EINE PRODUKTION VON MONTE KALK FILM

IN KOPRODUKTION MIT BILDUNDTONFABRIK & ANIA MARIA WANDA

DIE BALLADE VON MITTWOCH AUF DONNERSTAG

43. FILMFEST MÜNCHEN 26

MIT
ULRIKE PRAGER MAGDALENA LAUBISCH
DAVID VORMWEG JEAN-LUC BUBERT
JOHANNES BENECKE PAUL FAßNACHT
SERGEN MERAL OONA VON MAYDELL SVEN SEEBURG
TORSTEN PETER SCHNICK MICHAEL ELZE
MAURICE HERZ MARTIN ASELMANN JULIAN SARK
FERHAT KALELI SOPHIA MERCEDES BURTSCHER
NENA BORZIC PHILIPPINE PACHL CENNET RÜYA VOSS
THEKLA VILOO FLIESBERG MARCEL DEMELER
SUSANNE SEUFFERT MERYEM YILDIRIM
BENJAMIN HÖPPNER MORITZ KLAUS MICHAEL HOCH
JOSCHA BALTHA ANNOU REINERS NICK ROMEO REIMANN
GUISEPPE PENNINO EL MKLLAKI AISSA
MICHAEL SZYSZKA AMAL DAHER

GEFÖRDERT VON DER FILM- UND MEDIENSTIFTUNG NRW BUCH JAN BONNY, JAN EICHBERG BILDGESTALTUNG MONTELL TARASCHEWSKI MUSIK TINA SCHÜLER
MONTAGE CHRISTOPH OTTO TONGESTALTUNG STEFFEN PFAUTH, KARL ROMMING, RENÉ NICKLAUS KOSTÜMBILD NINA-SOPHIE BRETTSCHNEIDER
AUSSTATTUNG JULIA MARIA BAUMANN 2. KAMERA LARS ELLIGER, RUBEN GÖTZ FILMTONMEISTER RENÉ NICKLAUS, JORGE LOUREIRO
REGIEASSISTENZ MICHEL DULISCH, IRMAN THIESSEN, DANIEL HOPP GRADING LUCAS GRANT
KOPRODUKTION JUDITH FÜLLE & ANIA KOLYSZKO PRODUKTION & REGIE CHRISTOPH OTTO

PLAKATGESTALTUNG MICHAEL SZYSZKA (ILLUSTRATION), STUDIO TITEL (LAYOUT)

THE BALLAD FROM WEDNESDAY TO THURSDAY

Germany 2026 | Ensemble Comedy | 79 min
Director: Christoph Otto
Written by: Jan Bonny, Jan Eichberg
Production: Monte Kalk Film
Co-production: bildundtonfabrik, ania maria wanda

SYNOPSIS

The Ballad from Wednesday to Thursday is an ensemble comedy unfolding over the course of one night in Cologne's pubs, bars, shisha lounges and ice cream parlours.

Between Wednesday evening and Thursday morning, people meet who need to talk in order to make sense of the world – even when they are not quite sure how. They talk, argue, get tangled up in their own words, and keep talking anyway.

The film moves between a number of distinct locations: La Perla, a long-established Italian bar; Haus Elze, a traditional corner pub; Vogel, a classic Cologne beer house; Ayni, a bourgeois-hip wine bar; the Van der Put ice cream parlour; and the busy Ehrenbar shisha lounge. Hamid runs the Ehrenbar and secretly gets drunk as his increasingly frustrating search for an apartment in the city takes its toll.

Debbie, a police cadet, and Julius, a education student, meet for a Tinder date at Bar La Perla. Despite their differences and misunderstandings, they find themselves drawn to one another.

Moni, who took early retirement a few years ago, clashes with her former colleague Rudi and her friend Sanne. Although she is a familiar face at Vogel, she feels increasingly isolated. Her political views are drifting to the right – something her two friends are unwilling to accept.

At Ayni, Matze is looking for company and claims that Germany's new heat-pump legislation will lead to civil war. He soon finds himself entangled in an argument with Sam, a trans woman, and her friend Lunte.

At Haus Elze, Thorsten is bullied by his drinking buddies and takes revenge by leaving the pub a terrible Google review.

Then there are Elvira, Sarah and Kim, three elderly-care nurses meeting after an exhausting night shift. Between alcohol and fatigue, they talk about the darker sides of their working lives while distracting themselves with crude attempts to flirt with the staff.

And at the van der Put ice cream parlour, Martin and Julian argue over whether Jesus would buy them a round today, while Markus tries to apologise to the woman behind the counter by telling a joke that goes on far too long.

With its fixed locations and large ensemble, *The Ballad from Wednesday to Thursday* resembles an experiment more than a conventional narrative. Characters come and go; conversations begin, lose their way and unexpectedly cross paths again. From these small observations emerges a portrait of communication within the protected space of the neighbourhood pub.

ABOUT THE FILM

For this film, director Christoph Otto collaborates with writers Jan Bonny and Jan Eichberg. The three share a long-standing creative relationship as well as a common background in and affinity for the visual arts. This connection shapes the film's conceptual approach, along with their shared interest in precise observations of everyday life and open-ended situations.

The Ballad from Wednesday to Thursday is produced by Monte Kalk Film in co-production with bildundtonfabrik and ania maria wanda, with funding from the Film- und Medienstiftung NRW. The film was shot in Cologne in 2024.

WRITERS' STATEMENT

The night is magical. Melancholic and tender, suspended somewhere between yesterday and tomorrow. It is a time to lick the wounds of the day and soothe frayed nerves with alcohol. A time for confessions, sentimental encounters and unexpected kindred spirits. For innocent flirtations, great love – or the late realization that it may be time to part ways. And sometimes, for the realization that perhaps you haven't done such a bad job of life after all.

For us, the pub is above all a place to let off steam. A place where people think while they talk – or sometimes only afterwards. Here, people chatter, complain, curse and laugh. Because everyone carries something around with them: anger, disappointment, hurt. Before all of this continues to fester beneath the surface, it has to come out.

We believe in the pub as a form of dialysis, and in the bar counter as democracy's sewage treatment plant.

— Jan Bonny & Jan Eichberg

DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

We wanted to make a film in which things are allowed to remain unresolved. A film about talking – and about continuing to talk.

For us, this is also a film about democracy. Not democracy in an institutional sense, but on a small, everyday scale. It is about patience and generosity. About the ability to tolerate contradictions and forgive people their mistakes. Without that willingness, neither relationships nor society can function.

Democracy begins where we do not immediately turn our backs on one another. Where we stay, even when we are annoyed. Where a conversation does not end in agreement, but simply in a willingness to keep it going.

Perhaps the pub, as a gentle and slightly old-fashioned place, still reminds us of this ability: that people can be wrong, contradict one another and even hurt one another – and still remain seated at the same table.

— Christoph Otto

DIRECTOR BIOGRAPHY

Christoph Otto studied at the Mainz Academy of Arts and the Academy of Media Arts Cologne. He works as a director, writer and editor. His short film *Bei Gino* won the NRW Competition at the International Short Film Festival Oberhausen in 2024. As an editor, he received two German Television Awards for his work with director Jan Bonny. *The Ballad from Wednesday to Thursday* is his feature-length directorial debut.

DIRECTOR FILMOGRAPHY

2026 — *The Ballad from Wednesday to Thursday* — Feature Film, 79 min
2024 — *Bei Gino* — Short Film, 9 min
2021 — *Hemd in die Hose* — Short Film, 16 min
2017 — *I spoke about you* — Medium-Length Film, 64 min

FESTIVALS & AWARDS

FILMFEST MÜNCHEN 2026
New German Cinema Competition — World Premiere
New German Cinema Award — Best Production (Winner)

FESTIVAL DES DEUTSCHEN FILMS LUDWIGSHAFEN 2026
Official Selection
Nominated for the Film Art Award
Nominated for the Audience Award

FILM FESTIVAL COLOGNE 2026
NRW Competition

SELECTED PRESS

KINO-ZEIT — Harald Mühlbeyer

“The film brings people together – no small feat – and shows them in all their humanity.”

Mühlbeyer describes *The Ballad from Wednesday to Thursday* as a series of glimpses into everyday life: people going out without anything particular in mind, talking without following an agenda, and meeting without pursuing a specific goal. In these seemingly casual encounters, he sees the film quietly reaching into the heart of contemporary Germany – not through political slogans, but from the perspective of ordinary people and their everyday experiences. He particularly praises the film’s ensemble structure and rhythm: small encounters form no overarching narrative, yet create a compelling flow. Characters appear and disappear throughout the night, but the film never looks down on them. **Each is granted their dignity and met at eye level.**

In the end, Mühlbeyer returns to the film’s simplest and perhaps most fundamental gesture: bringing people together and allowing us to see them in all their humanity.

Read the full review on kino-zeit

ARTECHOCK — Axel Timo Purr

“Field research with a terrific camera: funny, vicious, precise.”

Purr describes the film as a **“pub mosaic as a diagnosis of Germany”**: a nocturnal portrait in which political conflicts, personal wounds and social tensions surface naturally through conversation. He praises the film’s dialogue, ensemble structure and visual approach, calling it **“a furious, hard-drinking, wide-awake panorama of the present”** and ultimately **“a fantastic Cologne film.”**

Read the full review on artechock

NEW GERMAN CINEMA AWARD — JURY STATEMENT
Filmfest München 2026

“A film that turns our gaze towards everyday life – with all its absurdity, tragedy and beauty.”

The jury praised the production for having the courage to make the inconspicuous the centre of attention and for trusting an open-ended process. Without judging or exposing its characters, the film portrays loneliness and the human search for connection, using the microcosm of a neighbourhood pub to capture the mood of an entire country.

“This film is a homage to Cologne, a homage to the people of the city, a homage to all of us – it is a ballad.”

— Jury Statement, New German Cinema Award — Best Production, Filmfest München 2026

Read the full jury statement

Quotes translated from German.

CREW

Production & Director Christoph Otto

Co-Producers Ania Kołyszko, Judith Fülle

Screenplay Jan Bonny, Jan Eichberg

Director of Photography Montell Taraschewski

Editor Christoph Otto

Sound René Nicklaus, Steffen Pfauth, Karl Römming

Music Tina Schüler

Costume Design Nina-Sophie Brettschneider

Color Grading Lucas Grant

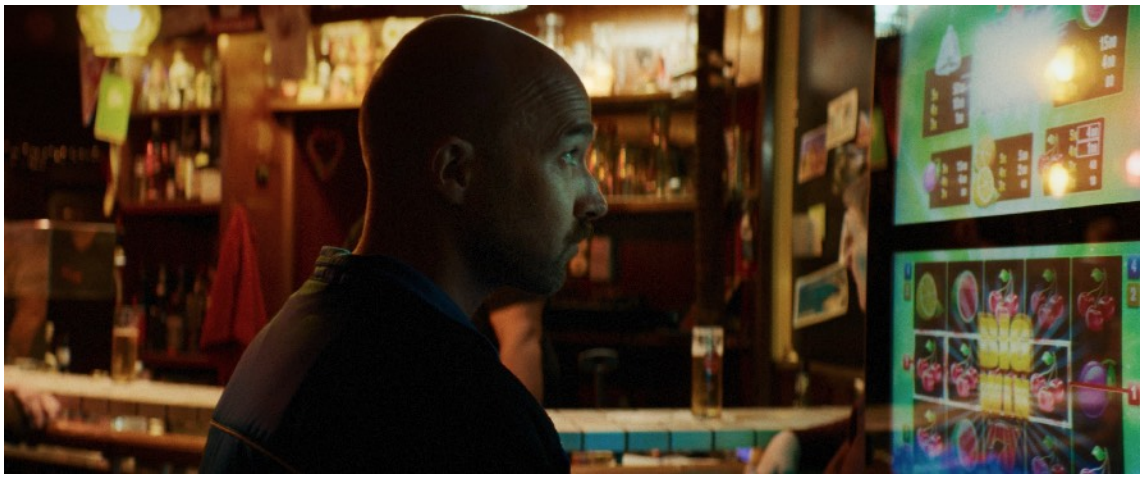
CAST

Ulrike Prager
Magdalena Laubisch
David Vormweg
Jean-Luc Bubert
Johannes Benecke
Paul Faßnacht
Sergen Meral
Oona von Maydell
Sven Seeburg
Torsten Peter Schnick
Michael Elze
Martin Aselmann
Julian Sark
Philippine Pachl
Cennet Rüya Voß
Thekla Viloo Fliesberg

Maurice Herz
Sophia Mercedes Burtscher
Nena Borzic
Marcel Demeler
Moritz Klaus
Benjamin Höppner
Michael Hoch
Ferhat Kaleli
Susanne Seuffert
Meryem Yildirim
Michael Szyszka
Joscha Baltha
Annou Reiners
Aissa El Mkllaki
Nick Romeo Reimann
Amal Daher

FILM STILLS

(© Montell Taraschewski) THE BALLAD FROM WEDNESDAY TO THURSDAY, Hamid (Sergen Meral) outside Ehrenbar. Directed by Christoph Otto. Produced by Monte Kalk Film, bildundtonfabrik and ania maria wanda.



(© Montell Taraschewski) THE BALLAD FROM WEDNESDAY TO THURSDAY, Thorsten (Johannes Benecke) at Haus Elze. Directed by Christoph Otto. Produced by Monte Kalk Film, bildundtonfabrik and ania maria wanda.

(© Montell Taraschewski) THE BALLAD FROM WEDNESDAY TO THURSDAY, Debby (Magdalena Laubisch) and Julius (David Vormweg) at La Perla. Directed by Christoph Otto. Produced by Monte Kalk Film, bildundtonfabrik and ania maria wanda.

(© Montell Taraschewski) THE BALLAD FROM WEDNESDAY TO THURSDAY, Moni (Ulrike Prager) and Matze (Jean-Luc Bubert) at Vogel. Directed by Christoph Otto. Produced by Monte Kalk Film, bildundtonfabrik and ania maria wanda.

(© Montell Taraschewski) THE BALLAD FROM WEDNESDAY TO THURSDAY, Kim (Philippine Pachl) and Elvira (Thekla Viloo Fliesberg) flirting with Felix (Moritz Klaus) at AYNI. Directed by Christoph Otto. Produced by Monte Kalk Film, bildundtonfabrik and ania maria wanda.

(© Montell Taraschewski) THE BALLAD FROM WEDNESDAY TO THURSDAY, Martin (Martin Aselmann), Steffie (Oona von Maydell) and Julian (Julian Sark) arguing outside the VAN DER PUT ice cream parlour. Directed by Christoph Otto. Produced by Monte Kalk Film, bildundtonfabrik and ania maria wanda.

CONTACT

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GERMAN DISTRIBUTION

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GEFÖRDERT VON DER **FILM- UND MEDIENSTIFTUNG NRW** *BUCH* **JAN BONNY, JAN EICHBERG** *BILDGESTALTUNG* **MONTELL TARASCHEWSKI** *MUSIK* **TINA SCHÜLER**
MONTAGE **CHRISTOPH OTTO** *TONGESTALTUNG* **STEFFEN PFAUTH, KARL RÖMMING, RENÉ NICKLAUS** *KOSTÜMBILD* **NINA-SOPHIE BRETTSCHNEIDER**
AUSSTATTUNG **JULIA MARIA BAUMANN** *2. KAMERA* **LARS ELLIGER, RUBEN GÖTZ** *FILMTONMEISTER* **RENÉ NICKLAUS, JORGE LOUREIRO**
REGIEASSISTENZ **MICHEL DULISCH, IRMAN THIESSEN, DANIEL HOPP** *GRADING* **LUCAS GRANT**
KOPRODUKTION **JUDITH FÜLLE** *&* **ANIA KOLYSZKO** *PRODUKTION & REGIE* **CHRISTOPH OTTO**

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