

GFAQ

GERMAN FILMS QUARTERLY

WITH PORTRAITS AND ARTICLES OF
DIRECTORS **MASCHA SCHILINSKI & FATIH AKIN**
PRODUCER **FRED BURLE**
ACTOR **MALA EMDE**
COMPOSER **VOLKER BERTELMANN**
SALES COMPANY **FILMS BOUTIQUE**
**HISTORY: GERMAN FILM ABROAD BEFORE
AND AFTER THE SECOND WORLD WAR**

german
●●● films

The best of
**GERMAN
CINEMA**



worldwide



german
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films

Dear Readers,

The Berlinale was also a successful launchpad for German productions and co-productions in 2025. There were more German films than ever before featured in the first year under the management of the new festival director Tricia Tuttle, with the 75th edition's line-up presenting a total of 67 German productions and co-productions, including 33 German majority productions. They included the Competition title *WHAT MARIELLE KNOWS* by Frédéric Hambalek, which received a Special Mention from the Guild of German Art-house Cinemas, and *THE MOELLN LETTERS* by Martina Priessner, presented with both the Amnesty International Film Award and the Panorama Audience Award.



German cinema also had a very strong presence at the major film awards event in Los Angeles with five nominations for German films and filmmakers at the 97th Academy Awards. Although there was only one Oscar® for the German nominees at the end of the day, all of their work received the well-deserved recognition on an international level. Congratulations are once again due to Gerd Nefzer on his third Academy Award®.

Spring is now once again being dominated by the Festival de Cannes. The festival's 78th edition will take place on the Croisette from 13 to 24 May. We are delighted to see that many German productions and co-productions have been invited to this year's line-up. Mascha Schilinski's *SOUND OF FALLING* will follow *THE SEED OF THE SACRED FIG* by Mohammad Rasoulof this year as another German production competing for the Golden Palm, while Fatih Akin will be presenting his drama *AMRUM* in the Cannes Première sidebar. This edition of GfQ sees both directors giving insights into the making of their films and revealing what participation in Cannes means to them. Kirill Serebrennikov's majority German production *THE DISAPPEARANCE OF JOSEF MENGELE*, with August Diehl in the lead role, will also premiere in Cannes. Another exciting premiere can be seen in the Quinzaine des Cinéastes where Christian Petzold will be showing *MIROIRS NO. 3*, the third part of his trilogy. But these three productions aren't the only ones worth catching. Numerous German productions and co-productions are screening in the other sections in Cannes from the Main Competition through *Un Certain Regard* and *La Cinéfondation* to the *Semaine de la Critique*. What's more, German Films will be presenting the 'Next Generation Short Tiger' programme, one of the oldest and most popular talent initiatives, for the 15th time at the festival. The filmmakers in this programme have been addressing the complex present for several years with their different visual ideas, perspectives and approaches, their films allowing us to look with confidence to the future. We are pleased that this year's Cannes will again be serving as a platform for the selection of short films as well as the kick-off event for the programme's festival tour.

German Films will also be joined again by the FFA, BKM and Focus Germany in having a presence at the German Pavilion in the Village International Riviera. As in previous years, this location aims to be a meeting point for filmmakers.

We look forward to seeing you again on the Croisette.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading 'Simone Baumann'.

Simone Baumann, Managing Director

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°efp is additionally supported by



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IN THIS ISSUE

INTRODUCTION Simone Baumann 3

ARTICLES AND PORTRAITS

“BREAKING VIEWING HABITS”
A portrait of director Mascha Schilinski 6

“MY MISSION”
A portrait of director Fatih Akin 8

BRAZILIAN PUNCH
A portrait of producer Fred Burle 10

“I’D JUST LIKE TO BE SURPRISED”
A portrait of actor Mala Emde 12

FOCUSED ON THE FILMMAKERS’ VISIONS
A portrait of sales company Films Boutique 14

RESISTANCE LEADS TO NEW APPROACHES
A portrait of composer Volker Bertelmann 16

AN INDUSTRY IN THE MAKING
German film export after World War II 18

NEW FEATURES

30 AND WILD
Felix Maxim Eller 23

AMRUM
Fatih Akin 24

CONFERENCE OF THE BIRDS
Amin Motallebzadeh 25

DAS GEHEIME STOCKWERK
THE SECRET FLOOR
Norbert Lechner 26

ENDE DES KREISES
END OF THE CIRCLE
Mareike Sophie Danisch 27

HEIDI - DIE LEGENDE VOM LUCHS
HEIDI - RESCUE OF THE LYNX
Tobias Schwarz 28

KARLA
Christina Tournatzes 29

LA VOIX HUMAINE
THE HUMAN VOICE
Iphigenie Worbes, Andreas Schröder 30

TOD MEINER JUGEND
DEATH OF MY YOUTH
Timo Jacobs 31

NEW DOCUMENTARIES

DAS THEATER IM SUCHER
THEATRE THROUGH A LENS
Thomas Ladenburger 33

GERMAINE ACOGNY - DIE ESSENZ DES TANZES
GERMAINE ACOGNY
Sarah Gross 34

GRAINS OF SAND
Greta-Marie Becker 35

HENRIETTE UND GUIDO - EINE UNGEWÖHNLICHE LIEBESGESCHICHTE
HENRIETTE AND GUIDO - AN UNUSUAL LOVESTORY
Stella Tinbergen 36

IM SCHATTEN DER BILDER
IN THE PAINTINGS’ SHADOW
Birgitta Weizenegger 37

STOLZ & EIGENSINN
PRIDE & ATTITUDE
Gerd Kroske 38

NEW SHORTS

PREKID VATRE
CEASEFIRE
Jakob Krese 40

RÜCKBLICKEND BETRACHTET
IN RETROSPECT
Daniel Asadi Faezi, Mila Zhluktenko 41

UPCOMING PRODUCTIONS

ASYMPTOTE
Shane S.Y. Kang 43

BIERMANN
Jens Meurer 43

BORN TO FAKE
Erec Brehmer, Benjamin Rost 44

DRAUSSEN DIE WELT
THE WORLD OUTSIDE
Katrine Eichberger & Nikolas Mühle 44

DRY LEAF
Alexandre Koberidze 45

FITNESS UND VERZWEIFLUNG (WT)
FITNESS AND DESPAIR (WT)
Moritz Geiser 45

KRUX
THE CRUX - Ulrike Tony Vah 46

LIEBHABERINNEN
WOMEN AS LOVERS - Koxi 46

MEIN NAME AKIM
MY NAME AKIM
Sarah Miro Fischer 47

PATTY (WT)
Luise Donschen 47

REBECCA HORN - DAS GEWICHT DER WELT
Claudia Müller 48

German Films Profile 50

German Films Team 51

Shareholders & Supporters 53

Film Exporters 54

Imprint 55

"BREAKING VIEWING HABITS"

A PORTRAIT OF DIRECTOR MASCHA SCHILINSKI

"Over the course of a century, as four girls from different time periods experience their youth on a German farm, their lives become intertwined until time seems to dissolve." This is the logline of Mascha Schilinski's film *SOUND OF FALLING*, which will premiere in the competition at Cannes Film Festival – the first German-language film to do so for many years. "It's just wonderful, an incredible bonus for the film and everyone who worked on it for five years," says the Berlin-based director. *SOUND OF FALLING* is Schilinski's second feature film. She studied directing at the Filmakademie Baden-Württemberg from 2012 to 2021. Her first short film *DIE KATZE* (2015) was much praised at the Max Ophüls Preis festival, while her third-year graduation film (and first feature-length movie) *DARK BLUE GIRL* screened at the Berlinale in 2017. This family drama – for which Schilinski discovered Helena Zengel, who later became famous as a child actress in *SYSTEM CRASHER* – then toured 40-odd festivals worldwide and received several awards.

Mascha Schilinski and her co-author Louise Peter have already been awarded the Thomas Strittmatter Prize by MFG Filmförderung Baden-Württemberg for the screenplay of their current work *SOUND OF FALLING*. Schilinski sees the film, which is due to celebrate its world premiere in Cannes, as being about what lives on inside us through the ages. What defines us without us being aware of that? She wanted to create an associative stream of images connecting fragments of memory from all the characters on the farm. Because she asked herself, when on the farm in the Altmark where she later did the filming, who sat here before me, what sort of people have experienced this place in the past? She was fascinated by the simultaneity of time – the idea that someone could be doing something utterly mundane in a place where, not long before, another had lived through a moment of profound existential depth.

Together with Louise Peter, she developed the idea in philosophical discussions over three years: "We didn't really know whether it would turn into a film," the now 41-year-old director admits. From the very beginning – and against all the odds – she held onto her vision.

Schilinski collaborated with cameraman Fabian Gamper again to ensure that everything looked exactly as she had imagined: the two have been a team since her first short film. They tried out a lot of possibilities "in a very visual way," the director admits. She wanted to break viewing habits. The finished film doesn't work through the intellect, "you have to grasp it through the heart". On set, she likes to surround herself with people she trusts and who also trust her. This is the only way to create a pleasant working atmosphere, "if you appreciate what the other person is doing". A lot of effort went into casting all the roles, including those of the extras. Shooting in the wet summer of 2023 was a challenge, with the historical costumes, and the changes to the respective period, which they then had to shoot chronologically. But she didn't want any compromises, says Schilinski, and she was supported unconditionally by her producers Maren Schmitt and Lucas Schmidt from Studio Zentral.

She was a 'troublemaker' at school and dropped out of her final year, wanting to pursue an urge for freedom. She travelled through Europe, wrote short stories, and performed as a magician and fire-eater in a small travelling circus in Italy. In 2008, she completed the masterclass in writing at Hamburg Film School and then worked as a freelance author in Berlin: "I wrote for telenovelas as well. In terms of content, I didn't feel at home there, but it taught me to think of different dramaturgical possibilities quickly in my head." She is interested in the child's perspective because "children have such a hallucinatory power to seek out the empty spaces for which there are no words. They look at the world without preconceived notions." She took this view to extremes for her new film by splitting it up into multiple perspectives. In the future, she hopes to be able to exploit many more of the possibilities and approaches offered by cinema. She can imagine directing a James Bond film as well as a series: "It's a great gift to be able to realise a film that you long to see. To create a film that you have felt was missing, that you really wanted to watch. Whether you are successful is another question entirely – but that's what it's all about, narrative freedom – even if that means battling a headwind sometimes."

Marion Meyer



"MY MISSION"

A PORTRAIT OF DIRECTOR FAITH AKIN

"It's a very special, unusual film for me," Fatih Akin says of *AMRUM*, his twelfth feature film, with which he has now been invited to Cannes. The story is loosely based on the childhood memories of Hark Bohm – filmmaker, screenwriter and actor. He was born in 1939 and, like the boy in the film, grew up on the German North Sea island of Amrum, where he lived through the final weeks of the Second World War and the upheaval that followed. "At some point, Hark told me about his childhood and I encouraged him to make a film about it," says Akin, who has been friends with Bohm for years. They co-wrote the screenplay for *IN THE FADE*. "Hark wrote a first version of *AMRUM*, and originally, I just wanted to produce it." But in the end, Bohm asked his friend and colleague to direct the film, being so much younger. "I had to do some soul-searching. Can I do this? Can I do that? Do I want to do this?" Because at first glance, he thought he couldn't relate to the story set in 1945. "What really helped me was my love of cinema. A spark was ignited, and I began to think about how I could tell the story and the way to film it."

Today, he calls the film adaptation "my mission". As a native of Hamburg, Akin got to know Bohm's films early on, *NORTH SEA IS DEAD SEA* and *MORITZ DEAR MORITZ* "had a huge influence on me during my childhood and early youth. I even became a filmmaker because of him," he emphasises. At school in 1988, we watched 'YASEMIN', which was set practically on my doorstep, in Hamburg-Ottensen. And it had Turkish characters. That's when I knew: I don't have to go to Hollywood, I can make films right here. That was a vital realisation."

Akin shortened and rewrote the screenplay for *AMRUM*, making it into his own. Bohm turned the material into a novel at the same time, co-writing with Philipp Winkler, and the book was published last year. By then, the preparations for Akin's film were already well underway, so it is definitely not an adaptation of the novel, but Akin's very own version. Much of 12-year-old Nanning's story reminded him of his own upbringing, of summer holidays in his father's Turkish fishing village, still very close to nature in the 1980s.

By confronting Bohm's history and Germany's past, he realised how German he was himself, says the son of Turkish immigrants born in Hamburg in 1973. "It was like a kind of coming out for me." Even though the film is set 80 years ago, Akin believes it is up-to-date and relevant today. "When Nanning learns later in the film that his parents were Nazis and bore some guilt, he says: 'It's not my fault'. He is then told: 'But it still affects you.' That sentence explains a lot of what continues to characterise our society today." Akin also wanted to depict this visually, using modern optics and a clear image, "to create a sense of the here and now," he says, explaining his concept in collaboration with cinematographer Karl Walter Lindenlaub. The adult roles are played by top-calibre actors such as Diane Kruger, Matthias Schweighöfer, Laura Tonke and Detlev Buck. His young lead actor Jasper Billerbeck was found by children's casting director Jacqueline Rietz. "I knew straight away that he was the one," says Akin. The character is difficult, "he's an outsider who comes to the island from Hamburg, but also the son of Nazis who needs to earn the islanders' approval." And *AMRUM* is told entirely from his point of view, from the perspective of a child: the film is "radically innocent". The scenes in nature were filmed on Amrum, the interiors shot in the Hamburg studio, and the historical settlements in Denmark. The weather and tides were a challenge, says Akin, as were the short filming schedules with children. We were only allowed to shoot three hours a day with Jasper and he was in almost every scene. "We rehearsed with doubles for five hours every day and then filmed with Jasper in the evenings when the light was at its best."

He is very happy to be running in the *Première* section in Cannes this year. "Running in the competition is great, but it also creates a lot of pressure. I'm glad that it will be more relaxed this time." Akin hopes that audiences will recognise themselves in this family story. "You can't choose your parents. How do you deal with someone you love voting for a radical party?" The film offers no reconciliation, he says at the end. "It portrays the rifts, and the attitudes that you need to come to terms with somehow. And that makes it very relevant and very contemporary."

Thomas Abeltshauser



BRAZILIAN PUNCH

A PORTRAIT OF PRODUCER FRED BURLE

As a teenager, Fred Burle had one great ambition. There was no cinema in the small Brazilian town of Pirapora, where he lived, so he had to rely on the video rental store. "Every month, a count was taken to see who had rented out the most films, and I always wanted to see my name in the top 3." Now 41 years old, he can thank this ambition for the fact that he and his business partner Sol Bondy have emerged as one of world cinema's leading independent production companies with their Berlin-based One Two Films. The company was represented at this year's Berlinale by PETER HUIJARS DAY and KOELN 75. The latter is also nominated in four categories at the German Film Awards, including in the section 'Best Feature Film'. One Two Films enjoyed one of its greatest successes to date with the multi-award-winning HOLY SPIDER in 2022, which won lead actress Zar Amir Ebrahimi the Best Actress trophy in Cannes. Burle's first acquisition, ARMAND by Halfdan Ullmann Tøndel, landed immediately in 'Un Certain Regard 2024' at Cannes, winning the Camera d'Or. This year, he will be able to present a film in the competition - Kleber Mendonça Filho's THE SECRET AGENT. Cannes will also be special for Burle this year as he will be part of EFP's Producer's on the Move program.

The next two films are in post-production at present - Alex Camilleri's ZEJTUNE and Maryam Touzani's CALLE MALAGA. Fred Burle is fully aware that One Two Films is defying the current rather problematic trends in the independent market. One reason behind this - the company's latest projects have paid off in terms of both prestige and finance: "This has enabled us to break new ground in regard to financing - a hybrid solution combining state funding and private money." But what kind of films are they? Burle explains: "Overall, the story needs to be a mixture of zeitgeist, relevance, and entertainment. And the way it is told is hugely important. There are very few innovative stories, but there is innovative storytelling."

This also applies to One Two Films' upcoming projects - the debut film, set in Yemen, by Yemeni-Scottish Oscar-nominated director Sara Ishaq, and the first feature film by Brazilian-Japanese director André Hayato Saito, whose short film AMARELA was in the Cannes short film competition last year.

The company, founded in 2010, is based in Berlin; however, it is not currently realising any projects by German directors. According to Burle, this is not a coincidence: "Of course, there are stories to tell in Germany, but they lack the edge necessary to produce them for an international market. Maybe it's because we still enjoy so many privileges here in Germany and are too well-behaved. As a result, there is a lack of hunger to tell stories." He is aware that he might cause offence with this statement: "I like to provoke. Prove me wrong! Preferably, with me as your partner!" And he adds: "Joking aside, there is a lot of talent in Germany, but fewer domestic filmmakers approach us than international filmmakers because they perhaps think we are only interested in international material. But that's not true." As things stand, however, he finds his projects among filmmakers from countries "where there are major conflicts and social problems" because: "They urgently want to tell a story, as no one else is doing anything about a situation. These films pack a punch."

As a result, Burle enjoyed no privileges during his education. He had moved to Brasilia to study, but was unable to study audiovisual media because the lectures took place during the daytime and he needed to work full-time. Instead, he studied archival science, which was offered in evening classes. He found a trick to combine this with 'cinema' - namely, the conservation and restoration of films. Ultimately, he managed to negotiate sufficient free time with an employer to complete his audiovisual studies. Then, he wished to specialise in production - but as there was no specific degree course for this in Brazil, he left life in his home country entirely and went to Berlin, where he got a place at the DFFB. It was there that he first met Sol Bondy in 2016, who hired him as a producers' assistant. From this point onwards, the company landed more and more international successes - from THE HAPPIEST DAY IN THE LIFE OF OLLI MAKI, which won the top prize at 'Un Certain Regard' in 2016, to THE BOOKSHOP by Isabel Coixet. However, the One Two Films lineup does not include TV projects. And for good reason: "Cinema is our passion," says Fred Burle. "I firmly believe in it. And if films are good, people will continue to go to the cinema."

Rüdiger Sturm



**"I'D JUST LIKE
TO BE SURPRISED"**

A PORTRAIT OF ACTOR MALA EMDE

These days, few other paths of success are as straight and upwardly steep as Mala Emde's career. However, the actress cuts right to the chase when I comment on how smoothly things are going for her at the moment. "I don't think life works like that," she says during our interview in a kitchen in Berlin's Kreuzberg district. "It's just that capitalism makes us believe things are always going upwards, and that everything always ought to get more and better." Simple answers and easy solutions are not Emde's thing, neither in conversation nor in her work, as she so clearly demonstrates. But it is not wrong to say that the Frankfurt native, born in 1996, has been enjoying a career high for several years now. In 2020, she was the lead actress in Julia von Heinz's *AND TOMORROW THE ENTIRE WORLD* in competition at the Venice Film Festival, returning to the Lido two years later with *SKIN DEEP* by Alex Schaad. She won the German Television Award for the two seasons of the smart comedy series *OH HELL*, in which she starred as the protagonist. And the novel adaptation *BLIND AT HEART* by Barbara Albert was shown at the film festivals in Tokyo and Luxembourg, among others. One of the highlights to date: Emde's most recent film *KOELN 75* emerged as a real Berlinale hit in February 2025 – and she has now received her first nomination for the German Film Award for her role as Vera Brandes, who organized a legendary Keith Jarrett concert as a teenager in 1975.

Happy as she is about being nominated for a Lola, looking back at the past few years Emde is equally enthusiastic about other things. The variety of roles, the content of the stories, plus "the chance to keep developing and never stand still", is how she describes it, "because I believe there is nothing more important in life than those moments when you dare to try something new." In the case of *KOELN 75*, this also meant that the graduate of the Ernst Busch Academy of Dramatic Arts in Berlin had to accept the possibility of failure. "Before this film, I always tried to create perfect characters that were new from the ground up, with as little of myself in them as possible," she explains. "But then I noticed that many of my colleagues that I admire most – like Franz Rogowski or Vicky Krieps – always introduce a bit of themselves into their characters. Even if it's just that they don't try and learn the perfect

accent. They may not be suitable for every role, but they bring in something that no one else can. I tried that for the first time in *KOELN 75*: I didn't distance myself; I fused Mala and Vera together, so that I embodied the character as only I could have done, possible for me and no one else."

Slipping into other roles is something Emde has been doing for a long time; she was eleven years old when she first faced the cameras. "When I watched a movie back then, I felt more alive afterwards," she says, reminiscing about the origin of her passion for the profession. "I had the feeling that my whole body was more open and my view of things was different. Even the way someone picked up a cup in the movie suddenly developed significance. And I wanted to be someone who gave such things meaning. That's still the case today." The desire to be an actress is never the focus – it is the acting itself. Emde prefers to describe herself as a filmmaker, with a view to the collaborative aspect of filming. She has a great desire to work abroad in the future, especially after living in Paris for two and a half years. However, the concept of national borders in filmmaking seems as contrived to her as the notion of a straightforward career path: "Why should I allow myself to be restricted by countries in my job? I'm not interested in nations; I'm interested in people. We are all storytellers – and the way a story is told always depends on the person who tells it. Not where they come from."

The next story Emde is telling has been filmed already: in the second half of the year, she will be appearing alongside Louis Hofmann and Katharina Stark in a Netflix production by director Markus Goller and author Oliver Ziegenbalg. It is about young people who employ their own initiative to save thousands of refugees from distress at sea in the Mediterranean in 2015. And afterwards? The youthful anxiety that one day she may not be allowed to act anymore has disappeared for the time being, thanks to the successes of recent years. But now she is on the lookout even more for like-minded people to join her on her journey; people who have something to tell, "who are looking for poetry, or have their own special language". And above all, she sums up as she says goodbye, "I'd just like to be surprised."

Patrick Heidmann

FOCUSED ON THE FILMMAKERS' VISIONS

A PORTRAIT OF SALES COMPANY FILMS BOUTIQUE

"We always try to work with a mix of new voices and more established directors," says Jean-Christophe Simon, CEO and founder of the Berlin and Lyon-based sales outfit Films Boutique. Simon, who first entered the film industry working for the French production company AGAT Film, spent several years at the Paris-based sales company Films Distribution before being attracted to Berlin to become involved in its dynamic music scene and then decided to return to the world of sales by setting up his own company in 2008.

Since then Films Boutique has handled an eclectic line-up of world cinema ranging from such Oscar-nominated films as EMBRACE THE SERPENT, BORDER, LUNANA A YAK IN THE CLASSROOM and THE SEED OF THE SACRED FIG as well as festival-winners ranging from Alexander Sokurov's FAUST (Golden Lion, 2011) through Ildikó Enyedi's ON BODY AND SOUL (Golden Bear, 2017), Houda Benyamina's DIVINES (Camera d'or, 2016), Lav Diaz's THE WOMAN WHO LEFT (Golden Lion, 2016) to Mohammad Rasoulof's THERE IS NO EVIL (Golden Bear, 2020). "At a time when people are more focused on issues and the films are increasingly driven by content, we at Films Boutique are more focused on the filmmakers themselves," Simon explains. "This is how we operated from the very beginning and it has become more so as time has progressed. We want to hear their voices and get into the films through the filmmakers' vision." Moreover, a cursory glance at Films Boutique's catalogue line-up shows that there isn't any conscious focus on specific countries or regions when looking for new titles to take on for international sales. "We are just excited about films," Simon says, pointing out that the company only handles a limited number of new titles each year - between 10 and 13 at most. "We are open to working with filmmakers from all over the globe and there have been many cases where it has then been the first time that a country's film is reaching the Oscars or being invited to major international film festivals."

The line-up's international character is also reflected in the cosmopolitan makeup of Films Boutique's team: for example, Simon and Head of Sales Julien Razafindranaly both hail from France, head of acquisitions / COO Gabor

Greiner is from Hungary and Films Boutique's VP Valeska Neu is German-born. "For 70% of our films we come onboard at script stage because we like to be part of the conversation with the filmmakers and producers while of course respecting their particular vision," Simon explains. "At the same time, we like to keep some slots open for discoveries and films we see as rough cuts, but that's a limited part of the line-up. Films Boutique attends various industry events throughout the year scouting for interesting new projects with international sales potential and forging contacts with promising new producers. They include workshops organised by such initiatives as EAVE and ACE as well as the Berlinale Co-Production Market, L'Atelier in Cannes, the Doha Film Institute's Qumra and Venice's Gap Financing Market. "But most of the projects we get involved in come through the contacts we have built up over the years with filmmakers and producers," Simon says.

While the company has built up relationships with German filmmakers such as "discoveries" Eva Trobisch and Annika Pinske as well as established names like Valeska Grisebach or Julia von Heinz, Simon and his team are also working closely with German production companies who serve as the co-producers of films by international auteurs.

This year, for example, will see Films Boutique handling sales on X Filme Creative Pool's co-production of Agnieszka Holland new feature FRANZ as well as Pandora Film's first collaboration with Ildikó Enyedi on SILENT FRIEND, while One Two Films is co-producer on three recent additions to the line-up: Ira Sachs' PETER HUJAR'S DAY, Maryam Touzani's Spanish-language feature CALLE MALAGA and Maltese director Alex Camilleri's ZEJTUNE. "One of our recent greatest successes was another co-production THE SEED OF THE SACRED FIG. The fact the German Oscar committee then selected it was an important political statement, particularly given the current global situation," Simon says, adding that the support from German Films for the Golden Globes and Oscar campaigns was "really valuable and helped the film reach another level."

Martin Blaney

A close-up portrait of composer Volker Bertelmann. He has dark hair, light blue eyes, and a slight stubble. He is wearing a dark jacket. The background is blurred.

RESISTANCE LEADS TO NEW APPROACHES

A PORTRAIT OF COMPOSER VOLKER BERTELMANN

At the age of eleven, Volker Bertelmann ruined his parents' piano. He had practised on the instrument for two years, but then "the sounds were no longer good enough". Because he didn't have "money for a synthesiser", he nailed drawing pins to the piano hammers to get a different sound.

This laid the foundation for a global career that would see him win the Oscar for Best Film Score in 2023. After forming his first rock band at the age of 14, he tried his luck with various groups until gradually gaining more international recognition as from 2004 under the pseudonym 'Hauschka' – after the Bohemian composer Vinzenz Hauschka. Here, he was returning to the principles he had discovered in his childhood by alienating piano sounds using mechanical means. For example, he clamped strips of leather between the strings, weighted them down with objects, or taped over some keys so he could no longer use them: "I build barriers to change my habits. Every resistance, every surprise leads me to new approaches."

However, a career as a film composer was not planned, although he did produce the soundtrack for Doris Dörrie's German production *BLISS* (GLÜCK) in 2012, for example. The situation changed abruptly in 2015, however. He was sent on a worldwide tour by his British record company FatCat, some of whose artists such as Johan Johansson (*SICARIO*) also wrote film scores. After a concert in Melbourne, director Garth Davis approached him and asked if he would like to score his film *FINDING HOME – GARTH DAVIS & THE DIRECTION OF LION*. This led to a collaboration with fellow composer Dustin O'Halloran, who had already created the score for *MARIE ANTOINETTE* by Sophia Coppola. "That was a bit like an apprenticeship for me," says Bertelmann. It was training that came along with spectacular successes – such as winning the Australian Film Award and an Oscar nomination. There were also revealing insights into "how other countries treat their film musicians".

The success of *FINDING HOME – GARTH DAVIS & THE DIRECTION OF LION* led to a commission for the score to the series *PATRICK MELROSE*, which brought him together with director Edward Berger in 2017: "That collaboration worked

fantastically straight away. There are directors from whom you get nothing but opposition. But Edward Berger's attitude is that we need to overcome certain obstacles, but we can do that. We just need to dig deeper." Bertelmann also appreciates the importance Berger attaches to the music: "While it is often blended into the background, there are many places in his work where it is truly audible." Their shared aesthetic approach was another decisive factor for the composer. "We want to find a sound that has delicacy, and sometimes strength. But it's not about long melodic arcs or pompous scores."

Bertelmann identifies with the philosophy of composer John Cage, who is considered the inventor of prepared pianos: "For him, everything that makes noise is actually music. I feel the same way. I can sit at a crossroads and hear syncopation in the cars' tyres."

Agreement on their artistic approach led to Edward Berger's *ALL QUIET ON THE WESTERN FRONT*, which won Bertelmann the Oscar for Best Film Score in 2023. This was followed by the joint project *CONCLAVE*, for the "religious sound aesthetic" of which Bertelmann used, among other things, the *Cristal Baschet*, an instrument made of glass and metal. He is currently working on Berger's *THE BALLAD OF A SMALL PLAYER*.

Because Bertelmann himself is a man of many sounds, he composes for a huge spectrum of productions. These range from Hollywood action films such as *THE CROW* to German TV movies like *SÖRENSEN FÄNGT FEUER*. Personal chemistry is often the deciding factor in his project decisions: "I made *SÖRENSEN* because I liked the lead actor Bjarne Mädel so much." He certainly doesn't rule out traditional orchestral soundtracks. "I am currently composing for an animated film, and it's great fun to write classical lines of melody for that." Despite his international career, he is finding the rain of awards and nominations rather surreal. When he received the 2023 Oscar, he felt "like [he was] in a tunnel". But the biggest surprise came from something else: "I never used to believe that I could write a great film score as an independent musician. But with the right skill-set, it is possible."

Rüdiger Sturm

AN INDUSTRY IN THE MAKING

German film export after World War II

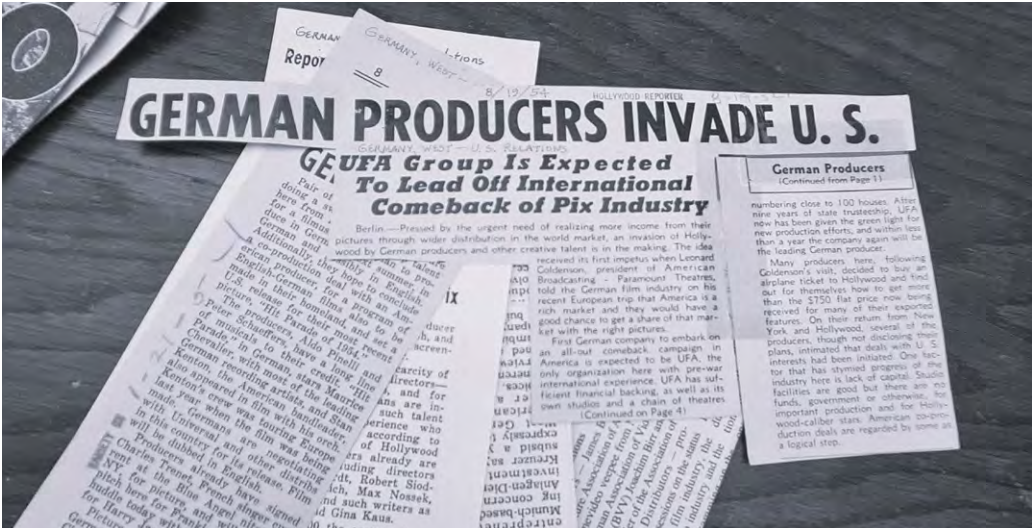
In 1954, the Export-Union des Deutschen Films (today: German Films) began its work to support the export of West German films by providing advice, promotion and marketing measures. It was headed by Günter Schwarz, an experienced film export official who had previously served the Nazi regime for years in the Film Chamber of the Reich (see GFQ 1/2024) and who was now supposed to help the blossoming German film internationally. But why was it necessary to establish such an organisation in 1954?

A statistic handed down by Thomas H. Guback provides an example of where West German film stood internationally in the 1950s: In Canada and the USA, no fewer than 74 German films were released in cinemas in 1956, almost twice as many as French films. However, the combined revenue from their release totalled just 282,000 dollars (equivalent to around DM 1.2 million) – a tenth of what the French films grossed. The “Filmstatistische Taschenbuch” puts the total West German export revenue for 1956 at DM 14

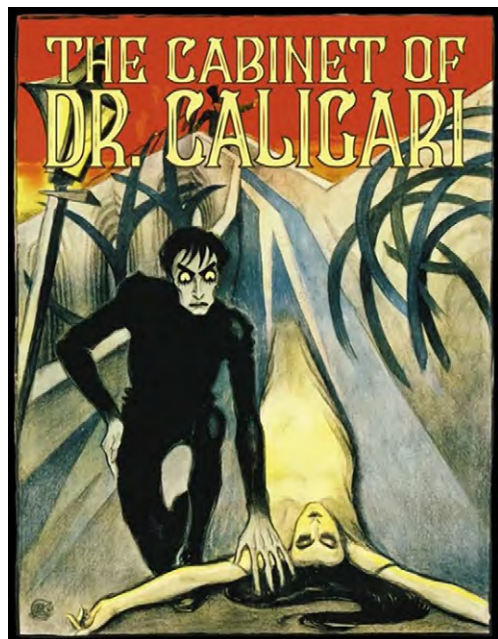
million. In other words: While domestic films set records at home with a turnover of DM 154 million (1956 in West Germany), international interest in them was marginal.

There are a number of reasons for this clear concentration of the West German film industry on the domestic market, which it largely dominated in the 1950s, and the resulting weakness in exports after the end of World War II. At least before the war, German film was in a completely different position internationally.

Between 1919 and 1933, German film enjoyed its most productive and internationally successful phase. There were many reasons for this: For example, the young German film industry was in a much stronger position than most other countries after World War I. In addition, a quota law first curbed film imports, then a compensation system was introduced that provided for a new German production for every import. Then there was inflation, which made German films extre-



mely cheap and also reduced the risk of venturing into cinematic experiments. All this led to an enormous output – up to 500 films were produced annually, flooding the international market at favourable prices. A few exceptional films further fuelled the interest and reputation of German film. Robert Wiene's *THE CABINET OF DR. CALIGARI*, for example, was a great success throughout Europe in 1920, while Ernst Lubitsch's *PASSION* was also shown for weeks in the USA in the same year.



The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari Poster © Transilfilm

Lubitsch's immense success triggered a veritable export boom of German films in the USA for a short time. In her book "Foreign Films in America", Kerry Segrave recounts in detail the almost hysterical reactions to the glut of inexpensive German productions. Once, when 46 German films were announced in one release week, there were veritable protest marches in Los Angeles on Miller's Theatre, which had planned a matinée of *THE CABINET OF DR. CALIGARI* in April 1921.

While rotten eggs were being thrown at the cinema there, a law was being considered in Venice, California, which would force cinema owners to buy a licence costing 50 dollars a day

if they played German or Austrian films. High tariffs for German films were also being discussed in order to protect American films from the superiority of German films. The New York Times took a more relaxed view and argued on 19 April 1921: "It is also true that the German feature films lately shown here are better than anything that ever came out of Los Angeles". A day later, it added: "The real German menace in the moving picture field is the menace of superior intelligence".

At the end of June 1921, *Variety* ran the headline "German-made films now found to be heavy drug on market", but after a few months, the excitement died down and interest in German film increased. After all, films such as *CALIGARI*, *PASSION* or Fritz Lang's *METROPOLIS* were notable exceptions in a German mass industry of that time – the majority of productions that left Germany's film factories at the time were clearly of inferior quality. Nevertheless, in the years between 1923 and 1935, the proceeds from German film exports accounted for between 20% and 50% of total production income. Moreover, by the end of the 1920s, over 70% of the annual output of German films was exported – a record for the ages. In addition to all the other factors, the cinema of the Weimar Republic had one main advantage for exports that was soon to disappear: it was silent film and therefore a cinema without a language barrier.

But back to the 1950s, when the export of West German films faced completely different challenges. There were numerous reasons for the export weakness after the end of World War II – for example, the fact that all structures first had to be rebuilt in a rather lengthy process: film had been misused by the Nazi regime for propaganda purposes to such an extent that the Allies initially stopped all film activities completely in 1945 with the aim of smashing the fascist propaganda monopoly and comprehensively reorganising the industry's structures. All administrations in the four occupation zones initially pursued their own plans for rebuilding the film industry. It was not until October 15, 1946 that Wolfgang Staudte's *THE MURDERERS ARE AMONG US* premiered, the first German feature film to be produced after the end of the war,



Wolfgang Staude 1955 © Noske, J.D. Aefelio - Nationala Archief

namely by DEFA under a Soviet licence. Nine more films from the four zones followed in the course of 1947, and another 22 in 1948.

In the first two post-war years, however, film exports were out of the question, not only because of the lack of films, but also because all German trade was initially cut off by the Allies anyway. In addition, the distribution of newly produced films within the four zones was difficult enough because there was no distributor allowed to operate in all four zones. So in June 1947, a complex four-power agreement was reached on the exchange of films between the occupation zones, in which all the occupying powers were able to make their selection according to their own criteria. The DEFA film *MARRIAGE IN THE SHADOWS* (1947) by Kurt Maetzig, for example, was one of the few films to be released simultaneously in all four zones because all of them apparently appreciated its "great educational value". Only in October 1948 was it possible to establish free film distribution within at least three zones, the American, British and French ones – the "film border" with the Soviet zone remained in place, however.

From 1948, foreign trade in the western zones was initially handled by the Joint Export Import Agency (JEIA), which treated goods such as cuckoo clocks in the same way as feature films. There was a lack of specialised knowledge as well as capacity: The issuing of import and export licences is said to have taken up to nine months.

In the Soviet zone, where the film sector was basically structured on a centralised basis by

DEFA, things were handled much more professionally from the outset: The film trade was initially taken over by Sovexportfilm, which specialised in it, before the VEB DEFA Außenhandel was founded in two stages up to 1955, which handled the GDR's film trade until 1990. DEFA exports were thus organised in a stable manner early on.

This was not the case in the western zones and, from 1949, in the newly founded FRG. By September 1949, only eight of the 50 or so films produced to date had been sold abroad. Only a few distribution companies had a foreign department, such as Herzog-Filmverleih, which succeeded in selling its operetta title *MASK IN BLUE* (Georg Jacoby, 1952) to almost 40 countries. But such successes were rare. Individual world sales companies such as the later very successful Exportfilm Bischoff or Omnia Deutsche Film-Export only began their work around 1950.



Omnia Deutsche Film-Export-Logo

It was therefore time for a specialised contact point to create a better environment for the export of West German films. In 1954, this gap in the structural fabric of West German film was closed with the establishment of the Export-Union – seven years after the first West German film was completed. Two years after the Export-Union began its work, the film trade magazine "Filmblätter" was quick to offer compliments: rising revenues in 1955 and 1956 were "primarily due to the work of the skilfully operating Export-Union". From 1954, foreign film revenues doubled to DM 25 million by 1958.

The complicated rebuilding of structures in the domestic film industry as an obstacle to film exports was accompanied by the general eco-

nomic and political rebuilding of foreign connections and film-specific distribution channels. These in turn were closely linked to the understandable resentment against Germany just a few years after a Nazi dictatorship that was responsible for the deaths of millions of people. The inhabitants of the countries formerly occupied by Germany, whose cinemas were flooded with UFA productions during the occupation, had lost their appetite for German cinema.

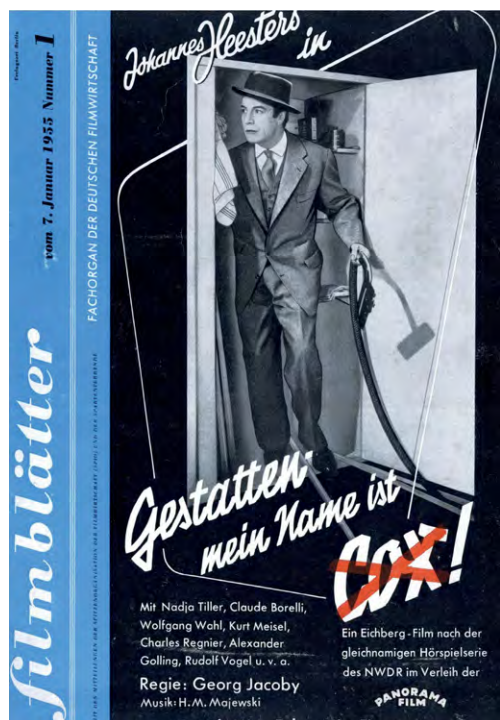
Especially as German post-war film was still strongly characterised on many levels by an enduring UFA continuity. Former UFA functionaries in important film policy positions was one thing. However, the fact that the majority of filmmakers had learnt or practised their craft at the UFA and – at least in West Germany – saw little reason to change the tried and tested narrative style was a decisive factor in the difficult export situation. They maintained the continuity on the one hand, because the familiar style represented a security in the way they worked under otherwise difficult con-

ditions. But also because the German audience was used to this UFA style and probably liked it very much. This can be seen quite clearly in the popularity of the so-called “Reprisen” (re-runs), i.e. entertaining UFA films from the Nazi era that were released by the Allies as unobjectionable and were shown in cinemas until the early 1960s (and later also repeated on television). Even between 1955 and 1958, these re-runs still generated a turnover of over DM 5 million at the cinema box office. Remakes of UFA films were also very popular: 95 UFA films that had already been filmed between 1933 and 1945 were remade and brought to the cinema between 1949 and 1959.

After all, this UFA style proved to be successful. The restructured film industry in the 1950s seemed to be content with exploitation on the German market with cinema revenues of DM 154 million for German films alone (1956). An average film had to sell around three million tickets in those years in order to pay for itself – and this could easily be achieved on the German market with the tailor-made Heimat and revue films in the UFA style alone.

Apart from the brief phase between 1946 and 1949, when the two German states had not yet been founded and rare “rubble film” gems could be made, West German film had not been able to develop a new wave à la neo-realism that could have been attractive on the international market. Its international successes were limited to individual films and directors, from Wolfgang Staudte to Helmut Käutner and Kurt Hoffmann, who were celebrated – thanks to the Export-Union – at film festivals around the world. The DEFA films of those early years, on the other hand, often surpassed the majority of their West German counterparts. However, they were rejected by the West as being too ideological, but celebrated regular successes in countries of the political East.

Oliver Baumgarten



Cover Magazin Filmblätter 1955

THEA EHRE
ACTOR

TIM KUHN
DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY

MARIKO MINOGUCHI
WRITER & DIRECTOR

LEA DRINDA
ACTOR

AARON ALTARAS
ACTOR

MALA REINHARDT
DIRECTOR

LEONIE KRIPPENDORFF
WRITER & DIRECTOR

FACE TO FACE WITH GERMAN FILMS

THE FILMMAKERS



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30 AND WILD

30 AND WILD is the hilarious standalone sequel to Germany's most successful YouTube feature film, YOUNG AND WILD, which has amassed over 39 million views since 2018.

Frederik and Tim return to their hometown to celebrate Dennis's 30th birthday, hoping to relive their wild youth. But when their plans are hijacked by the 'Concrete Rosebeds', a hopelessly talentless rock band desperate to win a local contest, their weekend spirals into unexpected chaos.

Between old loves, buried secrets, and the creeping reality of adulthood, they'll have to face the fact that finally growing up isn't just an option – it's inevitable.

GENRE Comedy, Coming-of-Age Story **YEAR OF PRODUCTION** 2025 **DIRECTOR** Felix Maxim Eller **SCREENPLAY** Felix Maxim Eller **DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY** Felix Maxim Eller **CAST** Karsten Jaskiewicz, Stefan Merten, Michael Bruch, Kathrin Bolle, Martin Armknecht, Ivo Pietzker **PRODUCER** Felix Maxim Eller **CO-PRODUCER** Karsten Jaskiewicz **PRODUCTION COMPANY** Lost Tape Film- & Tonproduktion **RUNTIME** 94 min **LANGUAGE** German

WORLD SALES Lost Tape Film- & Tonproduktion
 eller@losttape.de • www.losttape.de



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AMRUM

Amrum Island, Spring 1945. In the final days of the war, 12-year-old Nanning braves the treacherous sea to hunt seals, goes fishing at night, and works the nearby farm to help his mother feed the family. Despite the hardship, life on the beautiful, windswept island almost feels like paradise. But when peace finally comes, it reveals a deeper threat: the enemy is far closer than he imagined.

GENRE Drama **YEAR OF PRODUCTION** 2025 **DIRECTOR** Fatih Akin **SCREENPLAY** Hark Bohm, Fatih Akin **DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY** Karl Walter Lindenlaub **CAST** Jasper Billerbeck, Laura Tonke, Lisa Hagmeister, Kian Köppke, Lars Jessen, Detlev Buck, Matthias Schweighöfer, Diane Kruger **PRODUCERS** Fatih Akin, Herman Weigel **CO-PRODUCERS** Steffen Schier, Magdalena Prosteder, Felix Wendlandt **PRODUCTION COMPANY** bombero international and Warner Bros. Film Productions Germany in co-production with Rialto Film **RUNTIME** 93 min **LANGUAGE** German **FESTIVALS** Cannes Film Festival 2025

WORLD SALES Beta Cinema
beta@betacinema.com • www.betacinema.com



© Amin Motallebzadeh

CONFERENCE OF THE BIRDS

After the funeral of the club's head coach, former assistant Erdem Yıldırım finds himself confronted with questions on a press conference. As his statements are translated to the public, backroom meetings start to turn into unusual encounters. Club officials gather to navigate the turmoil, while Yıldırım and translator Anna Malik share secret moments in a Muslim prayer room. Meanwhile, the head scout fails to convince star player Sylla to agree to a transfer, and newly appointed head coach Simons van de Simons takes measures to avoid being recruited by his former rival club. As the day of the big final approaches, the team prepares—unaware of what lies ahead.

GENRE Drama **YEAR OF PRODUCTION** 2025 **DIRECTOR** Amin Motallebzadeh **SCREENPLAY** Amin Motallebzadeh **DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY** Tom Otte **CAST** Enes Yurdayün, Lucca Pawlik, Bülent Özdemir, Alexander Simon, Catherine Seifert, Marten Quirin Korte, Wigger Bierma, Dieter Bernkopf, Willy Hans, Souleymane Sylla, Hicham El Madkouri, Steven Sowah **PRODUCERS** Amin Motallebzadeh, Andrea Schütte, Dirk Decker **PRODUCTION COMPANY** Tamtam Film **RUNTIME** 79 min **LANGUAGE** English, Turkish, German, Arabic, French **FESTIVALS** FID Marseille 36e édition 2025

WORLD SALES Shellac Films
sales@shellacfilms.com • www.shellacfilms.com



© Kevin Lee - Amour Fou 2025

DAS GEHEIME STOCKWERK

THE SECRET FLOOR

Karli (12) moves to the Alps, where his parents fulfil their dream of owning a hotel. Instead of vacation, Karli grudgingly helps his parents scrape off old wallpaper. Then he discovers that he can travel through time with the old elevator - to the year 1938! There, Karli befriends the lively Jewish girl Hannah and the shoeshiner Georg. In the present, Karli gradually confronts the shadow of National Socialism that looms over the world of his new friends.

When Georg is wrongfully accused and arrested for theft, Hannah and Karli want to find the real criminal. They discover during their investigations that strange things are happening in the hotel. The three friends want to solve the mystery together and embark on an exciting journey, during which they discover that a great secret lies behind the hotel facade!

GENRE Children's Film **YEAR OF PRODUCTION** 2025 **DIRECTOR** Norbert Lechner **SCREENPLAY** Antonia Rothe-Liemann **DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY** Daniela Knapp **CAST** Silas John **PRODUCER** Norbert Lechner **PRODUCTION COMPANY** Kevin Lee Film **RUNTIME** 91 min **LANGUAGE** German **FESTIVALS** Goldener Spatz 2025

WORLD SALES The Playmaker Munich
worldsales@playmaker.de • www.playmaker.de



© Martin Danisch

ENDE DES KREISES

END OF THE CIRCLE

Marla – as an archaeologist, she is trying, with limited success, to prove the matriarchal origins of humanity. As a single mother, she is trying to manage the present. With limited success. Suddenly, Erika appears in the closet, singing the praises of the German housewife. Erika, Marla's deceased grandmother. Not the only ghost haunting the mother of two teenage daughters. Children are like ghosts: they drive Marla almost to madness. Then she also receives the termination notices for her day job and her Berlin backyard apartment. How do you avoid passing down the traumas of the past to the next generation? How is that possible? Not well, at first. Her daughters, Luna and Jade, struggle with their own issues and their mother's battle with her ancestors, who have long forgotten how to fight for themselves. Full of unfulfilled longings. A time travel. Humorous, touching. Until the end of the circle.

GENRE Drama, Fantasy, Tragicomedy **YEAR OF PRODUCTION** 2024 **DIRECTOR** Mareike Sophie Danisch **SCREENPLAY** Mareike Sophie Danisch **DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY** Anselm Belser **CAST** Kara Schröder **PRODUCER** Mareike Danisch **PRODUCTION COMPANY** Deutsche Film und Fernsehakademie Berlin **RUNTIME** 98 min **LANGUAGE** German

WORLD SALES Deutsche Film und Fernsehakademie
a.wenzel@dffb.de • www.dffb.de



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HEIDI - DIE LEGENDE VOM LUCHS

HEIDI - RESCUE OF THE LYNX

In the heart of the Swiss Alps, spirited 8-year-old Heidi revels in her carefree life with her gruff but loving grandfather, surrounded by lush pastures and towering peaks. When Heidi rescues an injured lynx cub caught in a trap set by a sly industrialist, Mr. Schnaittinger, she names him Pepper and secretly nurses him back to health. But as the cub's playful antics draw unwanted attention, Heidi learns Schnaittinger's plans for a destructive sawmill threaten not just the cub, but the entire Alpine ecosystem.

With her loyal friend Peter and the ever-faithful St. Bernard, Joseph, Heidi embarks on a daring nighttime journey to return Pepper to his family in the wild before it's too late. Along the way, she faces the perils of nature, the lure of industrial greed, and the emotional pull of friendship.

GENRE Adventure, Animation, Children's Film, Ecology, Family Entertainment **YEAR OF PRODUCTION** 2025 **DIRECTOR** Tobias Schwarz **SCREENPLAY** Rob Sprackling **PRODUCERS** Thorsten Wegener, Dario Sanchez **PRODUCTION COMPANIES** Studio 100 International, 3Doubles Producciones, Heidi Production Film AIE, Hotel Hungaria Animation, in association with Studio Isar Animation **RUNTIME** 80 min **LANGUAGE** English

WORLD SALES Studio 100 Film
info@studio100film.com • www.studio100film.com



© Achtung Panda/Florian Emmerich

KARLA

KARLA tells the true story of a 12-year old girl in Munich 1962 who takes the courageous step of filing a complaint against her father, seeking protection from his years of abuse.

As she navigates the legal system, she forms a unique bond with Judge Lamy, who becomes her beacon of hope.

Karla's reluctance to reveal the full extent of her suffering gradually forces Judge Lamy to give her the freedom to tell her story on her terms, putting his own career at risk.

Ultimately, Judge Lamy's unconventional ruling reflects a moral imperative that transcends legal constraints and is a poignant reflection on justice and empathy in the face of trauma.

GENRE Drama **YEAR OF PRODUCTION** 2024 **DIRECTOR** Christina Tournatzes **SCREENPLAY** Yvonne Görlach **DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY** Florian Emmerich **CAST** Elise Krieps, Rainer Bock, Imogen Kogge, Torben Liebrecht, Katharina Schüttler **PRODUCERS** Jamila Wenske, Melanie Blocksdorf **CO-PRODUCERS** Milena Maitz, Falk Sanne **PRODUCTION COMPANY** Achtung Panda! Media in coproduction with Studio.TV.Film **RUNTIME** 100 min **LANGUAGE** German

WORLD SALES The Playmaker Munich
 worldsales@playmaker.de • www.playmaker.de



© Andreas Schröder

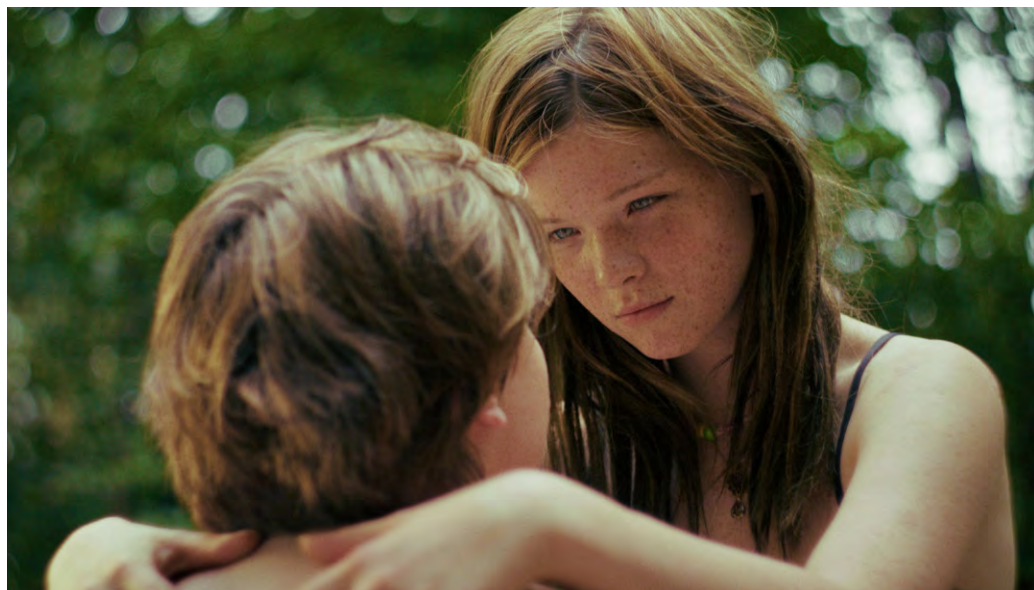
LA VOIX HUMAINE

THE HUMAN VOICE

LA VOIX HUMAINE is an opera film based on the mono-opera of the same name by Francis Poulenc. The story begins with a crack of light revealing a woman, “Elle”, on the floor. A sudden phone ring startles her. After a recent breakup Elle has been desperately waiting for her ex to call. As their conversation unfolds, surreal imagery mirrors Elle’s emotional journey through the stages of the separation. Her ex’s responses are left to the imagination, conveyed only through her reactions and the shifting musical landscape. The fractured dialogue, distorted by a poor phone connection and dishonesty on both sides, deepens her isolation. In this telecommunicative void, the phone line becomes a lifeline and a gallows rope, connecting and separating, offering both hope and doom.

GENRE Drama, Experimental **YEAR OF PRODUCTION** 2024 **DIRECTORS** Iphigenie Worbes, Andreas Schröder **SCREENPLAY** Iphigenie Worbes, Andreas Schröder **DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY** Andreas Schröder **CAST** Iphigenie Worbes **PRODUCERS** Iphigenie Worbes, Andreas Schröder **RUNTIME** 46 min **LANGUAGE** French **FESTIVALS** Stockholm City Film Festival 2024, Cine Paris Film Festival 2024, Rome Prisma Film Awards 2024, In The Palace ISFF 2025 **AWARDS** Best Experimental Film at Cine Paris Film Festival 2024, Best Experimental Film at Rome Prisma Film Award 2024, Best Actress Feature Film at Stockholm City Film Festival 2024, Best Acting Debut at Oniros Film Awards New York 2024, Best Musical Film at Oniros Film Awards New York 2024

CONTACT Andreas Schröder
info@schroeder-andreas.com • www.lavoixhumaine-operafilm.com



© Peter Keller

TOD MEINER JUGEND

DEATH OF MY YOUTH

Kai Peter returns to his hometown with his wife and son, working as a school caretaker at the same school he once attended. On the surface, life seems steady: a loving family, a stable job, and his son Silas excelling as a kickboxer, just like Kai in his youth. Yet, Kai feels unfulfilled. Hoping to break free from routine, he joins a comedy class that unexpectedly stirs up memories of his past. When he reconnects with Klaus, an old colleague, his carefully constructed life begins to unravel.

Kai must navigate the challenges of his past while deciding whether to embrace change or risk losing everything he holds dear.

GENRE Drama **YEAR OF PRODUCTION** 2025 **DIRECTOR** Timo Jacobs **SCREENPLAY** Timo Jacobs, Sophie Reyer, Daniel Jaro **DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY** Manuel Ruge **CAST** Nadeshda Brennicke, Timo Jacobs, Silas Peter, Sasha Alexander Geršak, Ninel Geiger, Detlev Buck, Sarah Bauerett, Milo Eisenblätter **PRODUCER** Timo Jacobs **PRODUCTION COMPANY** Jacobs Productions **RUNTIME** 90 min **LANGUAGE** German

WORLD SALES Look at That
thore.vollert@look-at-that.com • www.look-at-that.com

Meet us at Animation Day in Cannes Sunday, May 18, '25



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animation
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© Ruth Walz

DAS THEATER IM SUCHER

THEATER THROUGH A LENS

Ruth Walz is the most important theater photographer of our time and has worked for over 50 years at major theaters and opera houses in Berlin, Zurich, Basel, Amsterdam, Paris, Salzburg, Vienna, Brussels and Aix-en-Provence.

Her photographs still shape the collective memory of the epochal era of the Berlin Schaubühne in the 70s and 80s. There she also met the actor Bruno Ganz – the love of her life.

GENRE Art, Biopic, History, Theater **YEAR OF PRODUCTION** 2025 **DIRECTOR** Thomas Ladenburger **SCREENPLAY** Thomas Ladenburger **DIRECTORS OF PHOTOGRAPHY** Thomas Ladenburger, Ralph Netzer **CAST** Ruth Walz **PRODUCER** Thomas Ladenburger **PRODUCTION COMPANY** Thomas Ladenburger Filmproduktion in coproduction with PS Film – Peter Spoerri **RUNTIME** 100 min **LANGUAGE** German, English

WORLD SALES Thomas Ladenburger Filmproduktion
tladen@protonmail.com • www.thomas-ladenburger.com



© CALA Filmproduktion

GERMAINE ACOGNY - DIE ESSENZ DES TANZES

GERMAINE ACOGNY

Germaine Acogny is not only the “Mother of African Contemporary Dance”, but also one of Africa’s most important artistic voices. Rooted in traditional West African dances and facing European dance forms, she developed her very own, the Acogny Technique. More than 50 years on international stages, performing and teaching young dancers in Senegal and worldwide has made the 80 year old artist the dancing icon of an entire continent. 2021 this exceptional dancer, choreographer and mentor was awarded with the Venice Golden Lion of Dance for her Lifetime achievement.

GENRE Art **YEAR OF PRODUCTION** 2025 **DIRECTOR** Greta-Marie Becker **SCREENPLAY** Greta-Marie Becker **DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY** Sophie Maintigneux **CAST** Germaine Acogny, Alesandra Seutin, Helmut Vogt, Patrice Acogny **PRODUCER** Martina Haubrich **CO-PRODUCERS** Charlotte Uzu, Yanis Gaye **PRODUCTION COMPANY** CALA Filmproduktion in coproduction with Les Films d’Ici and Goree Island Cinema **RUNTIME** 92 min **LANGUAGE** French, English, Wolof

WORLD SALES/CONTACT

AUTLOOK

www.autlookfilms.com • welcome@autlookfilms.com

CALA Filmproduktion

haubrich@calafilm.de • www.calafilm.de/germaine-acogny



© Bugle Films 2023

GRAINS OF SAND

Filmed over eight years, *Grains of Sand* accompanies the filmmaker's mother and mother-in-law, artists and close friends, as they enter their ninth decade. Through conversation, memories and artwork, along with reflections by the filmmaker herself, they create together this positive, different kind of coming-of-age-story.

Margot lives in San Francisco and Barbara in Hamburg. Interviews with the women in their studios and homes reveal their rich lives at the easel and also how they have grappled over the decades with societal expectations and personal development in their roles as daughters, wives, mothers, and independent women artists.

Once a year for the course of the film, the women meet together at a stone farmhouse in the Brandenburg countryside. Here they sculpt stones together and explore what it means to arrive at this stage of their lives and how their creativity, alive and well, is changing with the years.

Margot and Barbara remain ever-passionate about their art and life. They aren't looking back on their lives. They are living them.

GENRE Art **YEAR OF PRODUCTION** 2025 **DIRECTOR** Sarah Gross **SCREENPLAY** Sarah Gross
DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY Mies Rogmans **EDITOR** Nicole Fischer **CAST** Margot Campbell Gross, R. Barbara Nelle **PRODUCER** Sarah Gross **CO-PRODUCER** Athena Kalkopoulou **PRODUCTION COMPANY** Bugle Films **RUNTIME** 85 min **LANGUAGE** English, German **FESTIVALS** Thessaloniki International Documentary 2025

WORLD SALES Bugle Films • contact@buglefilms.com • www.buglefilms.com/wp/



© Stella Tinbergen

HENRIETTE UND GUIDO - EINE UN-GEWÖHNLICHE LIEBESGESCHICHTE

HENRIETTE AND GUIDO - AN UNUSUAL LOVESTORY

Born with a frontal lobe disorder, directly after birth Henriette remained in the intensive care unit and only after many weeks she was given to her parents. This early childhood trauma is expressed today in a wild mixture of aggression and neediness. The highly intelligent Henriette is fighting against rejection which she often provokes herself. On her side there is Guido who is steadfastly building bridges to her surroundings, which she continually destroys. But thanks Guido she takes remarkable development steps.

In an inclusive fairy tale she defeats the magic bird and shows that she owns capacities which are an enrichment for others. The love story between Henriette and Guido is more than the narrative of her struggle with and in the society. It is also an example for many mentally ill people with their longing to be noticed and to be taken seriously.

GENRE Art, Biopic, Drama, Educational **YEAR OF PRODUCTION** 2024 **DIRECTOR** Stella Tinbergen
SCREENPLAY Stella Tinbergen **DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY** Sebastian Hattop **CAST** Henriette Simon, Guido Mattern, Hilma Simon, Marina Baranova, Tamara McCall **PRODUCER** Stella Tinbergen
CO-PRODUCER Kurt Otterbacher **PRODUCTION COMPANY** Stella Tinbergen - Dokumentarfilme
 in coproduction with strandfilm-Productions Frankfurt **RUNTIME** 102 min **LANGUAGE** German
FESTIVALS Kasseler Dokumentarfilm und Videofest 2024; Lichter Filmfest Frankfurt International 2025

CONTACT Stella Tinbergen - Dokumentarfilme • tinbergen@online.de • www.tinbergen.de
henrietteundguido.strandfilm.eu



© WeizeneggerFilm

IM SCHATTEN DER BILDER IN THE PAINTINGS' SHADOW

This documentary depicts the extraordinary life of expressionist artist Stephanie Hollenstein. Her life is characterized by opposites: born into an impoverished peasant family in Lustenau she rises to influential status within Vienna's art world. Living openly as a homosexual woman when it was still criminalized, she becomes president of the Association of Women Artists of Austria. Driven by extraordinary willpower she even disguises herself as a man to be able to join the armed forces in World War 1.

At first glance, it is a heroine's story. Until she joins the banned Nazi Party in 1934, whose ideals she remains faithful to until her death in 1944. The documentary follows Hollenstein's professional and personal life in the context of the political and economic conditions of her time. Her story and the clear parallels to our present allow for reflection.

GENRE Biopic, Experimental, History **YEAR OF PRODUCTION** 2025 **DIRECTOR** Birgitta Weizenegger **SCREENPLAY** Birgitta Weizenegger **DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY** Birgitta Weizenegger **SOUND** Soundscape Studio Leipzig **CAST** Irina Wrona, Louisa Sophie Egger, Nina Schedlmayer, Sabine Plakolm-Forsthuber, Georgia Holz, Oliver Heinzle, Alwin Rohner, Hannes Sulzenbacher **PRODUCER** Birgitta Weizenegger **PRODUCTION COMPANY** WeizeneggerFilm **RUNTIME** 90 min **LANGUAGE** German, English

WORLD SALES WeizeneggerFilm
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© Pascal Schmitt

STOLZ & EIGENSINN

PRIDE & ATTITUDE

Germany immediately after reunification. The second great wave of redundancies has reached the East. Women from the former largescale industrial enterprises of the GDR talk about themselves and the personal independence they have gained through their work with surprising naturalness. Self-confident and emancipated, they share their astonishment that suddenly only men are supposed to do their jobs. We also see footage of their day-to-day work in industrial buildings and brown coal mines. The interviews have been preserved on old U-matic tapes from the stocks of the former Leipzig pirate radio station KANAL X.

More than 30 years later, Gerd Kroske has recovered this cinematic treasure. Like an experimental setup, the old material is commented on by the women in split screen. **PRIDE & ATTITUDE** is a media encirclement that closes a gap and portrays women who have retained their pride and stubbornness to this day.

GENRE Biopic, Drama, Experimental, History, Tragicomedy **YEAR OF PRODUCTION** 2025
DIRECTOR Gerd Kroske **SCREENPLAY** Gerd Kroske **DIRECTORS OF PHOTOGRAPHY** Anne Misselwitz, Jakobine Motz **CAST** Steffi Gänkler, Silke Butzlaff, Ulla Nitzsche, Bärbel Grätz, Brigitte Jahn, Christel Bradler, Cornelia Patzwald, Ingrid Kressner, Monika Schurmann, Norbert Meissner
PRODUCER Gerd Kroske **PRODUCTION COMPANY** Realistfilm **RUNTIME** 113 min **LANGUAGE** German **FESTIVALS** Berlinale 2025

WORLD SALES realistfilm
 realistfilm@t-online.de • www.realistfilm.de



NEXT GENERATION SHORT TIGER

CANNES PREMIERE

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PREKID VATRE

CEASEFIRE

Hazira survived Srebrenica. She has lived in the Ježevac refugee camp near Tuzla for almost 30 years. She has never been able to return to her home village in the mountains above Srebrenica.

Today, it is in Republika Srpska, the Serbian part of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Put on hold by political and social conditions, her days are marked by survival routines—collecting firewood, cleaning obsessively, and navigating the harsh conditions of camp life. Through dark humor and quiet resilience, Hazira copes with the trauma of a war that continues to define her life.

To keep it from becoming too painful, Hazira is in constant motion, always running from her memories, her situation, and the fear that it could start all over again. This standstill is symbolic of the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina today. Hazira's portrait serves as a reminder of the enduring impact of war, showing how people like her navigate a world that seems to have forgotten them. 2025 marks the genocide in Srebrenica and the end of the war in former Yugoslavia for the 30th time. This film pays tribute to those who are still suffering from the consequences of this war.

2025 marks the genocide in Srebrenica and the end of the war in former Yugoslavia for the 30th time. This film pays tribute to those who are still suffering from the consequences of this war.

GENRE History **YEAR OF PRODUCTION** 2025 **DIRECTOR** Jakob Krese **SCREENPLAY** Meta Krese **DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY** Jakob Krese **CAST** Hazira Dzafić **PRODUCER** Annika Mayer **CO-PRODUCERS** Ivana Naceva, Otto Reuschel **PRODUCTION COMPANY** Majmun Films in coproduction with Zerostress Production and PÓTEM **RUNTIME** 30 min **LANGUAGE** Bosnian

CONTACT Jakob Krese • jakob@majmunfilms.com • www.majmunfilms.com



© Sebastian Huber

RÜCKBLICKEND BETRACHTET IN RETROSPECT

1970. An entire small town is being built for the Summer Olympics in Munich. It includes a subway station, a stadium, a swimming pool, a residential area and the largest shopping mall in Europe at the time – the Olympia shopping mall. Many migrant workers, so-called “guest workers”, are employed on the construction site.

2016. Nine people are murdered in a right-wing terrorist attack at the Olympia shopping mall in Munich. All the victims have a migrant background.

1982. Sohrab Shahid Saless, an Iranian director, shoots a film in West Germany as a response to the rapid increase in racism. The characters in the film walk past houses, walls and facades smeared with far-right slogans. The colours flicker shrilly and fade again. **IN RETROSPECT** is an attempt to look back and search for connections that link a space and its history.

GENRE Documentary **YEAR OF PRODUCTION** 2025 **DIRECTORS** Daniel Asadi Faezi, Mila Zhluktenko **SCREENPLAY** Daniel Asadi Faezi, Mila Zhluktenko **DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY** Tobias Blicke **PRODUCERS** Daniel Asadi Faezi, Mila Zhluktenko **PRODUCTION COMPANY** Daniel Asadi Faezi, Mila Zhluktenko **RUNTIME** 14 min **LANGUAGE** German **FESTIVALS** Berlinale 2025, Visions du Réel 2025, New Directors/New Films 2025, Vienna Shorts 2025, Documentary Film Festival Vancouver 2025

WORLD SALES Square Eyes – Wouter Jansen (Vienna, Austria)
info@squareeyesfilm.com

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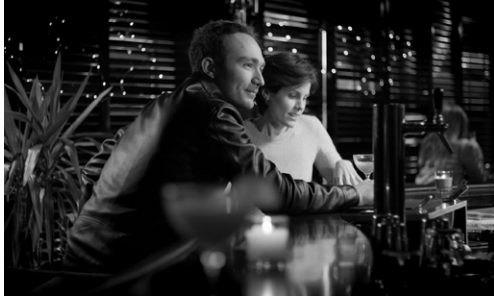
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© Shane S.Y. Kang

ASYMPTOTE

An ASYMPTOTE is a line that approaches a curve but never touches. It is a metaphor for the five characters who encounter each other, yearn to be close to each other, but are unable to touch.

A mathematician seeks out to have an affair, unhappy in her marriage. A businessman searches for true intimacy, after only blindly pursuing success. An exotic dancer struggles to be accepted for his gender identity. A singer-songwriter strives for validation, conscious of how others see her. A theremin player strains to remedy their stagnant relationship.

Each character encounters one after the other like a relay race. Yet we do not see how their stories end, left to wonder if they'll ever achieve these desires.

GENRE Drama **CATEGORY** Feature **DIRECTOR** Shane S.Y. Kang **SCREENPLAY** Shane S.Y. Kang **DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY** Dillon T. Ritchie **CAST** Andrea Benson, Özen Fidan, Eef Andriessen, Judith Mundinger, Bishop Black **PRODUCER** Shane S.Y. Kang **PRODUCTION COMPANY** Shane S.Y. Kang **LANGUAGE** English

CONTACT

Shane S.Y. Kang
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© Instant Film

BIERMANN

Germany's most (in)famous dissident Wolf Biermann, born under National Socialism to Communist parents, Jewish, and a child of war, will turn 90 next year and is still on tour; a rebel, renegade, political essayist, Holocaust survivor, and a unique German-German witness.

Although his political significance is often highlighted, Biermann is mainly a poet and songwriter, friend to colleagues such as Joan Baez and Bob Dylan. His main weapons - also in the political debate - were and are his songs and poems.

This film will showcase both the historical figure and the man - rebellious, lovingly disrespectful, and always entertaining - made by an experienced filmmaking team for a broad cinema audience.

GENRE Biopic, History, Music **CATEGORY** Theatrical Documentary **DIRECTOR** Jens Meurer **SCREENPLAY** Jens Meurer, Dirk Kämper, Pamela Biermann **DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY** Bernd Fischer, Sebastian Ganschow, Antonia Schäfer **PRODUCER** Jens Meurer **CO-PRODUCERS** Michael Souvignier, Johann Scheerer **PRODUCTION COMPANY** Instant Film in co-production with Zeitsprung Pictures and Clouds Hill Studio **LANGUAGE** German **GERMAN DISTRIBUTOR** Majestic Filmverleih

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www.instant-film.com



© MSZ

BORN TO FAKE

In 1996, one of the biggest media scandals in Germany to date shook the public: Michael Born, a self-made journalist, had faked over 20 reports for the newly emerged private television between 1990 and 1996. Some were amateurish, others featured absurd topics: child labour for Ikea in India, drug addicts licking toads to get high, and the Ku Klux Klan in the Eifel are just a few of the many fabrications.

How could it come to this? Was Michael Born a whistleblower who subversively exposed the tabloid system, or was he simply a fraudster?

A media-theoretical film challenging our perceptions of truth in an era of fake news and media manipulation, and posing the question of why we believe what we see.

GENRE Drama, Family Entertainment, Theatre, Tragicomedy **CATEGORY** Documentary **DIRECTORS** Erec Brehmer, Benjamin Rost **DIRECTORS OF PHOTOGRAPHY** Pius Neumaier, Julian Krubasik **WITH** Roland and Ulrike Berger, Martin Lettmayer, Dr. Gabriele Schuster, Claudia Bern and her daughter Marlene, Dr. Eva Hohenberger, Thomas Pritzl, Josef Maria Krasanovsky, and Michael Born **PRODUCER** Márk Szilágyi **PRODUCTION COMPANY** MSZ Production and Consulting in co-production with SWR **LANGUAGE** German

CONTACT

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www.mark-szilagyi.com



© Nuno Martini

DRAUSSEN DIE WELT THE WORLD OUTSIDE

The Berlin-set debut feature centers on 40-year-old Liz who hasn't left her apartment in over a year due to agoraphobia and severe panic attacks. Terrified of the outside world, she isolates herself, seeking safety within her four walls.

This seems to work until a wedding invitation from her former best friend arrives. Determined to attend and leave her apartment within 30 days, she begins therapy with the unconventional Dr. Sommer.

Throughout her therapy, Liz experiences triumphs, but also devastating setbacks that push her to the edge.

In the end, she must decide whether she's ready to break free from her physical and emotional prison and take the uncertain, yet promising step back into the world...

GENRE Drama **CATEGORY** Feature **DIRECTORS & SCREENPLAY** Katrine Eichberger & Nikolas Mühe **DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY** Nuno Martini **CAST** Katrine Eichberger, Anke Reitzenstein, Sidonie Smith, Javeh Asefdjah, Joel Cederberg, Kevin Brand, İdil Baydar, and John Painz **PRODUCERS** Katrine Eichberger & Nikolas Mühe **PRODUCTION COMPANY** Telling Stories Productions, Eichberger & Mühe GbR **LANGUAGE** German

CONTACT Telling Stories Productions,
 Eichberger & Mühe GbR

Katrine Eichberger und Nikolas Mühe
tellingstories@mail.de, www.katrine-eichberger.com/telling-stories-productions/
www.instagram.com/draussen_die_welt/



© New Matter Films

DRY LEAF

When Lisa, a photographer working for a sports magazine, goes missing, leaving nothing but a mysterious letter behind for her parents, her father, Ikrali, embarks on a journey to uncover what has happened to her and to find her whereabouts. Accompanied by Lisa's invisible colleague Levani, Ikrali travels to numerous football fields across Georgia, the last known locations where Lisa was working. As they journey from village to village, they connect with locals, get a sense of the communities, gather stories, and search for any information they can about Lisa.

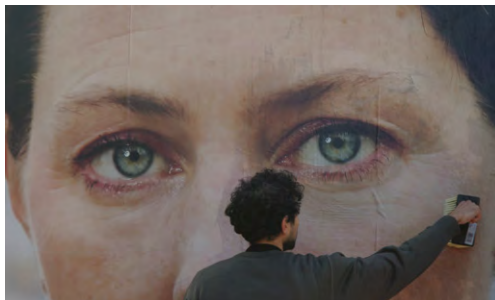
DRY LEAF is Alexandre Koberidze's second collaboration with New Matter Films after his award-winning WHAT DO WE SEE WHEN WE LOOK AT THE SKY?

GENRE Drama, Road Movie **CATEGORY** Feature

DIRECTOR Alexandre Koberidze **SCREENPLAY** Alexandre Koberidze **DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY** Alexandre Koberidze **CAST** David Koberidze, Manu Tavadze, Giorgi Bochorishvili, Vakhtang Fanchulidze, Irina Chelidze **PRODUCERS** Mariam Shatberashvili, Luise Hauschild, Alexandre Koberidze **PRODUCTION COMPANY** New Matter Films GmbH **LANGUAGE** Georgian

CONTACT

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www.newmatterfilms.com



© DFFB / Hannes Schulze

FITNESS UND VERZWEIFLUNG (WT) FITNESS AND DESPAIR (WT)

FITNESS AND DESPAIR (WT) is a genre-crossing love story about Berlin-based local politicians Wanda and Faraz, and a relationship in its long-term state and the troublesome small-scale negotiations that both love and democracy boil down to.

But what happens to a contemporary, egalitarian relationship when one partner's career is taking off while the other's is not? Can love as a communist island, essentially unselfish and irrational, survive in a free-market environment based on self-interest and economic rationality?

FITNESS AND DESPAIR (WT) is the debut feature of director Moritz Geiser, who studied at the Deutsche Film- und Fernsehakademie Berlin (DFFB).

GENRE Drama **CATEGORY** Feature **DIRECTOR** Moritz Geiser **SCREENPLAY** Moritz Geiser **DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY** Hannes Schulze **CAST** Sarah Gailer, Sahba Sahebi, Eva Löbau, Lisa Hrdina, Samuel Simon **PRODUCERS** Margarita Amineva-Jester, Daria Wichmann **CO-PRODUCER** Moritz Geiser **PRODUCTION COMPANY** Deutsche Film- und Fernsehakademie Berlin (DFFB) in co-production with Voices Films **LANGUAGE** German

CONTACT

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contact@voicesfilms.com, www.voicesfilms.com



© Ulrike Tony Vahl

KRUX

THE CRUX

THE CRUX tells the story of a deeply insecure people and the dark history of the decline of a small village community shortly before the end of the Second World War when right-wing terror was directed against its own people.

A graduate of the Film University Babelsberg KONRAD WOLF, Ulrike Tony Vahl has directed a number of short films, including the award-winning BELOW ZERO and her graduation film SUFFERING which was nominated for the German Short Film Awards. She is now making her directorial feature debut with THE CRUX.

GENRE History **CATEGORY** Feature **DIRECTOR** Ulrike Tony Vahl **SCREENPLAY** Ulrike Tony Vahl **DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY** Piotr Sobociński Jr. **CAST** Jella Haase, Frida-Lovisa Hamann, Clemens Schick, Lukas Miko, Martin Wuttke, Steffi Kühnert **PRODUCER** Martina Haubrich **CO-PRODUCERS** Claudia Schröter, Ewa Puszczynska **PRODUCTION COMPANY** CALA Filmproduktion in co-production with CALA Film Central and Extreme Emotions **LANGUAGE** German

CONTACT

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www.calafilm.de



© COIN FILM / Silviu Guiman

LIEBHABERINNEN

WOMEN AS LOVERS

Filmmaker and composer Koxi's debut feature WOMEN AS LOVERS centres on the trade fair hostess Brigitte (Johanna Wokalek), who sees her future fading away as she gets older, and 18-year-old Paula (Hannah Schiller), who in her youthful enthusiasm still has really big dreams ahead of her.

This dark tragicomedy based on the Nobel Prize winner Elfriede Jelinek's best-selling novel shows the calculating Brigitte making it right to the very top, while Paula is almost in danger of becoming a victim of reality.

A film about the impossibility of female fulfillment and the value of love.

GENRE Tragicomedy **CATEGORY** Feature **DIRECTOR** Koxi **SCREENPLAY** Koxi, Antonio de Luca **DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY** Jakob Berger **CAST** Johanna Wokalek, Hannah Schiller, Ben Münchow, Ulrike Willenbacher, Victoria Trauttmansdorff, Susanne Bredehöft, Stephanie Stremler, and others **PRODUCERS** Christine Kiauk, Herbert Schwering **CO-PRODUCERS** Judith Fülle, Philipp Käßbohrer, Matthias Murmann, Alexander Dumreicher-Ivanceanu, Bady Minck, Koxi **PRODUCTION COMPANY** COIN FILM in co-production with btF and Amour Fou Luxembourg, and supported by MMC Movies Cologne **LANGUAGE** German **GERMAN DISTRIBUTOR** Filmwelt

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© Nicolai Plätzen

MEIN NAME AKIM

MY NAME AKIM

Akim, a trans man and political refugee, struggles with bureaucratic and social barriers in a refugee reception centre. His desire to learn German is denied as language courses are only available to recognised refugees. He keeps his trans identity secret from his roommates and the other residents of the shelter for fear of being discriminated against. Shunted off to the laundry room, he lives in a world of silence – until the young Kamil and an intern manage to slowly free Akim from his isolation.

The film's story is based on the real-life experiences of Kyrgyz-born writer-director Aleksandr Kim who graduated from ifs International Film School Cologne with MY NAME AKIM this year.

GENRE Drama **CATEGORY** Short Feature
DIRECTOR Aleksandr Kim **SCREENPLAY** Aleksandr Kim **DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY** Jonas Thibaut **CAST** Yun Huang, Harry Schäfer, Kenan Javadzade, Barbara Schmidt, Carolina Romberg, Julia Reznik, Elke Bludau, Omar Shaker, Oleg Kraus **PRODUCER** Alina Naomi Theis **CREATIVE PRODUCER** Annalena Liesner **PRODUCTION COMPANY** ifs Internationale Filmschule Köln with backing from YTF Young Talent Foundation Berlin **LANGUAGE** German, Russian

CONTACT

ifs Internationale Filmschule Köln
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© Fünferfilm

PATTY (WT)

Amidst the turbulent events of German reunification, Patty is made unemployed by the Wolfen Film Factory, loses her friend Jelena and disappears in the forest of the Kyffhäuser mountains. When she reappears barely aged some thirty years later in a nearby town at the foot of the mountain, Jelena follows her ghostly apparition into the historical landscape of an East German present.

PATTY (working title) is the debut fiction feature by Hochschule für Bildende Künste Hamburg (HFBK) graduate Luise Donschen whose documentary CASANOVA GENE (CASANOVAGEN) had its world premiere in the Berlinale's Forum programme in 2018.

GENRE Drama, History **CATEGORY** Feature
DIRECTOR Luise Donschen **SCREENPLAY** Luise Donschen **DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY** Helena Wittmann **CAST** Gerti Drassl, Clemens Bobke, Nele Christoph, Manuela Biedermann **PRODUCERS** Julia Cöllen, Frank Scheuffele, Karsten Krause **CO-PRODUCERS** Mariam Shatberashvili, Luise Hauschild **PRODUCTION COMPANY** Fünferfilm in co-production with New Matter Films **LANGUAGE** German **GERMAN DISTRIBUTOR** Grandfilm

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REBECCA HORN - DAS GEWICHT DER WELT

REBECCA HORN - DAS GEWICHT DER WELT explores the multi-layered and extensive oeuvre of the late artist Rebecca Horn, who expanded the concept of art in the 20th century and laid the foundation for subsequent generations of female artists with her work. Her interdisciplinary work, consisting of performances, videos, films, installations, sculptures, poems and drawings, is examined within the context of her time and its significance for the present day.

The artist portrait sees Müller reunited with producer Martina Haubrich and DoP Christine A. Maier after their collaboration together on ELFRIEDE JELINEK - LANGUAGE UNLEASHED which won the German and Austrian Film Awards for Best Documentary in 2023.

GENRE Art **CATEGORY** Documentary **DIRECTOR** Claudia Müller **SCREENPLAY** Claudia Müller **DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY** Christine A. Maier **WITH** Rebecca Horn, Marina Abramovic, Nancy Spector, Peter Raue **PRODUCER** Martina Haubrich **PRODUCTION COMPANY** CALA Film West GmbH in co-production with CALA Filmproduktion GmbH **LANGUAGE** German **GERMAN DISTRIBUTOR** Missing Films GmbH

WORLD SALES / CONTACT

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GERMAN FILMS PODCASTS



published every third Tuesday



published every third Thursday

GERMAN FILMS SERVICE + MARKETING



is the national information and advisory center for the promotion of German films worldwide. It was established in 1954 under the name Export-Union of German Cinema as the umbrella association for the Association of German Feature Film Producers, the Association of New German Feature Film Producers and the Association of German Film Exporters, and operates today in the legal form of a limited company. In 2004, the company was reorganized and now operates under the name: German Films Service + Marketing GmbH.

SHAREHOLDERS are the German Producers Guild, the German Producers Alliance, the Association of German Film Exporters, the German Federal Film Board (FFA), the German Kinemathek Museum for Film and TV, the German Documentary Association, Bavarian Film Fund, Film Fund North Rhine-Westphalia, Berlin-Brandenburg Film Fund, and the German Short Film Association.

German Films' budget comes from film export levies, the office of the Federal Government Commissioner for Culture and the Media, and the FFA. The eight main regional film funds (FilmFernsehFonds Bayern, MOIN Filmförderung Hamburg Schleswig-Holstein, Film und Medienstiftung NRW, HessenFilm, Medienboard Berlin-Brandenburg, MFG Baden-Württemberg, Mitteldeutsche Medienförderung, MV Filmförderung, and Nordmedia) make a financial contribution towards the work of German Films.

German Films is a founding member of the European Film Promotion, a network of European film organizations with similar responsibilities to those of German Films. The organization, with its headquarters in Hamburg, aims to develop and realize joint projects for the presentation of European films on an international level.

In association and cooperation with its shareholders, German Films works to promote feature, documentary, television and short films.

In addition, German Films has foreign representatives for the US, Eastern Europe and China/ Southeast Asia.

RANGE OF ACTIVITIES

■ Close cooperation with major international film festivals, including Berlin, Cannes, Venice, San Sebastian, Locarno, Sundance, Karlovy Vary, Toronto, New York, Shanghai, Warsaw, and Busan

■ Organization of umbrella stands for German sales companies and producers at international television and film markets

■ Staging of Festivals of German Films in selected international territories in cooperation with the Goethe-Institut

■ Staging of industry screenings in key international territories

■ Providing advice and information for representatives of the international press and buyers from the fields of cinema, home entertainment, and television

■ Providing advice and information for German filmmakers and press on international festivals, conditions of participation, and German films being shown

■ Organization of the annual Next Generation Short Tiger short film program, which presents a selection of shorts and is internationally premiered in Cannes

■ Publication of informational literature about current German films and the German film industry, as well as international market analyses and special festival brochures

■ A website (www.german-films.de) offering information about new German films, a film archive, information and links to German and international film festivals and institutions

■ Organization of the selection procedure for the German entry for the Oscar® for Best International Feature Film

■ Organization of the German Films Previews geared toward arthouse distributors and buyers of German films

■ Selective financial Distribution Support for the foreign releases of German films

■ Organization with UniFrance of the annual German-French film meeting

■ Presentation of the annual FACE TO FACE WITH GERMAN FILMS campaign which shines a spotlight on some of the most influential German talents currently working in the industry, who represent just some of the many dynamic 'faces' of German filmmaking today.

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GERMAN FILMS QUARTERLY IS PUBLISHED BY**German Films Service + Marketing GmbH****Herzog-Wilhelm-Str. 16****80331 Munich/Germany****phone +49-89-5 99 78 70****info@german-films.de****www.german-films.de**

ISSN 1614-6387

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Fatih Akin © Linda Rosa Saal

Design & Art DirectionWerner Schauer www.triptychon.design**Printing Office**

F&W Druck- und Mediencenter GmbH
www.fw-medien.de

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