

# GfQ

GERMAN FILMS QUARTERLY

ISSUE 3-2025

WITH PORTRAITS AND ARTICLES OF  
DIRECTORS **MARTINA PRIESSNER & JULIAN RADLMAIER**  
PRODUCERS **LUCAS SCHMIDT & MAREN SCHMITT**  
ACTOR **LAURA TONKE**  
SALES COMPANY **ARTHOOD ENTERTAINMENT**  
CASTING DIRECTOR **JACQUELINE RIETZ**  
**HISTORY: INTERNATIONALLY SUCCESSFUL**  
**FEMALE GERMAN FILMMAKERS IN FILM HISTORY**

german  
●●● films

The best of  
**GERMAN  
CINEMA**



worldwide



german  
●●●  
films

Dear Readers,

We are delighted that several German films have enjoyed success at international film festivals in the first six months of this year. German productions and co-productions have regularly featured in the line-ups of the A-list festivals, with German films and filmmakers also being among the prize-winners. Mascha Schilinski's *SOUND OF FALLING* attracted particular attention at the film festival in Cannes. As the first film to be shown in the Competition, it was also a sensation right from the outset. The Cannes jury awarded the Jury Prize (ex-aequo) to *SOUND OF FALLING*.



The prominent appearance of German films now continues at the Locarno Film Festival. No less than three films as German majority co-productions are in competition at the Swiss film festival which is held at the beginning of August. Kamal Aljafari's *WITH HASAN IN GAZA* will open the International Competition, and *PHANTOMS OF JULY* by Julian Radlmaier – see the portrait in this issue on pages 8 and 9 – and Alexandre Koberidze's *DRY LEAF* can also be seen in this section. The German-American production of Brian Kirk's *THE DEAD OF WINTER* will be shown on the Piazza Grande – starring Emma Thompson, who will also receive the Leopard Club Award in Locarno. And two short films – *BLIND, INTO THE EYE* by Atefeh Kheirabadi and Mehrad Sepahnia, and *THE UNIFORMED* by Timon Ott – have also been selected for the line-up of this year's Pardi Di Domani: Concorso Internazionale section.

The German productions screening in Venice will include *SILENT FRIEND* by Ildiko Enyedi in the main competition, Roderick Warich's *FUNERAL CASINO BLUES* in the Orizzonti competition, *A SOIL A CULTURE A RIVER A PEOPLE* by Viv Li in Orizzonti – Short Films as well as *HOLOFICTION* by Michal Kosakowski, *SHORT SUMMER* by Nastia Korkia and *COTTON QUEEN* by Suzannah Mirghani in various other sections. German productions and filmmakers will also be prominently featured in Venice this year at the "Gap Financing Market". The German productions *ATHOS 2643* by David Wnendt, *CALL ME QUEEN* by Emily Atef, and *SAVE OUR SOULS* by Jonas Steinacker are among a selection of 54 projects from around the world that are in the final stages of development and financing.

As part of our "History" series, this issue takes a look at internationally successful German female filmmakers throughout the history of cinema. The article shows how actresses such as Luise Rainer, Marlene Dietrich and Sandra Hüller as well as filmmakers from Lotte Reiniger through Margarethe von Trotta to Maren Ade have left their particular mark on German film history on an international level.

We are now looking forward to an exciting second half of 2025 with more interesting German films and courageous filmmakers.

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

Simone Baumann, Managing Director



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



german  
films

Supported by



Die Bundesliga der Bundesregierung  
für Kultur und Medien

FFA 2025  
GERMAN FEDERAL FILM FUNDING

FFF BAYERN

Film und Medien  
Stiftung NRW

MBB  
Medienboard  
Baden-Württemberg

HESEN FILM  
& MEDIEN

MDM  
Medienboard  
Mecklenburg-Vorpommern

MEG  
Medienboard  
Brandenburg

MOIN  
Medienboard  
Niedersachsen

HY  
FILMFÖRDERUNG

nordmedia  
Medienboard  
Hamburg

[www.german-films.de](http://www.german-films.de)

# IN THIS ISSUE

**INTRODUCTION** Simone Baumann ..... 3

**ARTICLES AND PORTRAITS**

**„I TRY TO OPEN UP SPACES“**  
A portrait of director Martina Priessner ..... 6

**BETWEEN MARX AND FAIRY TALES**  
A portrait of director Julian Radlmaier ..... 8

**FREEDOM FOR CREATIVES**  
A portrait of the producer duo Maren Schmitt  
and Lucas Schmidt ..... 10

**PASSIONATE ONCE AGAIN**  
A portrait of actor Laura Tonke ..... 12

**MORE THAN JUST A SALES COMPANY**  
A portrait of sales company Arthood Entertainment ..... 14

**“AN OPEN, FREE APPROACH”**  
A portrait of casting director Jacqueline Rietz ..... 16

**HEROINE STORIES**  
Internationally successful female  
German filmmakers in film history ..... 18

**NEW FEATURES**

**BABYSTAR**  
Joscha Bongard ..... 22

**FREE**  
Max Hegewald ..... 23

**GANZER HALBER BRUDER**  
ALMOST BROTHERS  
Hanno Olderdissen ..... 24

**HOLY MEAT**  
Alison Kuhn ..... 25

**MÄDCHEN MÄDCHEN**  
HOT GIRL SUMMER  
Martina Plura ..... 26

**RAVE ON**  
Nikias Chryssos, Viktor Jakovleski ..... 27

**NEW DOCUMENTARIES**

**DAS THEATER IM SUCHER**  
THEATER THROUGH A LENS  
Thomas Ladenburger ..... 28

**HOLOFICTION**  
Michal Kosakowski ..... 29

**PINK POWER**  
Chiara Kempers..... 30

**SHARDS OF LIGHT**  
Mila Tessaieva, Marcus Lenz ..... 31

**STRANGE NEIGHBORS**  
Mi Steinbach ..... 32

**WO/MEN**  
HOUSE WITH A VOICE  
Kristine Nrecaj, Birthe Templin ..... 33

**NEW SHORTS**

**58 KILO**  
Fine Susanna Gumpert ..... 34

**ALL DIE GARTENZWERGE**  
THE WEIGHT OF GNOMES  
Emma-Mathilda Lipphaus ..... 35

**DIE UNIFORMIERTEN**  
THE UNIFORMED  
Timon Ott ..... 36

**EROGENESIS**  
Xandra Popescu ..... 37

**IT’S ONLY THE LITTLE DEATH**  
Dmitriy Sagan ..... 38

**UPCOMING PRODUCTIONS**

**BAMBI IST TOT**  
BAMBI IS DEAD  
Anton von Heiseler ..... 40

**CAMOUFLAGE**  
Mykyta Gibalenko ..... 40

**DAS LEICHTE UND DAS SCHWERE**  
LIGHTNESS AND WEIGHT  
Erec Brehmer ..... 41

**DIE ANDERE SEITE**  
THE OTHER SIDE  
Mariko Minoguchi ..... 41

**DIE ASSISTENTIN (AT)**  
THE ASSISTANT (WT)  
Jutta Brückner ..... 42

**IM ZEICHEN DES DRACHEN**  
THE SIGN OF THE DRAGON  
Enrico Saller, Marina Hoeft ..... 42

**INTERIOR**  
Pascal Schuh ..... 43

**NEUES LAND**  
Esther Rauch ..... 43

**STORM**  
Vladlena Savenkova ..... 44

**SUPERBUHEI**  
Josef Brandl ..... 44

**DER LETZTE WALSÄNGER**  
THE LAST WHALE SINGER  
Reza Memari ..... 45

**THE PLANT FROM THE CANARIES**  
Ruan Lan-Xi ..... 45

German Films Profile ..... 46

German Films Team ..... 47

Shareholders & Supporters ..... 49

Film Exporters ..... 50

Imprint ..... 51

A portrait of Martina Priessner, a woman with dark hair and round glasses, wearing an olive green bomber jacket over a black top. She is resting her chin on her hand and looking thoughtfully at the camera against a dark background.

# "I TRY TO OPEN UP SPACES"

A PORTRAIT OF DIRECTOR MARTINA PRIESSNER

Martina Priessner was 23 years old when a arson attack was carried out on two houses in Mölln in 1992. This period which saw a growing number of racist attacks left its mark on her and fuelled her activism, as the director now recalls. Three people lost their lives in Mölln at the time, and the attack still continues to affect many others to this day. Ibrahim Arslan is one of the survivors. It wasn't until 2019 that he learnt that more than 900 letters had been written to his and other affected families as people expressed their sympathy and solidarity. However, none of the victims had ever known about these letters until that point. Mölln's municipal administration had gathered the letters and then taken them to the town archives without informing the victims' families.

Martina Priessner's new documentary *THE MOELLN LETTERS* has her following Ibrahim and other members of the Arslan family as they try to find out why they had never heard about these letters which would have brought them some comfort. Priessner gets very close to the victims and their families, and consistently adopts their particular perspective. The film is impressive in the way it reveals how a mixture of structural racism, sloppiness, institutional failure and helplessness can exacerbate such a tragedy. But there are also glimmers of hope, especially in the open exchange between the protagonists, that leads to moving moments of rapprochement. The director explains that she always aims to create an atmosphere of trust. "I see myself as an ally, I try to open up spaces." Working together and on equal terms. And then there's the fact that she speaks Turkish fluently, something that can be a door-opener. *THE MOELLN LETTERS* celebrated its world premiere at this year's Berlinale and was awarded the Panorama Audience Award for Best Documentary Film. It also received the Amnesty International Film Award and the Roman Brodmann Prize. Real Fiction will release the inselfilm production in German cinemas on 25 September. Priessner will accompany the film on a tour of the cinemas since it's already clear there will be a lot that needs to be talked about after the screenings. "I'm very curious about what will happen," the Franconian-born filmmaker says. The film is only the beginning and she would like to see further research being conducted into the events.

In fact, she always wanted to become a journalist and studied Social Sciences in Erlangen and later in Berlin. In Nuremberg, she worked at an independent radio station which brought her into contact with the German-Turkish Film Festival. She began learning Turkish more than 30 years ago and went to Izmir to improve her language skills. In 2008, she opened the Ballhaus Naunynstraße in Berlin with Shermin Langhoff working as a curator and dramaturge and helping to develop post-migrant theatre. Two years later, she made the documentary *BASED DOWN SOUTH* which tells the story of call centre agents abroad and was nominated for the Grimme Prize. This was followed in 2013 by the found footage film *EVERYDAY I'M ÇAPULING* about the Gezi Park protests in Istanbul. She had come to the Turkish metropolis in 2012 with a scholarship and stayed there until 2017. Her film *650 WORDS* (2015) saw her interviewing eight people from different regions of Turkey who all want nothing more than to be able to live with their partners in Germany. She dedicated her next film, *THE GUARDIAN* (2020), to a Syrian Orthodox nun and won the Goethe-Institut Documentary Film Prize.

Priessner spent three years on and off filming *THE MOELLN LETTERS* - with a diverse team, something that was very important for her in such an activist film. It was clear to her from the outset that she wanted to be consistent in taking the victims' point of view: „We are always so focused on the perpetrators: everyone knows the names of the perpetrators, but no one knows the names of the victims. I wanted to show the families' strong position as active subjects.“ She points out that she wasn't interested in denouncing the mayor, but wanted rather to focus on the authorities and institutional racism. In general, the director wants to tell stories that would otherwise not be heard. "Who is actually allowed to tell stories, whose voices are being heard?" It is precisely these questions that she sees at the centre of documentary storytelling. That's why it is important for her to have a change in perspective in order to ask relevant questions. Her new project will also have a political theme: she is working on a documentary series about the continuities in right-wing terrorism and government failings in Germany.

*Marion Meyer*



# BETWEEN MARX AND FAIRY TALES

A PORTRAIT OF DIRECTOR JULIAN RADLMAIER



Julian Radlmaier might never have become a film director if his grandfathers had been successful in their careers. One of them had to settle for a job as a postman, while the other went bankrupt with his artificial stone factory. And neither of them had any idea that they would be one day – at least indirectly – inspiring their grandson's stories because it was through the stories of this family constellation that the now 40-year-old came to understand the meaning of class differences.

This leitmotif can also be found in his latest film, *PHANTOMS OF JULY*. The film centres on servants and service staff from the 18th and 21st centuries who come into conflict with the ruling structures in different ways. Yet, Radlmaier doesn't portray himself as an aggressive class warrior. His story aims at "utopian moments where the laws of society are briefly suspended." *PHANTOMS OF JULY* stands apart from his previous works, including *SELF-CRITICISM OF A BOURGEOIS DOG* which was awarded Best Feature Film Debut by the German Film Critics Association (VDFK) at the 2017 Berlinale, and the vampire comedy *BLOODSUCKERS – A MARXIST VAMPIRE COMEDY*, which was screened at the Berlinale in 2021 and won the German Screenplay Award, among other distinctions. The stories here were even more "overlaid with political satire", he says, while *PHANTOMS OF JULY* seems more fairytale-like and poetic. While Sergei Eisenstein was the point of reference for the characters in *BLOODSUCKERS – A MARXIST VAMPIRE COMEDY*, the romantic poet Novalis is the inspiration for *PHANTOMS OF JULY*.

This is also consistent with the directors who shaped Radlmaier's youthful imagination – namely Federico Fellini and Luis Bunuel. Even back then, influences from real life began to emerge that would later become even more decisive in their impact: his father worked as a journalist and a colleague from Kharkiv in Ukraine came to stay with the Radlmaiers as part of an exchange programme, so sparking Radlmaier's interest in Eastern Europe. Whilst studying Directing at the German Film and Television Academy (DFFB), he got to know many fellow students from different countries, something that subsequently served as inspiration for his films' universe:

Radlmaier's network therefore mainly consists of international colleagues: "I'm not really that in touch with the German film scene in the traditional sense," he notes. However, he did develop a close relationship with one of the classic directors of New German Cinema: he worked during his studies as a personal assistant to Werner Schroeter. Schroeter's aesthetics and way of working also left their mark: "He mixes genres and tones, made both experimental as well as narrative films combining absurd humour with socially critical elements. What's more, he filmed in all kinds of countries and played with a wide variety of cultural influences."

And the French philosopher Jacques Rancière became an intellectual reference point for the filmmaker – his writings on film theory were translated and published by Radlmaier while he still studied. Rancière's insights are also reflected in the director's films: „He is concerned with what fiction is capable of as a fabulation machine. There are moments when rigid living conditions are suspended. And the focus is then not on the working class heroes, but on the idlers and slackers.“ Unlike his heroes who are critical of the system, Radlmaier hasn't had any major difficulties in realising his projects to date. There was only one occasion when a project had to be abandoned for the time being due to the political reality. He had been working after *BLOODSUCKERS* on a film set in the crumbling Soviet Union, but then put the project on hold following Russia's invasion of Ukraine because he needed distance from the political situation.

He is now trying to rewrite a screenplay entitled *BINNENSCHIFFFAHRERIN BIRTE* with a new focus. What's more, he's working on a project inspired by his mother's homeland and set in Brittany. According to Radlmaier, the best place for these stories is and remains the cinema: „My films need the space of collective viewing. And, in my opinion, the cinema system still offers the greatest freedom because it is located at the interface between avant-garde and popular art. Cinema can have moments where the world as it could be shines through. It offers a utopian spark, and consequently gives the viewer a form of hope.“

*Rüdiger Sturm*



Maren Schmitt and Lucas Schmidt © Studio Zentral

# FREEDOM FOR CREATIVES

A PORTRAIT OF THE PRODUCER DUO  
MAREN SCHMITT AND LUCAS SCHMIDT

What do vampires and a chambermaid with superpowers have in common with the protagonists of Mascha Schilinski's *SOUND OF FALLING*? They all originate from Studio Zentral, a production subsidiary of ZDF Studios, which has been enjoying success in the German-speaking market with a huge range of projects since 2020. They include the vampire series *LOVE SUCKS*, the mini-series *ANGEMESSEN ANGRY* about a super-heroine hunting sex offenders, and quintessential arthouse cinema such as the film *SOUND OF FALLING* which won the Prix du Jury (ex-aequo) in Cannes.

What is the common denominator in this lineup? "What all these projects have in common is that we are passionate about them," says producer Maren Schmitt, who oversaw production of *SOUND OF FALLING* with Lucas Schmidt. "They are all different in terms of format and genre, but we can take responsibility for every single one and muster the passion to invest several years in making them."

In the case of *SOUND OF FALLING*, Maren Schmitt and her colleague Lucas Schmidt, co-founder of Studio Zentral, were completely convinced after reading the very first one-pager in 2020: "We saw very early on that this was something extraordinary with a very special vision that had never been seen before," Schmitt says.

This diversity is also reflected in Studio Zentral's particular structure with its 40 employees in Berlin being primarily involved in producing. Every creative can contribute their personal preferences and backgrounds. "That meant we were then much faster than expected in becoming an important player in the market," Schmidt explains.

These preferences were shaped by their experiences of following public television. While Schmitt enjoyed watching Edgar Wallace's German crime films with her father, Schmidt discovered American and French film classics which were still being shown on public television during prime time in his youth. However, neither of them originally had any concrete plans to pursue a career in production. Schmitt, who had been cast in a small film role at the age of nine, wanted to do something in the industry, but initially focused on a course in

Cultural Studies, among other things. After completing her Master's degree, she visited her sister at the EICTV film school in Cuba. "That really ignited my passion for film, and I realised that I actually wanted to tell stories." She then went to Argentina for five years to study film – in part because she was interested in co-productions with Latin America. It was there that she then produced her first short film, *AURELIA Y UN SUEÑO* (dir: Kathrin Frank), in 2012. "Sometimes, you have to take a detour to get to where you really want to go." The experiences she gathered at that time were not only extremely important on a personal level: "By gaining a foothold in a new culture, I learned to assert myself in different professional contexts," she recalls. In 2019, she completed a Master's degree at the Film University Babelsberg Konrad Wolf. At the same time, she founded the production company Sailor's Yarn with her sister and produced the long-term documentary *ADELHEID, KORNELIUS UND DIE TÖDE* (dir: Kirstin Schmitt) which she released through her own distribution outfit in the cinemas in 2019.

Lucas Schmidt also initially took a different path despite his passion for cinema and pursued TV journalism during his studies in England and the USA until he came to the realisation: "I can also turn my hobby into a career." Apart from the experience he gained as Director of International Originals at Netflix in Amsterdam, the most important part of his professional life before Studio Zentral was the 20 years he spent as a commissioning editor at ZDF's 'Das kleine Fernsehspiel' unit: "That's where I learned how valuable it is to have patience and trust when working with young talents, without having to focus on short-term success." Among the numerous films he was responsible for during this time were, for example, the novel adaptation *WETLANDS* by David Wnendt (2013) and the international drama *THE TALE* by Jennifer Fox (2018).

The mentality of the two is reflected in the company's general philosophy: "We try to give the creative team as much freedom as possible on every shoot – always in the interests of the project," Schmidt says. "I think that this is also something that's recognised in the industry."

*Rüdiger Sturm*





Laura Tonke © Joachim Gern

# PASSIONATE ONCE AGAIN

A PORTRAIT OF ACTOR LAURA TONKE

Acting challenges have been a major part of Laura Tonke's career since the early days. The daughter of a film set designer and an artist was still at school when she made her first film, playing a teenager who flees to the West from East Germany with her mother and ends up in a reception camp in Michael Klier's *OSTKREUZ*. Later, she appeared in front of the cameras for Tom Tykwer and Dominik Graf, and in *BAADER* she played the RAF terrorist Gudrun Ensslin. But when it comes to balancing acts, as the Berliner tells me on an early summer day in her home city, the role in *AMRUM* by Fatih Akin has got to be relatively high on the list.

"I thought a lot about how to tackle this role," says Tonke, who plays the mother of the 12-year-old protagonist Nanning in the film – a German woman who idolised Hitler until the very end. "It was important to me to show that it wasn't evil in the classic sense; it was normal people who were totally committed to a murderous ideology. This blindness cost millions of lives and often began with blind obedience rather than violence. I wanted it to be clear how fascism can change and scar people without downplaying the horror of their actions and beliefs. And acting this horror was extremely uncomfortable for me. Especially today, we should never forget how quickly something like that could happen again."

Initially, Tonke recalls that Akin himself was convinced she would turn down the role: "Of course, you won't want to play a Nazi, he said right away at our first meeting, and immediately went into his charming boy mode to try and persuade me. Actually, that wasn't necessary at all, because I was thrilled at the chance to star in a film by Fatih Akin." However, she adds: "The decision was also quite easy for me because National Socialism is a topic I am really interested in, especially the tie-up between then and now. I felt that I could get a message across with this role."

The dynamic with the person behind the camera is crucial for Tonke, and she says that from the very first encounter, her gut feeling tells her whether it will work or not. She is not always right, but she is generally. She describes working with Dominik Graf, after starring in his television film *BITTERE UNSCHULD*, as a true milestone.

She also says that collaboration with directors Sonja Heiss and Laura Lackmann, with whom she has already made several films, has been like winning the lottery.

In 2016, with Heiss' *HEDI SCHNEIDER IS STUCK* and Lackmann's *TOO HARD TO HANDLE*, Tonke achieved the extraordinary feat of winning the German Film Award for both leading and supporting actress. After several years in which worthwhile cinema projects rarely landed on her desk and she was seen predominantly in television roles, the two films marked a turning point in her career. "Somehow, it felt like I was standing in the shadows at the time," she recalls. "I wanted to escape that – to be seen at least once more. To show one more time what I have to offer as an actor." Besides finding the ideal projects, there was a second reason why Tonke succeeded in starting a whole new chapter in her career. In the years after the birth of her son, when the actor – who has been part of the performance collective *Gob Squad* for almost 20 years but never attended acting school – had less time than usual to prepare for her roles, she worked with an acting coach for the first time. "That gave me a whole new self-image, a whole new perspective on my profession, and I no longer felt that the director was responsible for me acting well," she says. "Since then, I've not only been prepared for anything; above all, I have been completely open, unbiased and ready to learn new things. I've opened up fresh possibilities and spheres of experience for myself."

Tonke says she is now as passionate about acting as she was as a teenager, but she makes one distinction: "Back then, it was all about the dopamine rush, about pleasing others and impressing the director. Today, I know that I have a job to do and I take responsibility for it myself." Not that she isn't delighted by the attention she received for her work in *AMRUM* or in the best-selling film adaptation *22 BAHNEN*, in which she plays an alcoholic. But the shadows have long since disappeared, and the awards are on the shelf. "Unlike in the past, I no longer feel the need for applause," she says as she leaves. "Seeing what I have achieved is sufficient these days."

*Patrick Heidmann*

A portrait of a middle-aged man with a dark beard and mustache, wearing a dark blue cap and a dark blue suit jacket over a white shirt. He is looking directly at the camera with a slight smile. The background is a blue wall with large white letters, including "D'ART", "LA", "INA", and "3".

# MORE THAN JUST A SALES COMPANY

A PORTRAIT OF SALES COMPANY ARTHOOD ENTERTAINMENT



"When I founded ArtHood Entertainment in 2018, my goal was not only to build a traditional sales and production company but also to create a platform through which I could express my political and social perspective," recalls CEO Said Nur Akkuş who had previously worked at Berlin-based Mitosfilm from 2011 to 2017 after graduating in International Relations in Turkey.

"For me, ArtHood is more than just a company: it is a space for films and filmmakers with a clear political and social vision," he outlines his company's positioning in the market, adding that "what sets us apart from many other sales agents is our clear curatorial vision: we represent films that not only demonstrate artistic excellence but also engage with urgent global issues, be it migration, identity, justice, or resistance."

He identifies another unique aspect of the company's strategy in that "we actively participate in shaping the international discourse through film by placing titles in the right festivals and markets, and by curating our catalogues with political and ethical consciousness."

Each year sees the company aiming to have between five to six new titles supplementing its sales portfolio.

"Our approach varies depending on the project," Akkuş explains. "Sometimes we come on board as early as the script stage, sometimes later. In some cases, we even help develop the project, especially when it's produced through our sister company, ArtHood Films. In other cases, we join during post-production or after the film is completed."

"This flexible strategy allows us to support a diverse range of films, from projects we help shape from the beginning to powerful completed works that align with our vision. Ultimately, what matters most to us is the film's artistic quality, political relevance, and potential to resonate internationally."

Recent highlights from ArtHood's line-up have included the company's in-house production of Nader Saeivar's *THE WITNESS* which began a strong international festival run after premiering

at last year's Venice Film Festival and has since been sold to more than 15 territories, the European premiere of Areeb Zuaiteer's debut documentary *YALLA PARKOUR* in the 2025 Berlinale's Panorama section, and world premieres this year of Miwako van Weyenberg's coming of age debut *SOFT LEAVES* in Rotterdam and Ensar Altay's family drama *KANTO* in Shanghai.

German films have also found a home at ArtHood Entertainment for international distribution. They have included Ayşe Polat's *IN THE BLIND SPOT*, which took home three Lola statuettes at the 2024 German Films Awards and has been successful both in terms of sales as well as festival invitations, Asli Özarslan's coming of age drama *ELBOW*, first shown at the Berlinale's Generation sidebar last year, Film University Babelsberg graduate Jannis Alexander Kiefer's dark comedy *ANOTHER GERMAN TANK STORY* celebrated its world premiere at the 2024 Shanghai International Film Festival, and Elmar Imanov's father-son grotesque drama *THE KISS OF THE GRASSHOPPER* was selected for this year's Forum section at the Berlinale.

In fact, this year has seen the company decide to shift its focus more towards German and European films, although the Middle East will always remain an important part of ArtHood's programme. "I believe that my background gives me a special interest in this region, but at the same time, we want to broaden our portfolio internationally and remain open to films from various countries," Akkuş says.

"Since the pandemic, the market has become noticeably more challenging", he notes. "Many distributors are more cautious and hesitant to take risks, especially when it comes to recouping their investments."

"At ArtHood, we therefore believe it's crucial to adapt to the current climate rather than resist it and so we are continuously adjusting our strategies to remain relevant and effective, and remain optimistic and committed to bringing strong, meaningful cinema to global audiences in the future," Akkuş concludes.

*Martin Blaney*

A close-up portrait of a woman with shoulder-length, wavy brown hair and blue eyes. She is wearing a black collared shirt and a small, dangling earring. She has a slight smile and is looking directly at the camera. The background is a plain, light color.

# **"AN OPEN, FREE APPROACH"**

A PORTRAIT OF CASTING DIRECTOR JACQUELINE RIETZ

Casting? Ubiquitous today, this word was still unknown in the German film and television industry when Jacqueline Rietz began her career. For almost 30 years, she has specialised in placing and casting children and young people; something completely new at the time, when there was no established agency and casting scene in Germany. Today, the distinction between casting children and adults is well established – and a German speciality. “Naturally, there are colleagues abroad who focus on young talent,” Rietz reports. “But unlike here, they still cast the film in its entirety.”

She gained her first experience casting young actors rather by chance, during a semester abroad in London: she had a camera with her, and some film student friends were working on a short – one thing then led to another. However, it was her family who lay behind her actual entry into the profession. Her mother worked in the acting department at Babelsberg Film University, so Rietz was able to watch acting students auditioning from an early age. But it was director Karola Hattop who first recognised her stepdaughter’s talent for casting. “She always had a good eye for young talent in her work,” Rietz recalls. “She was the one who encouraged me to try my hand at it. She and my father thought I had a nose for it, an interest in people, and in engaging with content.”

Although it was others who initially recognised her special intuition, now Rietz is well able to describe what it takes to be a successful casting director over time: “I believe you need a high degree of empathy and sensitivity. But it is also about understanding material and characters, social structures, and historical backgrounds. You need to be able to familiarise yourself with a lot of things quickly.” She continues: “Marked curiosity is a trait that helps a lot in this profession. Along with an open, free approach. On the one hand, I need to empathise with the director’s vision. But on the other hand, it is up to me to be courageous and contribute my own ideas as well. So being able to communicate successfully in every way is also crucial.”

This year, Rietz, who has already worked with Andreas Dresen, Florian Henckel von Donners-

marck, Caroline Link, Julia von Heinz and Burhan Qurbani, among others, was involved in two films, playing a key role in their success by casting the children and youth roles.

Mascha Schilinski’s *SOUND OF FALLING*, which won an award in Cannes, was a particular challenge, not least because of the different time periods and the number of roles that required casting. “Although I have a very good overview of the scene, especially when it comes to young people, we opted for an open call,” she recounts. “In addition, we didn’t commit to anything in advance and always kept all our options open. For example, one of the sisters from the 1910s is played by a young actress who we initially had in mind for the 1980s.” However, one role assumed a special significance: “The most important decision was probably the one in favour of Hanna Heckt, who now plays little Alma in 1910. We chose her quite late, which is why we waited a long time with many of the other castings to find the right counterparts. This didn’t just affect me, but also Karima El-Giamal, who cast the adult roles – she had to find the perfect mother for this girl.”

The situation was different with Fatih Akin’s *AMRUM*; Rietz was collaborating for a second time with Akin on this project. As with Nora Fingscheidt’s *SYSTEM CRASHER*, for which she discovered Helena Zengel, the aim was to find a child who could take on the leading role and carry the film. “I was looking for someone who would fit into the 1940s and this location. Not too modern a face and someone from northern Germany. Above all, the protagonist is a quiet observer, so we certainly didn’t need a child who has been on Hamburg’s musical stages for years,” Rietz explains. Once again, she succeeded in demonstrating her special talent for seeking and finding people off the beaten track. Because the boy in the film has a special relationship to water, she wrote specifically to sailing clubs. And that is where she found what she was looking for – once again providing German cinema with a remarkable new talent in Jasper Billerbeck.

*Patrick Heidmann*



# HEROINE STORIES

## Internationally successful female German filmmakers in film history

When the world's first public film screening, the Wintergarten programme by the Skladanowsky brothers in Berlin, celebrates its anniversary on November 1 this year, we will be able to look back on 130 years of film and cinema history. The lion's share of this time has clearly been shaped by male perspectives worldwide. But film production is increasingly changing, gender equality has become a declared goal, and the view of film history is also changing. For example, no one today can recount the early history of film without mentioning the long-concealed achievements of Alice Guy-Blaché, or discuss Weimar cinema without acknowledging the conservation work of Lotte Eisner.

If one wants to trace internationally successful female German filmmakers in film history, one will primarily find them in the field of acting. But what does success really mean? "For my second and third pictures, I won Academy Awards. Nothing worse could have happened to me."

Success is relative: Luise Rainer, born in Düsseldorf, made the leap to Hollywood in 1935 thanks to a talent scout and a contract with MGM. With three films and an Oscar for each of her leading roles in *THE GREAT ZIEGFELD* in 1937 and *THE GOOD EARTH* in 1938, she immediately captivated Hollywood. But having reached this rapid peak of fame, studio boss Louis B. Mayer



Marlene Dietrich in *THE BLUE ANGEL* © United Archives

refused to let her play the roles she aspired to. Luise Rainer, who worked with Albert Einstein to help Jews escape from Nazi Germany, did not see herself in the trivial films she was offered. She was quickly labelled as difficult, hysterical and greedy – a typical label attached to many female filmmakers in this industry who have a mind of their own. When she terminated her contract, Louis B. Mayer is said to have replied: “We made you and we are going to destroy you.”



Luise Rainer © Rex Hardy-The LIFE Premium Collection

Five years before Luise Rainer, Marlene Dietrich had arrived in Hollywood after her global hit *THE BLUE ANGEL*. Unlike Rainer, she had signed with Paramount and was nominated for an Oscar for her very first film, *MOROCCO* – but she did not win, nor did she win later. Just how incredibly quickly Marlene Dietrich became a star in the USA is evidenced by the original of her first contract, which was hastily rewritten film after film with ever-higher fees. Whereas she had received 25,000 Reichsmarks for *THE BLUE ANGEL* in Berlin in 1929, by 1933 she was already earning 150,000 dollars per film in Hollywood, plus a share of the profits. Marlene Dietrich became a style icon, shaped a new, self-determined image of women and fought passionately

for freedom and against fascism – similar to Luise Rainer, but more publicly and politically. Apart from the fact that she was, of course, a completely different type of person, Marlene Dietrich had an advantage over Rainer and other emigrants in that she was able to build her international career in artistic partnership. She made six successful films with Josef von Sternberg, director of *THE BLUE ANGEL*.

“She took a cigarette, Max gave her a light, but her Dunhill was already closed before he could reach her cigarette. Over the extinguishing match, she said, ‘She’s like me when I was young.’ She said it as if I weren’t there, stating a fact, brooking no contradiction [...] The comparison took my breath away.” When the very young Hildegard Knef met Marlene Dietrich in Hollywood in 1948, she was in the midst of her attempt to become the first actress of the post-war German generation to gain a foothold abroad. The legendary David O’Selznick had offered her a contract, but Hildegard Knef was initially unlucky. After two years of inactivity, she returned to Germany in 1950 to shoot *THE SINNER*.

The downright hysterical reaction to the film exposed the double standards of the young Federal Republic, and much of the anger was directed at Hildegard Knef. The documentary film *I WANT IT ALL* by Luzia Schmid, which premiered at the Berlinale in 2025, beautifully illustrates how Knef was always ahead of her time – a modern, intelligent woman in a stubborn, conservative Federal Republic. Similar to Marlene Dietrich, with whom she remained friends until her death, Hildegard Knef had a hard time with her domestic audience. In the USA and large parts of Europe, however, she enjoyed cinematic success after 1951, working with Henry Hathaway, Carol Reed and Claude Chabrol, among others.

Although Hildegard Knef repeatedly had to justify her behaviour at the end of the Nazi era, she paved the way for a new generation of German actresses. It was a generation that, due to their age, could not be blamed for the dictatorship, young and modern women – in the USA, the rather disrespectful term “Fräulein-

wunder“ was coined for them. Actresses such as Christiane Schmidtmer, Christine Kaufmann, Heidi Brühl, Elke Sommer and Senta Berger were able to achieve Hollywood success as a result. Furthermore, the European cinema crisis of the 1960s and the resulting co-productions led to the wonderful circumstance that there was a lively exchange of international actors within Europe. This meant that Romy Schneider became the biggest star in France for a few years, Marianne Koch starred in Westerns alongside Clint Eastwood in Italy, and Karin Dor played a Bond girl alongside Sean Connery in London.

While many German actresses have become internationally sought-after artists and even legends in the history of film, the picture changes considerably when it comes to female directors. The reason for this is simply that, especially in Germany, filmmaking was so dominated by men that, until the 1960s, only a tiny number of female directors ever managed to direct a film. This dominance seems almost absolute, especially in the feature film sector: in the silent film era, there were Luise Fleck from Austria, Hanna Henning and Henny Porten's sister Rosa, three German-speaking film



Caroline Link © Adrienne Meister



Margarethe von Trotta © Alexander Vojnovic

For a few years now, the circumstances of an increasingly international film industry have enabled a new generation of actors to build on the international careers of those years. Like Luise Rainer and Marlene Dietrich, Sandra Hüller was nominated for an Oscar two years ago – for the leading role in a French film. Or Florence Kasumba, who alternates between appearances in Tatort and regular roles in Marvel blockbusters, or Sibel Kekilli, who appears in 20 episodes of GAME OF THRONES, one of the most successful series of all time.

pioneers who have basically been forgotten. Lotte Reiniger made the first feature-length animation film in 1926, years before Disney, and Thea von Harbou wrote important screenplays for Weimar cinema before turning to Nazi propaganda films, as did Leni Riefenstahl. Erica Balqué, assistant director and wife of Helmut Käutner, was the first female director in West Germany after the Second World War to shoot a feature film in 1961 with ZU JUNG FÜR DIE LIEBE?, which was also to be her last. The results in the field of directing are devastating (significantly better in the field of screenwriting).



It was not until the European women's movement of the 1960s that female authors began to emerge and female filmmaking began to be taken for granted. May Spils, Ula Stöckl, Jeanine Meerapfel, Helke Sander, Helma Sanders-Brahms: they and others can be considered pioneers on the long road to equal rights in filmmaking in Germany. Margarethe von Trotta in particular achieved her big breakthrough in the 1970s, especially internationally. Her films were screened in competition at Cannes, won the Golden Lion in Venice and the main award in Chicago. These successes were truly hard-won; her

Today, the goal of equal opportunities in filmmaking, which has been enshrined in the Filmfördergesetz (Film Promotion Act) since 2016, is still far from being achieved, but the breadth of internationally successful female directors from Germany is yet remarkable. Maren Ade's *TONI ERDMANN* was nominated for an Oscar in 2017, Maria Schrader won a Prime Time Emmy for *UNORTHODOX*, two of Caroline Link's films were nominated for Oscars (*NOWHERE IN AFRICA* also won in 2003), Nora Fingscheidt shot films with Sandra Bullock and Saoirse Ronan, and Mascha Schilinski won the Jury Prize in Cannes:



Sandra Hüller © Kurt Krieger

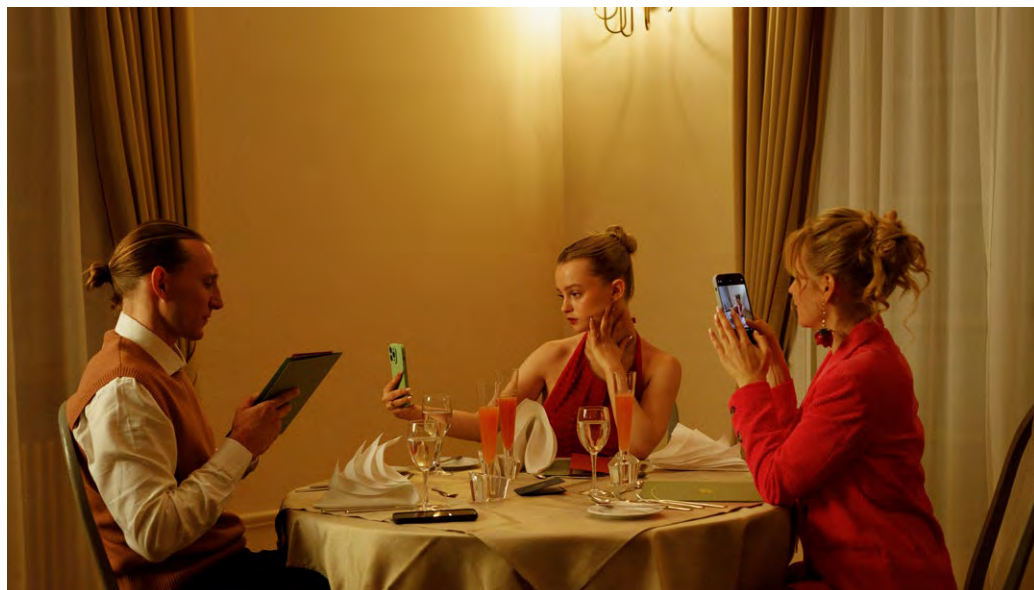


Mascha Schilinski © Stefano Spaziani - Europa Press

first co-direction of *THE LOST HONOUR* OF KATHARINA BLUM was simply hushed up for years, and for her official directorial debut, *THE SECOND AWAKENING* OF CHRISTA KLAGES, Volker Schlöndorff had to promise WDR that he would step in if necessary. But von Trotta's successes paved the way for other female directors, such as Doris Dörrie, who helped shape the 1980s in film after the million-dollar success of *MEN...* and today enjoys international renown as a director. Or Monika Treut, whose queer cinema has been celebrated worldwide since the mid-1980s.

these are truly exciting times for German cinema, and hopefully each event will help to permanently achieve the goal of gender equality, which the ProQuote Film initiative, among others, has been campaigning for since 2013.

*Oliver Baumgarten*



© Jakob Sinsel

# BABYSTAR

BABYSTAR is the story of a young woman, Luca, who is an influencer since birth, as she is the product of the love of two influencers. Her whole growing up was shared on Social Media platforms. As she now is nearly an adult, her parents have to think of new business solutions and decide to have another child. Lucas' position is attacked and for the first time she reflects on her upbringing and tries to create a new life outside her family. She spirals into a deep emptiness and begins to realize how little of herself is truly left. After various attempts of living on her own fail, she returns home and witnesses the birth of her sister and decides to protect her from the childhood she herself had to live through.

Babystar, a satirical drama, explores the phenomenon of family influencing and questions whether children are not only a product of their parents – but also their commodity.

**GENRE** Drama **YEAR OF PRODUCTION** 2025 **DIRECTOR** Joscha Bongard **SCREENPLAY** Nicole Rùthers, Joscha Bongard **DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY** Jakob Sinsel **CAST** Maja Bons, Bea Brocks, Liliom Lewad, Joy Ewulu, Verena Altenberger, Maximilian Mundt **PRODUCERS** Lisa Purtscher, Lotta Schmelzer **PRODUCTION COMPANY** LiseLotte Films **RUNTIME** 98 min **LANGUAGE** German

**CONTACT** LiseLotte Films  
lotta@liselottefilms.com • www.liselottefilms.com



© Junifilm

# FREE

16-year-old Sebastian lives a sheltered life in a small town. Everything changes when his family takes in 15-year-old Kolja, who is said to be the son of a deceased friend of Sebastian's father. Initially distant, the two boys slowly open up to each other and eventually discover they are biological brothers. Sebastian's world is turned upside down when he realizes Kolja is not only a soulmate but also his first true love. Overwhelmed by their feelings, they keep their relationship a secret. When the truth about their incestuous bond is revealed, the family is cast out of the social fabric of the town and forced to confront societal norms and prejudices. An emotional rollercoaster begins for everyone involved.

**GENRE** Coming-of-Age Story, Drama **YEAR OF PRODUCTION** 2025 **DIRECTOR** Max Hegewald  
**SCREENPLAY** Max Hegewald **DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY** Marius von Felbert, BVK **CAST**  
Linus Moog, Aurel Klug **PRODUCER** Jan Philip Lange **PRODUCTION COMPANY** Junifilm **RUNTIME**  
115 min **LANGUAGE** German

**WORLD SALES** Junifilm

jpl@junifilm.de • www.junifilm.de



© Neue Schönhauser Filmproduktion

# GANZER HALBER BRUDER

## ALMOST BROTHERS

When fresh out ex-con Thomas inherits a valuable house, his plans to sell it and start over in Spain are thwarted by Roland, his half-brother with Down syndrome, who holds lifelong residency rights. As Thomas schemes to evict Roland, an unexpected bond forms between the mismatched brothers – leading to chaos, comedy, and a chance at redemption. A heartfelt story about family, second chances, and finding home where you least expect it.

**GENRE** Comedy, Family **YEAR OF PRODUCTION** 2025 **DIRECTOR** Hanno Olderdissen **SCREEN-PLAY** Clemente Fernandez-Gil **DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY** Carol Burandt von Kameke **CAST** Christoph Maria Herbst, Nicolas Randel, Sesede Terziyan, Tristan Seith, Martin Brambach, Michael Ostrowski, Anja Herden, Cem Bingöl, Enno Kalisch, Antje Mairich, Roxana Samadi, Doreen Nixdorf, Julia Schmitt **PRODUCER** Boris Schönfelder **PRODUCTION COMPANY** Neue Schönhauser Filmproduktion in coproduction with Senator Film Produktion, Bantry Bay Productions and ZDF **RUN-TIME** 105 min **LANGUAGE** German **FESTIVALS** Munich International Film Festival

**WORLD SALES** Picture Tree International  
 pti@picturetree-international.com • www.picturetree-international.com





© Matthias Reisser

# HOLY MEAT

A rural amateur production of the Passion of Christ spirals into a blasphemous rave, bringing together three wildly different characters: Director Roberto, recently canceled from Berlin's off-theatre scene; Mia, a young butcher who suddenly finds herself the legal guardian of her sister with Down syndrome; and Father Oskar Iversen, who has mysteriously abandoned his Danish island parish. Now stationed in the small Swabian village of Winteringen – where the local parish faces imminent closure – Oskar must act fast. Determined never to return to Denmark, he tries to save the parish by staging an unforgettable Passion play to impress the theatre-loving archbishop. An absurd triptych about loneliness, responsibility, and the Catholic Church.

**GENRE** Comedy, Drama, Tragicomedy **YEAR OF PRODUCTION** 2025 **DIRECTOR** Alison Kuhn  
**SCREENPLAY** Alison Kuhn **DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY** Matthias Reisser **CAST** Jens Albinus, Homa Faghiri, Pit Bukowski, Lou Strenger, Jeremias Meyer **PRODUCERS** Thomas Reisser, Marcus Machura **CO-PRODUCERS** Martin Schwimmer, Dominik Utz **PRODUCTION COMPANY** Niama-Film in coproduction with Domar Film **RUNTIME** 117 min **LANGUAGE** German, Danish **FESTIVALS** Munich International Film Festival

**CONTACT** Niama-Film  
 contact@niama-film.com • www.niama-film.com



© Constantin Film

# MÄDCHEN MÄDCHEN

## HOT GIRL SUMMER

In this bold and feel-good teen comedy, three best friends embark on a chaotic and hilarious journey to discover the secret to their first orgasm. Between bad advice, awkward mishaps, and unexpected crushes – including a bike ride that changes everything – they face friendship drama, body insecurities, and self-discovery in the heat of summer. **HOT GIRL SUMMER** is a vibrant coming-of-age ride full of laughter, heart, and unapologetic girl power.

**GENRE** Comedy, Romantic Comedy, Gen-Z **YEAR OF PRODUCTION** 2025 **DIRECTOR** Martina Plura  
**SCREENPLAY** Kathi Kiesel **DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY** Monika Plura **CAST** Kya-Celina Barucki, Julia Novohradsky, Nhung Hong, Zoë Pastelle Holthuizen, Yoran Leicher, Jason Klare, Jamie-Lee Curt Williams, Victor Kadam, Henning Baum, Annette Frier **PRODUCERS** Marina Schiller, Viola Jäger **CO-PRODUCERS** Jakob Pochlatko, Dieter Pochlatko **EXECUTIVE PRODUCER** Oliver Berben **PRODUCTION COMPANY** OLGA FILM in coproduction with Constantin Film and Epo-Film  
**RUNTIME** 89 min **LANGUAGE** German **FESTIVALS** Munich International Film Festival

**WORLD SALES** Picture Tree International

pti@picturetree-international.com • www.picturetree-international.com



© Telos Pictures

# RAVE ON

RAVE ON transforms the cinema screen into a night club: A deep dive into Berlin's club scene, the film follows Kosmo, a music producer who is trying to hand-deliver his newest vinyl record to a legendary DJ that is playing in the city's most notorious techno club. What begins as a simple mission soon derails into an existential rave odyssey. Filmed at real parties in real techno locations, RAVE ON is a singular cinematic experience that blends fictional narrative with a guerrilla documentary approach and immersive, mind-bending cinematography.

**GENRE** Drama, Music **YEAR OF PRODUCTION** 2025 **DIRECTORS** Nikias Chryssos, Viktor Jakovleski  
**SCREENPLAY** Nikias Chryssos, Viktor Jakovleski **DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY** Jonas Schneider  
**CAST** Aaron Altaras, Clemens Schick, June Ellys-Mach, Ruby Commey, Bineta Hansen, Hieroglyphic Being, Lucia Lu, Benny Claessens **PRODUCER** Andro Steinborn **COMMISSIONING EDITORS** Jörg Himstedt, Claudia Tronnier, Erin Högerle, Anne-Caroline Paquet **PRODUCTION COMPANY** Telos Pictures in coproduction with Hessischer Rundfunk, ARTE **RUNTIME** 80 min **LANGUAGE** German, English **FESTIVALS** Munich International Film Festival

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



© Thomas Ladenburger

## DAS THEATER IM SUCHER

### THEATER THROUGH A LENS

Ruth Walz is the most important theater photographer of our time. Her photographs have set standards for decades. The film follows her during rehearsals in Salzburg, Amsterdam, Aix-en-Provence, Neustrelitz and Berlin. The special closeness she has built up with the various directors and actors over her 50 years of work, characterize her unique position within the theater.

At a young age, she broke out of the bourgeois world of shipowners and merchants in Bremen to then train as a single mother to become a photographer in Berlin. 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. Venice was the ideal refuge for this discreet partnership away from the public eye. The film alternates between observations of her actual participation in rehearsals and conversations with the artists involved. Her photographs act as a dramaturgical corrective and allow us a glimpse into her vast archive. The film is far more than just a portrait of an obsessive artist, but also a tableau of the theater of our time.

**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, Peter Sellars, Andrea Breth, Robert Wilson, Pierre Audi **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





© Kosakowski Films

# HOLOFICTION

HOLOFICTION is an experimental film that explores the visual representation of the Holocaust through a montage of thousands of excerpts from fictional films and television series produced between 1938 and the present. Drawing from an extensive archive of over 3,000 narrative works the film critically examines how Holocaust imagery has been codified and reproduced in cinema across decades.

HOLOFICTION exposes recurring visual motifs and narrative patterns that have become iconic in the portrayal of the Holocaust. Inspired by Claude Lanzmann's skepticism toward visual representations of historical trauma, the film questions the possibility and implications of depicting such an atrocity in fictional cinema. Through its essayistic approach, HOLOFICTION invites audiences to reflect on the ethics and responsibility of cinematic storytelling, urging a deeper understanding of how these representations shape collective memory and historical perception.

**GENRE** Art, Educational, Experimental, History **YEAR OF PRODUCTION** 2025 **DIRECTOR** Michal Kosakowski **SCREENPLAY** Michal Kosakowski **PRODUCER** Michal Kosakowski **CO-PRODUCER** Uli Aigner **PRODUCTION COMPANY** Kosakowski Films in coproduction with Atelier Uli Aigner **RUN-TIME** 102 min **LANGUAGE** No Dialogues **FESTIVALS** Venice Film Festival 2025, Archivio Aperto - 18th edition - Bologna, Night Visions Helsinki 2025

**WORLD SALES** Kosakowski Films  
 michal@kosakowskifilms.com • www.kosakowskifilms.com



© JUNIFILM / Mika Voelker

## PINK POWER

Konni (70) and Jasmin (43) are both part of the Wilhelmshaven dragon boat team "Küstenpinkies" – every woman in the boat has breast cancer or is affected by the late effects of the disease. This makes them part of the global "pink paddling" movement, as dragon boat racing has been proven to be physically and mentally highly beneficial in overcoming the disease and combating its long-term effects. For the women dragon boat paddling has become much more than just therapy. Their goal: winning the Dragon Boat European Championship!

**GENRE** Drama, Educational, Sports **YEAR OF PRODUCTION** 2025 **DIRECTOR** Chiara Kempers  
**SCREENPLAY** Chiara Kempers, Marianna Martens **DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY** Mika Voelker  
**CAST** Konni Jürgens, Jasmin Eilers **PRODUCERS** Jan Philip Lange, Marianna Martens **PRODUCTION COMPANY** Junifilm **RUNTIME** 70 min **LANGUAGE** German **FESTIVALS** International Filmfest Emden-Norderney

**WORLD SALES** Junifilm  
 jpl@junifilm.de • www.junifilm.de



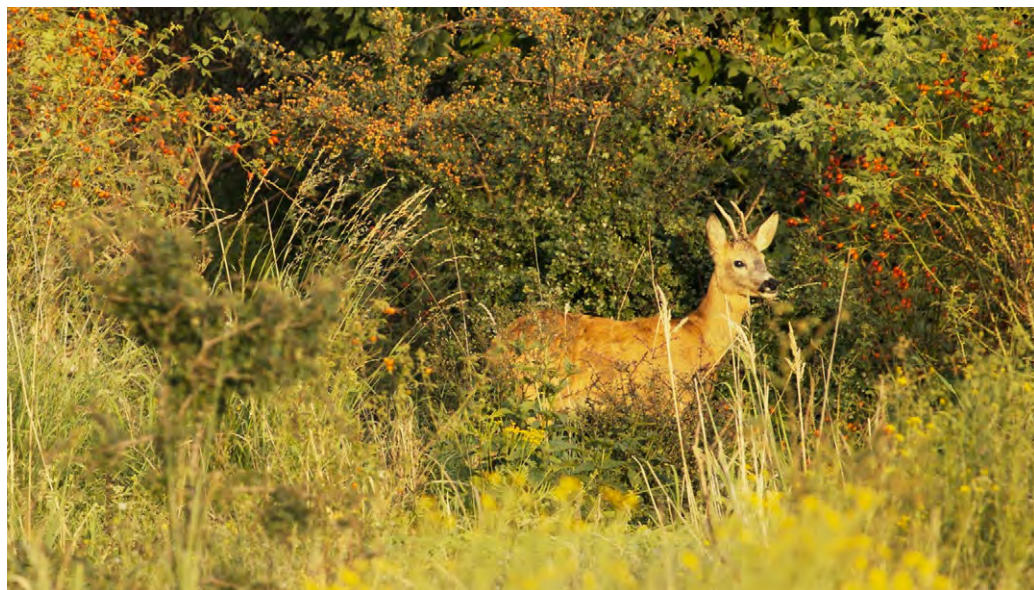
© wildfilms

# SHARDS OF LIGHT

After surviving the horrors of Russian occupation, the residents of Bucha, Ukraine, are rebuilding their city from the rubble. A newly married couple, a schoolgirl, a city official, and a housewife have all endured the painful experiences of war, yet they manage to hold onto hope and solidarity. But how do you rebuild in the wake of growing trauma, especially with war still raging in your country? As hopes for a peaceful life fade, they must grapple with mounting tensions within their communities. Shot over a three-year period, the film follows five protagonists navigating the complex terrain of inner conflicts, trauma, and a longing for justice, posing questions about the future of a society at war.

**GENRE** Documentary, Human Rights, War in Ukraine **YEAR OF PRODUCTION** 2025 **DIRECTORS** Mila Tessaieva, Marcus Lenz **DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY** Marcus Lenz **PRODUCER** Marcus Lenz **CO-PRODUCERS** Mette Meyer Hoffmann, Mila Tessaieva **PRODUCTION COMPANY** Wildfilms in coproduction with The Why Foundation and Quiet Talks **RUNTIME** 93 min **LANGUAGE** Ukrainian **FESTIVALS** Sheffield DocFest 2025

**WORLD SALES** wildfilms  
marcus@wildfilms.de • www.wildfilms.de



© Mi Steinbach

# STRANGE NEIGHBORS

Across our planet, hidden gems of untouched nature unfold amidst extensive industrial landscapes. These two neighboring realms couldn't be further apart and, as it turns out, more similar at the same time. On one side, there's the world of pristine wilderness, where animals roam freely, living in harmony with the timeless cycles of the sun, moon, and seasons. On the other side lies the vibrant environment of global industry, powered by the relentless rhythm of machinery and an ever-flowing stream of goods. **STRANGE NEIGHBORS** takes us on an exceptional journey, inviting us to dive into both worlds and unveil the mystical bond that unites them.

**GENRE** Documentary **YEAR OF PRODUCTION** 2025 **DIRECTOR** Mi Steinbach **SCREENPLAY** Mi Steinbach **DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY** Mi Steinbach **COMPOSER** Robert Nacken **EDITOR** Bernhard Reddig **PRODUCER** Mi Steinbach **PRODUCTION COMPANY** Earth Cut Filmproduktion **RUNTIME** 80 min **LANGUAGE** No Dialogue

**CONTACT** Mi Steinbach  
info@earth-cut.de • www.earth-cut.de





© Filmkantine, Birthe Templin

## WO/MEN

### HOUSE WITH A VOICE

HOUSE WITH A VOICE is about six women in a patriarchal society, about six different life stories and one mutual decision: giving up femininity and living as men to gain a voice, to experience personal freedom and to fight for equality. To be a real Burrnesha.

**GENRE** Documentary **YEAR OF PRODUCTION** 2024 **DIRECTORS** Kristine Nrecaj, Birthe Templin  
**SCREENPLAY** Writer: Kristine Nrecaj, Co-Writer: Birthe Templin **DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY**  
 Alfred Nrecaj **PROTAGONISTS** Bedri Gosturani, Marta Vorfi, Diana Rakipi, Gjystina Grishaj,  
 Sanie Vatoci, Lumturie Brahaj **PRODUCER** Katrin Springer **PRODUCTION COMPANY** Filmkan-  
 tine UG **RUNTIME** 87 min **LANGUAGE** Albanian, English **FESTIVALS** Thessaloniki Film Festival,  
 KinoKosova Bern, Ciudad del Este Independent Film Festival CEIFF, Tirana Int. Film Festival, Astra  
 Film Festival, DOK Leipzig, Mix Brasil Film Festival, Int. Filmfestival for Human Rights FICDEH,  
 ReFrame Film Festival, achtung berlin Filmfestival, Beirut Int. Women Film Festival, Global Cinema  
 Film Festival of Boston, Emden Int. Film Festival, Prishtina Queer Festival, MiX Festival Int. Milano,  
 Everybody's Perfect - Geneva Int. Queer Film Festival, OKO Int. Ethnographic Film Festival, PriMed  
 Marseille **AWARDS** Best International Documentary Feature Film at International Filmfestival for  
 Human Rights FICDEH, Best Documentary Feature Film at Ciudad del Este Independent Film Festi-  
 val CEIFF, Special Jury Mention at Beirut International Women Film Festival

**WORLD SALES/CONTACT** Stranger Films Sales  
 hello@strangerfilmssales.com • www.housewithavoice.com  
 www.filmkantine.de • www.missingfilms.de



© Fine Susanna Gumpert

## 58 KILO

Again and again, Sofia and Klara throw each other to the ground. Wrestling is a demanding sport, but for these two young women from Kyrgyzstan, every move builds confidence. Klara shows great promise, while Sofia is the heart of the local wrestling scene. She has competed internationally, won medals, and now shares her experience and skills with others. To Klara, she is an inspiration. 58 KILO is a story of determination and resilience—of pushing forward, rising up, and standing up for oneself.

**GENRE** Sports **YEAR OF PRODUCTION** 2024 **DIRECTOR** Fine Susanna Gumpert **SCREENPLAY** Fine Susanna Gumpert **DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY** Fine Susanna Gumpert **CAST** Klara Saidinova, Sofia Zairova **PRODUCER** Jan Ruckes **PRODUCTION COMPANY** ifs International Film-school Cologne in coproduction with Fine Susanna Gumpert **RUNTIME** 21 min **LANGUAGE** Kyrgyz

**CONTACT** Fine Susanna Gumpert  
hallo@finegumpertdop.com • [www.finegumpertdop.com](http://www.finegumpertdop.com)



© Alissa Larkamp / Emma-Mathilda Lipphaus

# ALL DIE GARTENZWERGE

## THE WEIGHT OF GNOMES

Marie, 15, and Luka, 17, watch their hometown vanish – swallowed by an expanding lignite mine. A whole village erased for profit. But who is to profit? They're losing the ground beneath their feet, both literally and figuratively. Growing up in the late capitalist wreckage, they navigate a world shaped by climate crisis and social collapse. Marie wants to escape her family – especially her father, whose cruelty leaves her numb. School pressure suffocates her. She's in love with her brother's girlfriend. Luka longs for his mother, who's always off working, just to keep them afloat. He understands, but the anger sticks. In his relationship, he's torn between vulnerability and old-school ideals of masculinity. They both face a future they don't know how to shape. The smokestacks of the mine grow bigger each day – symbols of a broken system that demands everything and gives nothing. Change is necessary, but it arrives like a storm: too loud, too fast, too much. Fear and numbness become constants. Their bond is the only thing that holds – intense, unpredictable, sometimes tender, sometimes brutal. The mine, like a cancer, just keeps growing.

**GENRE** Coming-of-Age Story, Drama **YEAR OF PRODUCTION** 2025 **DIRECTOR** Emma-Mathilda Lipphaus **SCREENPLAY** Emma-Mathilda Lipphaus **DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY** Alissa Larkamp **CAST** Anna Notova, Maximilian Krappatsch **EDITOR** Mirella Drosten **PRODUCER** Saba Mehdizadeh **PRODUCTION COMPANY** Fachhochschule Dortmund **RUNTIME** 45 min **LANGUAGE** German

### CONTACT

Emma-Mathilda Lipphaus, emma\_lip@web.de  
Mirella Drosten, hello@mirelladrosten.com





© Einbaum Film

# DIE UNIFORMIERTEN

## THE UNIFORMED

At 18, a young man commits to 17 years in the military. Inside the system, he witnesses things he hadn't thought possible. Many of his comrades consistently make mistakes or lack the physical and mental endurance. The military is well prepared and quietly removes the deviants from the countless formations they have to perform. The young man holds up well, but Frank, his roommate and friend, has a problem. His repeated failures have caught up with him.

**GENRE** Drama **YEAR OF PRODUCTION** 2025 **DIRECTOR** Timon Ott **SCREENPLAY** Timon Ott  
**DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY** Rafael Kuhn **CAST** Soldiers of the German Armed Forces, Antonis Antoniadis  
**PRODUCERS** Ricardo Guzmán Bausch, Timon Ott **PRODUCTION COMPANY** Einbaum Film  
**RUNTIME** 17 min **LANGUAGE** German **FESTIVALS** Locarno Film Festival 2025

**WORLD SALES** Kurzfilm Agentur Hamburg  
[sales@shortfilm.com](mailto:sales@shortfilm.com) • [www.shortfilmsales.com](http://www.shortfilmsales.com)

**FESTIVAL DISTRIBUTION** Gargantua Film Distribution  
[administration@gargantuafilm.it](mailto:administration@gargantuafilm.it) • [www.gargantuafilm.it](http://www.gargantuafilm.it)





© DFFB / Angst Film / Hello Trouble

# EROGENESIS

In the aftermath of a mysterious disaster, the few humans left find themselves unable to reproduce the species. All hope lies in the hands of five women who have developed the technology to create human life outside the body. But the researchers cannot reach an agreement on how and if to release it. In the absence of consensus, they immerse themselves in the study of pleasure.

**GENRE** Science Fiction **YEAR OF PRODUCTION** 2025 **DIRECTOR** Xandra Popescu **SCREENPLAY** Xandra Popescu, Clara Puhlmann **DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY** Maayane Bouhnik **CAST** Valerie Renay, Yuko Kaseki, Estelle Widmaier, Greta Markurt, Sasha Deckinger, Cécile Perrot **SOUND DESIGN & COMPOSING** Florentin Tudor **EDITING** Vanessa Heeger **PRODUCTION DESIGN** Fausto Torelli **COSTUME DESIGN** Helene Albrecht **PRODUCERS** Clara Puhlmann, Xandra Popescu **CO-PRODUCERS** Carlotta Cornehl, Astrid Schäfer **PRODUCTION COMPANY** German Film and Television Academy Berlin in coproduction with Angst Film and Hello Trouble **RUNTIME** 15 min **LANGUAGE** English **FESTIVALS** Semaine de la Critique - Cannes 2025 **AWARDS** Canal+ Award 2025 at Semaine de la Critique - Cannes 2025

## WORLD SALES / CONTACT

Premium Films, Martina Fiorellino  
mf@premium-films.com



© Dmitriy Sagan

# IT'S ONLY THE LITTLE DEATH

Matias is 26 and still a virgin. He's an artist and, at first glance, a bit weird. At a point in his life when the desire for physical intimacy has become an obsession, he's given a chance. However his expectations about such a desired event are a bit too high.

**GENRE** Tragicomedy **YEAR OF PRODUCTION** 2025 **DIRECTOR** Dmitriy Sagan **SCREENPLAY** Dmitriy Sagan **DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY** Daryna Shylko **CAST** Will Bruder, Julia Grauhan, Helene Reinke, Paul Fritzsche **PRODUCER** Dmitriy Sagan **PRODUCTION COMPANY** Dmitriy Sagan **RUNTIME** 28 min **LANGUAGE** English

**CONTACT** Dmitriy Sagan  
sadsagan@gmail.com

**German films in the U.S.**

**German**

---

**Film**

---

**Office**

**Subscribe at  
[germanfilmoffice.us](http://germanfilmoffice.us)**

An initiative of



**GOETHE  
INSTITUT**

**german  
●●● films**



© Konrad Waldmann

## BAMBI IST TOT

### BAMBI IS DEAD

"A death, a drug trip, an accident - Marie's life falls apart in a single day. After a year in a psychiatric hospital, she returns to her parental home - miscast in a life her parents still expect her to act in. Feeling trapped, she sets off with her ex-boyfriend on a journey through Eastern Europe. Now drifters, bound by no rules, they move from one encounter to the next. Along the way, Marie pushes her limits and exceeds the boundaries of others - until the journey slips out of control."

BAMBI IS DEAD is the second feature film by Anton von Heiseler who graduated in Film Directing from the Film University Babelsberg Konrad Wolf in 2024.

**GENRE** Drama, Road Movie **CATEGORY** Feature **DIRECTOR** Anton von Heiseler **SCREENPLAY** Anton von Heiseler **DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY** Konrad Waldmann **CAST** Dana Herfurth, Daniel Prussak, Michaela Caspar **PRODUCERS** Justus Hagemann, Ben-Alexander Hüttig, Anton von Heiseler **LANGUAGE** German, English

### CONTACT

Justus Hagemann, Ben-Alexander Hüttig  
hagemannjustus@gmail.com  
benhuettig@icloud.com



© kalekone film

## CAMOUFLAGE

2021. Conflict-averse Vitaly flees the restrictive post-Soviet structures of Ukraine and his authoritarian mother Tatyana to Germany, leaving sister Eugenia behind. As Vitaly gradually starts making friends and finding his footing in Germany with a theatre group, he also begins to sever all ties with anything that has to do with his Ukrainian culture and identity, including his sister, Eugenia.

However, when the Russian invasion occurs, Vitaly has to learn how to be honest and stand up for his beliefs and identity without losing himself.

CAMOUFLAGE is the poignant story of a young man striving to shape his life freely, only to be confronted by two harsh realities: the political turmoil of the world and his own family dynamics.

**GENRE** Coming-of-Age Story, Drama **CATEGORY** Feature **DIRECTOR** Mykyta Gibalenko **SCREENPLAY** Mykyta Gibalenko, Sharyhan Osman **DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY** Mirko Hans **CAST** Arthur Aliev, Liza Tsilyk, Klara Lange, Hanna Yaremchuk-Bobalo **PRODUCERS** Katharina Kolleczeck, Lea Neu, Jennifer Drake **PRODUCTION COMPANY** kalekone film in co-production with ZDF Das kleine Fernsehspiel **LANGUAGE** Ukrainian, German, Russian

### CONTACT

kalekone film, Katharina Kolleczeck  
hello@kalekone-film.com  
www.kalekone-film.com





© Leander Hartung

## DAS LEICHTE UND DAS SCHWERE LIGHTNESS AND WEIGHT

After a failed suicide attempt, grieving 32-year-old photographer Lukas meets single-parent nurse Nora. While they develop a friendship, they are also trying to find elements of their past lives that they long for in each other: Lukas for his deceased artist girlfriend Maya and Nora for her absent partner Mario. By trying to arrange a posthumous exhibition for Maya, Lukas slowly finds his way back to life at Nora's side. But Nora carries a secret that also threatens to destroy their newly found happiness.

A graduate of the University of Television and Film Munich (HFF), Erec Brehmer was co-director with Benjamin Rost of the documentary BORN TO FAKE which had its world premiere at the 2025 Filmfest München.

**GENRE** Drama **CATEGORY** Feature **DIRECTOR** Erec Brehmer **SCREENPLAY** Erec Brehmer, Karla Cristóbal **DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY** Sven Zellner **CAST** Thomas Schubert, Melodie Simina, Kriemhild Hamann, Adrian Grünewald, Imogen Kogge, Hassan Akkouch, Agnes Decker **PRODUCERS** Philipp Maron, Tristan Bähre **PRODUCTION COMPANY** Maverick Film GmbH in co-production with ZDF Das kleine Fernsehspiel and arte **LANGUAGE** German

### CONTACT

Maverick Film GmbH, Philipp Maron  
philipp.maron@maverickfilm.de  
www.maverickfilm.de



© Trimafilm-Rundfilm / Florian Strandl

## DIE ANDERE SEITE THE OTHER SIDE

Since losing her family, a woman is living alone in the wilderness – far away from society which is dominated by mistrust and fear after the outbreak of a fatal disease. When she is forced to leave this life behind, she not only experiences a boundless freedom, but also remembers the importance of human closeness and the feeling of belonging.

"THE OTHER SIDE explores whether it is possible to overcome the boundaries – both between countries and between people – that define our divided world," says director Mariko Minoguchi whose debut feature RELATIVITY won the German Film Critics' Awards for "Best Debut Film" and "Best Screenplay" in 2020.

**GENRE** Action/Adventure, Drama **CATEGORY** Feature **DIRECTOR** Mariko Minoguchi **SCREENPLAY** Mariko Minoguchi **DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY** Felix Pflieger **CAST** Nina Hoss, Precious Mariam Sanusi, Barbara Petritsch, Johannes Nussbaum, Çiğdem Teke, Mohamed Achour, Anita Pititto, Therese Affolter and many more **PRODUCERS** Trini Götze, David Armati Lechner, Isabelle Bertolone **CO-PRODUCERS** Constanze Schumann, Thomas Kiennast **PRODUCTION COMPANY** Trimafilm in co-production with Rundfilm **LANGUAGE** German **WORLD SALES** Beta Cinema GmbH **GERMAN DISTRIBUTOR** X Verleih

### CONTACT

Trimafilm, Trini Götze  
trini@trimafilm.de, www.trimafilm.de



© COIN FILM

## DIE ASSISTENTIN (AT) THE ASSISTANT (WT)

In Jutta Brückner's drama about three generations of women, the renowned archaeologist Ursula Scheuner (Corinna Harfouch) makes a sensational discovery during excavations in the moor – at the same time as her mother (Hildegard Schmahl) dies. Ursula comes under suspicion of being involved in her death herself. Meanwhile, Ursula's new assistant Mel (Carla Juri) confuses everything: she seems to know more about Ursula's past than she reveals and entangles Ursula in a labyrinth of memories, illusions and truths.

**GENRE** Drama, Mystery **CATEGORY** Feature  
**DIRECTOR** Jutta Brückner **SCREENPLAY** Jutta Brückner **DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY** Daniela Knapp **CAST** Corinna Harfouch, Carla Juri, Hildegard Schmahl, Nina Kunzendorff, Samuel Finzi, Sebastian Schwarz, Rosa Enskat, Hannah Ehrlichmann **PRODUCERS** Christine Kiauk, Herbert Schwering **PRODUCTION COMPANY** COIN FILM, Köln **GERMAN DISTRIBUTOR** X-Verleih **LANGUAGE** German

### CONTACT

COIN FILM

c.kiauk@coin-film.de, www.coin-film.de



© Peter Paul Altmann

## IM ZEICHEN DES DRACHEN THE SIGN OF THE DRAGON

A single moment changed everything. Detective Michael loses his hearing on duty and retreats into silence. Years of isolation and self-doubt follow, until the only person who still believes in him, his former partner and only true friend, asks for his help on a mysterious case. For Michael, it's a chance to return to life.

As a police advisor, he enters a world filled with symbols and secrets. He discovers new ways of perception and inner strength and falls in love with a woman who sees him for who he truly is. But when she becomes the target of a mysterious dragon cult, a race against time begins.

A gripping thriller about loss, resilience, and the power of never giving up.

**GENRE** Crime Thriller **CATEGORY** Feature  
**DIRECTORS** Enrico Saller and Marina Hoeft **SCREENPLAY** Enrico Saller **DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY** Chris Hirschhäuser **CAST** Erol Sander, Amira Aly, Nastassja Kinski, Erdogan Atalay, Verena Kringe, Charles Rettinghaus, Sabrina Schieder, Susan Hoecke, Guido Broscheit, Aurelio Savina, Max Ortner, Johannes Berzl, Marina Hoeft, Yasmin Ott, Inaam Al Battat **PRODUCER** Enrico Saller **CO-PRODUCERS** Marina Hoeft, Chris Hirschhäuser, Erol Sander **PRODUCTION COMPANY** Royal Movie Production in co-production with Deerhouse Film **LANGUAGE** German

### CONTACT

Royal Movie Production/Enrico Saller

regie@enrico-saller.de, www.enrico-saller.de



© Greta Isabella Conte

## INTERIOR

Kasimir uses a hollow couch to infiltrate houses. Once inside, he secretly films the owners' lives. A few days later the couch is picked up again, with Kasimir inside: "Delivery Error". He delivers the tapes to the brain surgeon Dr. Liebermann, who is trying to learn how to feel human emotions. While Kasimir provides him with more footage of further break-ins to prove his love, the doctor, unimpressed, prepares an awake surgery in his cellar for a young musician. Broken by unrequited love, Kasimir begins to deviate from Liebermann's dogma: never intervene in what happens in front of the camera. An unforgivable breach of trust for Liebermann and so he decides to determine Kasimir's fate.

**GENRE** Drama, Thriller **CATEGORY** Feature **DIRECTOR** Pascal Schuh **SCREENPLAY** Joe Hofer, Timo Ackermann, Pascal Schuh **DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY** Greta Isabella Conte **CAST** Knut Berger, Danill Kremkin, Andreas Nickl, Monika Lennartz, Johannes Kühn, Kristina van Eyck, Ludwig Simon, Malaya Stern Takeda, Jennifer Sabel, Benjamin Kramme, Niels Bormann **PRODUCERS** Timo Ackermann, William Eggert, Katrin Haase, Oliver Arnold **PRODUCTION COMPANY** U5 Filmproduktion in co-production with Filmuniversität Babelsberg **KONRAD WOLF LANGUAGE** German, German Sign Language

### CONTACT

Timo Ackermann, [timo.ackermann@ewetel.net](mailto:timo.ackermann@ewetel.net)  
 Pascal Schuh, [mail@pascalschuh.com](mailto:mail@pascalschuh.com)  
 Oliver Arnold, [arnold@u5-filmproduktion.de](mailto:arnold@u5-filmproduktion.de)  
[www.interiorfilm.de](http://www.interiorfilm.de)



© UFA

## NEUES LAND

After a space of several years, geologist Ina Sedlitz comes back to her home village of Neukirch which has undergone a transformation from a former lignite mining area into a popular tourist destination. Ina wants only one thing: to transfer her inheritance from the family hotel to her niece Mara and finally put the past behind her. But when she is asked to prepare a geological report on the artificially created lake, she encounters dangerous instabilities – and the shadows of a long-suppressed family secret. When Mara begins asking uncomfortable questions, the family's carefully guarded silence begins to crumble. Ina faces a decision that will change everything – for her, for Mara and for an entire village.

**GENRE** Drama **CATEGORY** TV Movie **DIRECTOR** Esther Rauch **SCREENPLAY** Khyana el Bitar, Dörte Franke **SCRIPT EDITING** Esther Rauch **DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY** Mario Minichmayr **CAST** Jödis Triebel, Jörg Schüttauf, Ronald Zehrfeld, Lucy Gartner, Naemi Florez, Thomas Dehler **PRODUCERS** Katharina Rietz, Henriette Lippold **CO-PRODUCERS** Tom Haase, Toni Heye **PRODUCTION COMPANIES** UFA Mitte GmbH and ZDF **LANGUAGE** German **GERMAN BROADCASTER** ZDF

### CONTACT

UFA GmbH, Toni Heye  
[Toni.Heye@ufa.de](mailto:Toni.Heye@ufa.de)  
[www.ufa.de](http://www.ufa.de)



© Leo Wolters

## STORM

A young man with a bad haircut – Alexey, or simply Lesha – drifts through the darkness of a Berlin winter. Over two days, we follow his seemingly ordinary routine, filled with casual encounters and quiet observations. But Lesha carries a secret: he's a deserter from the Russian army.

Fragments of his everyday life intertwine with documentary footage and private archives, gradually shaping a portrait of a Russian emigrant on fire.

STORM is director Vladlena Savenkova's artistic reflection on the Russian war in Ukraine and at the same time mourning for the homeland that no longer exists. She is currently studying Directing at the DFFB and working as a writer-director for ARTE's "Tracks East" programme.

**GENRE** Drama **CATEGORY** Short **DIRECTOR** Vladlena Savenkova **SCREENPLAY** Vladlena Savenkova **DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY** Leo Wolters **CAST** Andrey Tverdy, Vlad Kistner, Daria Delman, Natalia Korotaeva, Anja Karmanski, Tita von Hardenberg, Tatiana Grechanyuk **PRODUCER** Anonymous **PRODUCTION COMPANY** Deutsche Film- und Fernsehakademie Berlin GmbH **LANGUAGE** Russian, German, Ukrainian

### WORLD SALES

Deutsche Film- und Fernsehakademie Berlin GmbH, Anna Zaluska  
a.zaluska@dffb.de, www.dffb.de



© Bernd Hermes

## SUPERBUHEI

The unsuccessful bar owner Jesse Bronske (Oliver Korittke) is afraid that his evil twin brother is now back on his trail and gradually wanting to take over his life. However, the more Jesse becomes consumed by his persecution paranoia and tries to calm himself with alcohol, the more he actually loses control of his life.

SUPERBUHEI is Josef Brandl's debut feature after having shot a teaser version of the story in 2022, subsequently one of the winners of the 2024 Short Tiger Awards.

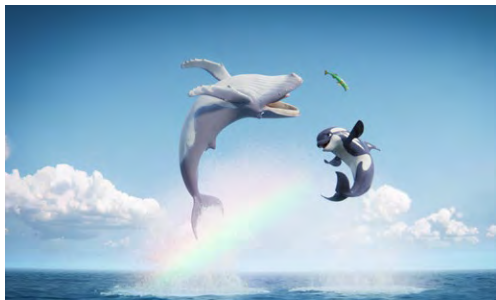
Apart from directing, Brandl has also worked for more than 10 years as a production designer, art director and set designer for filmmakers as diverse as Steven Spielberg, Wes Anderson and Alireza Golafshan.

**GENRE** Drama, Thriller, Horror **CATEGORY** Feature **DIRECTOR** Josef Brandl **SCREENPLAY** Josef Brandl and Johannes Simon Becker **DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY** Moritz Moesinger **CAST** Oliver Korittke, Silke Bodenbender, Leni Rabbel, Susanne Bredehoeft, Milton Welsh, Jan Georg Schuette, Hans-Juergen Alf, Jan Henrik Stahlberg **PRODUCERS** Janina Sara Hennemann and Jan Philip Lange **PRODUCTION COMPANY** JUNIFILM GmbH in co-production with Norddeutscher Rundfunk **LANGUAGE** German **GERMAN DISTRIBUTOR** Barnsteiner-Film

### CONTACT

JUNIFILM GmbH, Janina Sara Hennemann  
mail@junifilm.de, www.junifilm.de





© Telescope Animation GmbH

## DER LETZTE WALSÄNGER THE LAST WHALE SINGER

Vincent, a teenage humpback whale, is the orphaned son of the last Whale Singer, whose magical song once protected the oceans. Burdened by the loss of his parents, Vincent doubts his own abilities. When the monstrous Leviathan escapes from a melting iceberg, threatening all marine life with its poisonous ink, Vincent must find his own song to stop the threat. But overwhelmed by self-doubt, he embarks on a perilous journey into the deep sea to bring his parents back from the mythical Star Pool, hoping his father can defeat the Leviathan in his place. Joined by Walter, his finicky cleaner fish nanny, and Darya, a brave deaf orca, Vincent must face his fears, accept his loss, and discover his own song to save the oceans.

**GENRE** Animation, Children's Film, Family Entertainment **CATEGORY** Feature **DIRECTOR** Reza Memari **SCREENPLAY** Reza Memari **PRODUCTION DESIGNER** Sebastian Gadow **ORIGINAL VOICE CAST** Vincent Tong, Bruce Dinsmore, Jenna Wheeler-Hughes, Priyanka (Mark Suknanan) and many more **PRODUCER** Maite Woköck **CO-PRODUCERS** Jiri Mika, Fanny-Laure Malo **PRODUCTION COMPANY** Telescope Animation GmbH in co-production with PFX and La Boite à Fanny **LANGUAGE** English **WORLD SALES** Global Constellation **GERMAN DISTRIBUTOR** Little Dream Pictures GmbH

### CONTACT

Telescope Animation GmbH, Meyrem Yücel  
meyrem@telescopeanimation.com  
www.telescopeanimation.com



© DFFB

## THE PLANT FROM THE CANARIES

May, a Korean woman in her early thirties, finds herself suddenly alone after an unexpected breakup. As she drifts through sleepless days in Berlin, memories of her youth in Seoul quietly resurface.

THE PLANT FROM THE CANARIES is a contemporary portrait of a woman caught between times, identities, and the gentle shifts of everyday life.

The debut feature by Berlin-based Chinese filmmaker Ruan Lan-Xi was, developed with the support of the Deutsche Film- und Fernsehakademie Berlin (DFFB).

**GENRE** Drama **CATEGORY** Feature **DIRECTOR** Ruan Lan-Xi **SCREENPLAY** Ruan Lan-Xi **DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY** Jonathan Steil **CAST** Hyeonsu Jung, Daria Wichmann **PRODUCER** Ruan Lan-Xi **PRODUCTION COMPANY** Deutsche Film- und Fernsehakademie Berlin GmbH in co-production with Chickpea Entertainment **LANGUAGE** Korean, English, German **FESTIVAL** Locarno Film Festival 2025

### CONTACT

Chickpea Entertainment, Ruan Lan-Xi  
mail@lanxi-ruan.com  
lanxi-ruan.com

# 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](http://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.

## SUPERVISORY BOARD

**Philipp Kreuzer** Chairman

**Johannes Busse**  
**Dr. Frank Castenholz**  
**Jana Cernik**  
**Kirsten Niehuus**  
**Jolinde Sawahn**



**Simone Baumann**  
Managing Director  
phone +49-89-59 97 87 15  
baumann@german-films.de



**Anne Beuermann**  
Assistant to  
Managing Director  
phone +49-89-59 97 87 21  
beuermann@german-films.de



**Andrea Schiefer**  
Deputy Managing Director,  
Director Administration  
& Strategic Development  
phone +49-89-59 97 87 24  
schiefer@german-films.de



**Anna Damasio**  
Accounting / Administration  
phone +49-89-59 97 87 22  
damasio@german-films.de



**Martin Scheuring**  
Head of Short Films  
& Market Projects  
phone +49-89-59 97 87 12  
scheuring@german-films.de



**Ina Sommer**  
Head of Animation Germany  
phone +49-89-59 97 87 13  
sommer@german-films.de



**Julia Teichmann**  
Head of Documentary  
Marketing & Subtitling Support  
phone +49-89-59 97 87 20  
teichmann@german-films.de



**Sylva Häutle**  
Head of Festival Relations  
& Producers Liaison  
phone +49-89-59 97 87 14  
haeutle@german-films.de



**Nicole Kaufmann**  
Head of Regional Desk  
USA & UK  
phone +49-89-59 97 87 11  
kaufmann@german-films.de



**Marcos Rabelo**  
Head of Regional Desk  
Central and Eastern Europe,  
Festival Relations  
phone +49-89-59 97 87 25  
rabelo@german-films.de



**Fides Stark**  
Head of Regional Desk Asia,  
Australia, Scandinavia & Turkey  
phone +49-89-59 97 87 13  
stark@german-films.de



**Valentin Köhn**  
Head of Regional Desk  
Southern Europe, South-  
& Central America  
phone +49-89-59 97 87 14  
koehn@german-films.de



**Eva-Maria Pellikan**  
Head of Communications  
& Marketing  
Liaison TV & Series  
phone +49-89-59 97 87 17  
pellikan@german-films.de



**Angela Sonntag**  
Head of Press  
& Public Relations  
phone +49-89-59 97 87 28  
sonntag@german-films.de



**Anne Heidebrecht**  
Head of Distribution Support  
& Previews  
phone +49-89-59 97 87 44  
heidebrecht@german-films.de



**Dorothee von Manteuffel**  
Distribution Support  
phone +49-89-59 97 87 47  
vonmanteuffel@german-films.de



**Florin Aurich**  
Apprentice Event Management  
phone +49-89-59 97 87 29  
aurich@german-films.de

# GERMAN FILMS PODCASTS



published every third Tuesday



published every third Thursday



## SHAREHOLDERS



[www.agdok.de](http://www.agdok.de)



[www.ag-kurzfilm.de](http://www.ag-kurzfilm.de)



[www.deutsche-kinemathek.de](http://www.deutsche-kinemathek.de)



GERMAN FEDERAL FILM FUNDING

[www.ffa.de](http://www.ffa.de)

**FFF BAYERN**

[www.fff-bayern.de](http://www.fff-bayern.de)



[www.filmstiftung.de](http://www.filmstiftung.de)



[www.medienboard.de](http://www.medienboard.de)



[www.produzentenallianz.de](http://www.produzentenallianz.de)



[www.prog.film](http://www.prog.film)



[www.vdfe.de](http://www.vdfe.de)

## SUPPORTERS



Federal Government Commissioner  
for Culture and the Media

[www.kulturstaatsministerin.de](http://www.kulturstaatsministerin.de)



GERMAN FEDERAL FILM FUNDING

[www.ffa.de](http://www.ffa.de)

**FFF BAYERN**

[www.fff-bayern.de](http://www.fff-bayern.de)



[www.filmstiftung.de](http://www.filmstiftung.de)

**HESSEN FILM  
& MEDIEN**

[www.hessenfilm.de](http://www.hessenfilm.de)



[www.medienboard.de](http://www.medienboard.de)



[www.film.mfg.de](http://www.film.mfg.de)



Mitteldeutsche  
Medienförderung

[www.mdm-online.de](http://www.mdm-online.de)



[www.moin-filmfoerderung.de](http://www.moin-filmfoerderung.de)



[www.mv-filmfoerderung.de](http://www.mv-filmfoerderung.de)



[www.nordmedia.de](http://www.nordmedia.de)

# ASSOCIATION OF GERMAN FILM EXPORTERS

## Verband deutscher Filmexporteure e.V. (VD FE)

Manfred-von-Richthofen-Straße 15, 12101 Berlin

phone +49-173-726 06 16

mail@vdfe.de, www.vdfe.de

# VD FE

Experts in Export

### Beta Cinema GmbH

Grünwalder Weg 28d

82041 Oberhaching/Germany

phone +49-89-6 73 46 98 28

beta@betacinema.com

www.betacinema.com

### The Match Factory GmbH

Domstr. 60

50668 Cologne/Germany

phone +49-2 21-53 97 09-0

info@matchfactory.de

www.the-match-factory.com

### Constantin Film Distribution GmbH

Feilitzschstr. 6

80802 Munich/Germany

phone +49-89-44 44 60 0

zentrale@constantin.film

www.constantin-film.de

### Media Luna New Films UG

Kaiser-Wilhelm-Ring 38, 6th Floor

50672 Cologne/Germany

phone +49-2 21-51 09 18 91

info@medialuna.biz

www.medialuna.biz

### Epsilon Film GmbH

Grünwalder Weg 28d

82041 Oberhaching/Germany

+49-89-67 34 69 80

info@epsilonfilm.de

www.epsilonfilm.de

### The Playmaker Munich

Türkenstr. 89

80799 Munich/Germany

phone +49-89-4132 578 10 17

worldsales@playmaker.de

www.playmaker.de

### Films Boutique GmbH

Köpenicker Str. 184

10997 Berlin/Germany

phone +49-30-69 53 78 50

contact@filmsboutique.com

www.filmsboutique.com

### Pluto Film Distribution Network GmbH

Schliemannstr. 5

10437 Berlin/Germany

phone +49 030 2191 8220

info@plutofilm.de

www.plutofilm.de

### Global Screen GmbH

Kopernikusstrasse 9

81679 München/Germany

phone +49-89-24 41 29 55 00

info@globalscreen.de

www.globalscreen.de

### SOLA Media GmbH

Rotebühlplatz 29

70178 Stuttgart/Germany

phone +49-7 11-96 89 44 40

post@sola-media.com

www.sola-media.com

### MAGNETFILM GmbH

Ilisensteinweg 35

14129 Berlin

phone +49-30-24 62 81 56

info@magnetfilm.de

www.magnetfilm.de

### Studio 100 International GmbH

Neumarkter Strasse 18-20

81673 München/Germany

+49-89-96 08 55-0

info@studio100int.com

www.studio100international.com

**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

Credits are not contractual for any of  
the films mentioned in this publication.

© German Films Service + Marketing GmbH

All rights reserved. No reproduction, copy or  
transmission of this publication may be made  
without written permission.

**Editor**

Angela Sonntag

**Contributors**

Oliver Baumgarten, Martin Blaney,  
Patrick Heidmann, Marion Meyer,  
Rüdiger Sturm

**Translations**

Lucinda Rennison, Martin Blaney

**Cover**

Laura Tonke © Joachim Gern

**Design & Art Direction**Werner Schauer [www.triptychon.design](http://www.triptychon.design)**Printing Office**

F&W Druck- und Mediencenter GmbH  
[www.fw-medien.de](http://www.fw-medien.de)

---

**FOREIGN REPRESENTATIVES****USA - New York**

German Film Office

An initiative of German Films  
and Goethe-Institut

Sara Stevenson

phone +1 212 439 8706

[sara.stevenson@goethe.de](mailto:sara.stevenson@goethe.de)[www.germanfilmoffice.us](http://www.germanfilmoffice.us)**Argentina/South America**

Gustav Wilhelmi

phone +54-9-11 5568 19 52

[gustav@cenealeman.com.ar](mailto:gustav@cenealeman.com.ar)**China**

Anke Redl

phone +86 136 01 35 59 19

[redl@german-films.de](mailto:redl@german-films.de)**Eastern Europe**

Marcel Maïga

phone +49 176 38 84 56 72

[maiga@german-films.de](mailto:maiga@german-films.de)

Scan here to visit  
our GFQ website



Welcome to

# GERMAN CINEMA

worldwide



german  
●●●  
films