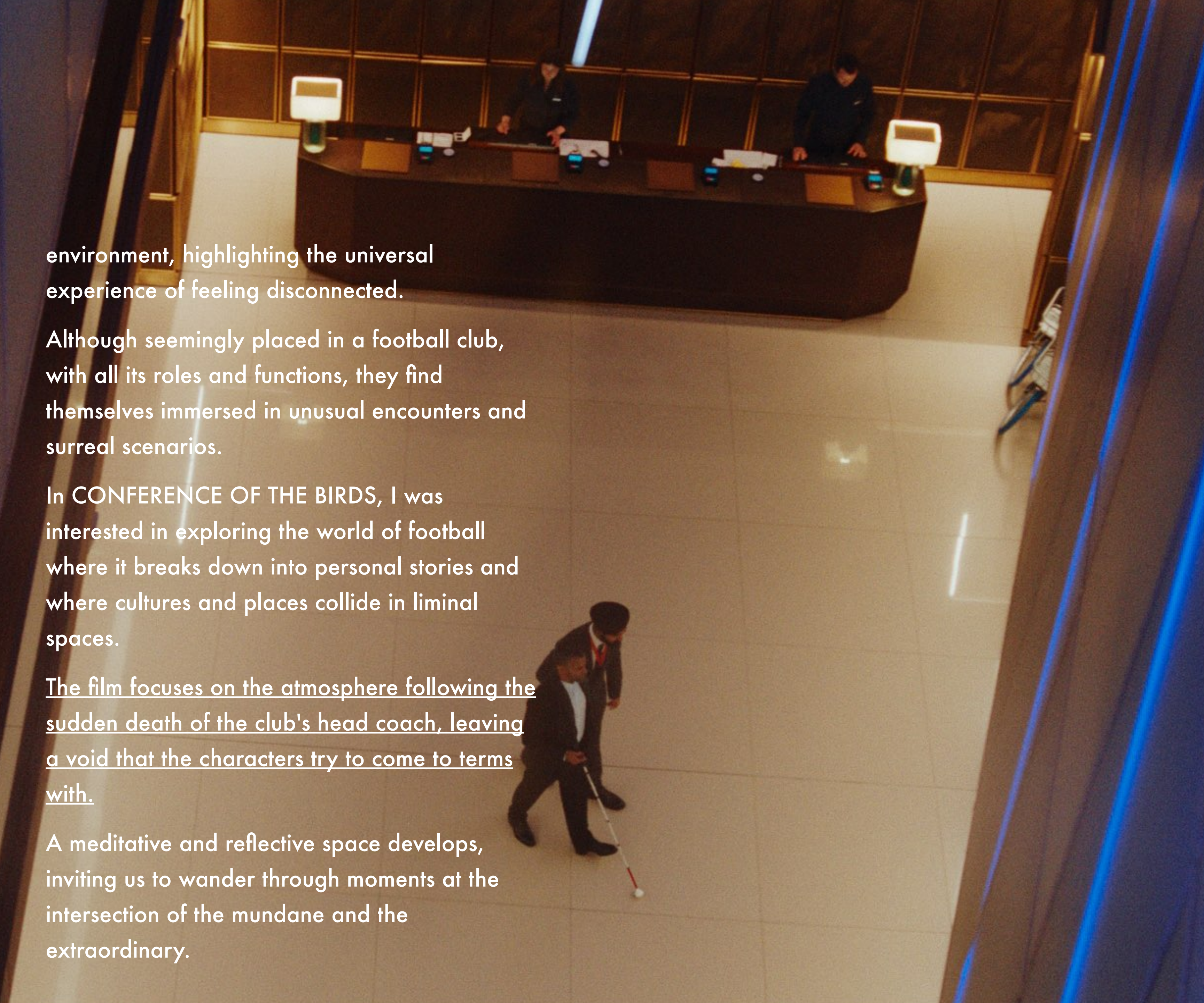
environment, highlighting the universal experience of feeling disconnected.

Although seemingly placed in a football club, with all its roles and functions, they find themselves immersed in unusual encounters and surreal scenarios.


In CONFERENCE OF THE BIRDS, I was interested in exploring the world of football where it breaks down into personal stories and where cultures and places collide in liminal spaces.

The film focuses on the atmosphere following the sudden death of the club's head coach, leaving a void that the characters try to come to terms with.

A meditative and reflective space develops, inviting us to wander through moments at the intersection of the mundane and the extraordinary.





A man in a dark suit is embracing a woman from behind. They are standing in front of a wall with a vertical gold-colored pleated texture. The lighting is warm and soft, creating a intimate atmosphere.

While the tone of the film remains seemingly calm, the viewer gently sinks into a nest of elliptical dreams.

The boundaries between reality and fantasy are blurred, allowing for a dreamlike exploration of themes.

While the settings are specific, the themes transcend cultural boundaries to offer a universal reflection on the human condition. The whispering in a Muslim prayer room is read as a romantic encounter, and a translator's personal statements at a press conference are mistaken for translations.

Current questions about the takeover of football by wealthy Arab donors are naively viewed through an emotional lens that focuses on motifs of grief and mourning.

Eschewing a form that represents the fast-paced world of sport, the film relies on expanding the spectacle into a

vacuum of lost movements in search of an anchor.

It invites us to a contemplative experience that transcends the ordinary and embraces the unexpected notions of Islam, football and men.

In a subtle crime scene, mafia-like club officials are seen through a melancholic lens and heard in quiet, doubting voices. Different languages speak to each other in a tone of despair. Long takes and elliptical editing reveal the fragility of the characters.

I want my audience to actively engage with the story, to question the expectations that come with seemingly banal roles - a coach, a player, a translator. What is created is an atmosphere that challenges the familiar as it slowly drifts away from real traces into surreal encounters and spaces.



A person wearing a blue, textured sweater is sitting on a wooden chair. Their right arm is extended downwards, with their hand resting on their lap. The background is a plain, light-colored wall. The overall lighting is soft and natural.

## BIOGRAPHY

AMIN MOTALLEBZADEH was born in 1989 in Hamburg, Germany. After studying medicine and later theatre direction, he studied film in the classes of Angela Schanelec, Thomas Demand and Omer Fast at the University of Fine Arts Hamburg.

## FILMOGRPAHY

Following his short film STEPS AND RACKETS (2019) and his feature-length TEMPEST (2021), as well as several video installations and stage productions, CONFERENCE OF THE BIRDS is Amin's graduation film.









**WRITTEN & DIRECTED BY /**  
Amin Motallebzadeh

**DOP /**  
Tom Otte

**COLOUR GRADING /**  
Julien von Schultendorff

**PRODUCTION DESIGN /**  
Nurgül Dursun, Stella Rossié  
Paula Hummer, Samuel Witt

**COSTUME DESIGN /**  
Maja Pesa

**SOUND /**  
Jakob Defant, Jakob Spengemann,  
Felix Roggel

**SCORE /**  
Nima Khaste

**EDITING /**  
Maja Tennstedt

**WITH /**  
Enes Yurdayün  
Marten Korte  
Lucca Pawlik  
Bülent Özdemir  
Wigger Bierma  
Dieter Bernkopf  
Steven Sowah  
Souleymane Sylla  
Hannah Schutsch  
Catherine Seifert  
Alexander Simon  
Steven Sowah

**PRODUCED BY /**  
Amin Motallebzadeh &  
Tamtam Film (Dirk Decker & Andrea Schütte)



A dimly lit hotel room scene. In the foreground, a person is seated at a round table with a water bottle and glasses. In the background, another person is lying on a bed, and a third person is standing over them, performing a massage on their back. The room has large windows with sheer curtains and a warm lamp in the background.

## PRODUCERS' NOTE

In *CONFERENCE OF THE BIRDS*, Amin Motallebzadeh takes us behind the curtain of the highly professional, constantly staged world of soccer, which seems familiar and has been depicted countless times, but is actually unknown.

Capturing tenderness and melancholy in their simultaneity and interconnected-ness is a new soundtrack for football, a competitive sport that is otherwise characterised by functionality and strength, and that incessantly reproduces the stereotypical image of male strength and emotional coolness.

Amin Motallebzadeh's wandering, intimate camera during the footballers' fitness training translates the physicality and gaze of their protagonists into rhythm and tempo, existence into bittersweet everyday poetry.

*CONFERENCE OF THE BIRDS* is an arthouse film that, with its sensitive style and captivating images, enters a space that is otherwise characterised by dominance and radiance. The film evokes empathy for the cracks in a structure that may be specific to the world of football, but has an appealing universality through the emotional landscape and accessible characters it depicts.

Amin Motallebzadeh's debut already shows that he shares the courage of cinema's most influential directors not to over-define relationships and narrative strands, but instead to rely on atmospheric tension and a more precise staging that immerses the viewer in a transcendent experience – a quality that makes him, without exaggeration, one of the new talents to watch.







## TAMTAM FILM

The Hamburg based outlet, run by Andrea Schütte and Dirk Decker, has been an inspiring creative home for established filmmakers and up-and-coming talent alike, consistently serving three pillars of their company profile:

The portfolio includes fictional features as well as creative documentaries and series production, carried out single-handedly or as European co-productions with long-standing partners. Just in time for its ten year anniversary, Tamtam Film has been given the company's most special gift so far, with Albert Serra's PACIFCTION being selected for the 2022 Cannes competition.

Our projects have received numerous awards and nominations, including nominations or shortlists for the César, the German Film Award, the German Short Film Award, the German Documentary Film Award and the Grimme Award, as well as winning Césars, the Heiner Carow Award at the Berlinale, the Dragon Award and FIPRESCI Awards in Gothenburg, the Eurimages Audentia Award and the very rare Werner Herzog Foundation Award.

As one of the most prolific independent companies in the north of Germany, Tamtam Film has been a trailblazer in setting up sustainable production standards for a decade now. As determined industry players, we are regulars as panel participators, workshop leaders and are being frequently appointed to expert juries and committees.

Tamtam Film is a board member of the German Producers Association, member of the European Film Academy, Queer Media Society and WIFT, and an EAVE and TAP alumnus. Our team is passionate about the stories we tell and the ways we are making them: politically aware, with a strong commitment to diversity in storytelling, team- & cast structure and the mindful and sustainable use of our resources.



## CURRENT FILMS

**BRUET** • Series • DE • written and directed by Oliver Bassemir & Marian Freistühler • in coproduction with Ohne Falsch Film

**STERNBRÜCKE – THE LAST SUMMER** • Creative Documentary (theatrical) • DE • written and directed by Christian Hornung • in coproduction with NDR

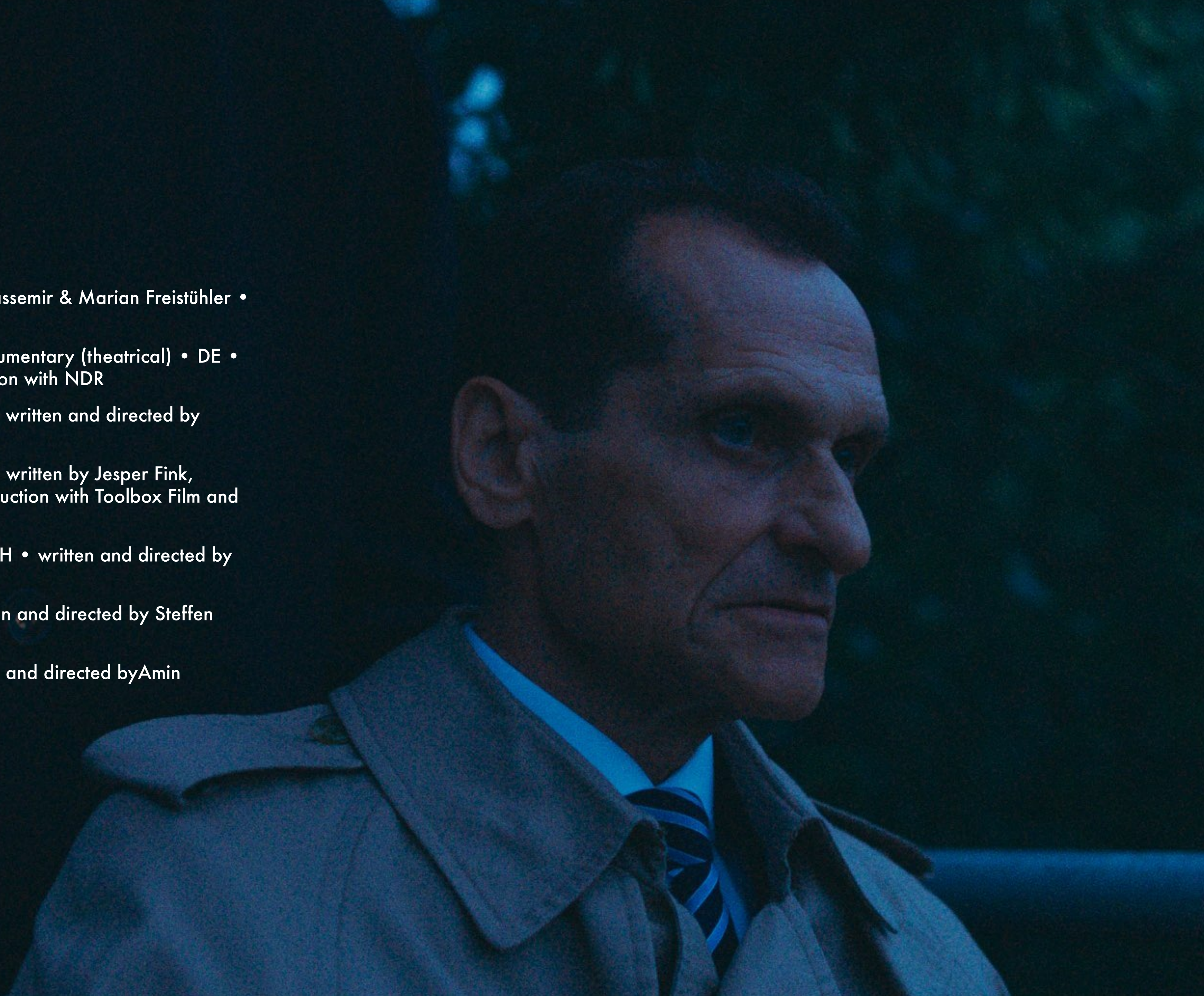
**THE WHEEL** • Creative Documentary (theatrical) • DE • written and directed by Maria Shalaeva, Denis Shabaev & Tamara Dondurey

**WAY HOME** • Feature Film (theatrical) • DK, NO, DE • written by Jesper Fink, Nagieb Khaja • directed by Charlotte Sieling • in coproduction with Toolbox Film and Hummelfilm

**HIGHLY EXPLOSIVE** • Feature Film (theatrical) • DE, CH • written and directed by Kerstin Polte • in coproduction with Catpics

**THE OPTIMISM** • Feature Film (theatrical) • DE • written and directed by Steffen Goldkamp

**SECOND SUN** • Feature Film (theatrical) • DE • written and directed by Amin Motallebzadeh • in coproduction with HfbK









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