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DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY

MALA REINHARDT
DIRECTOR

AARON ALTARAS
ACTOR

LEONIE KRIPPENDORFF
WRITER & DIRECTOR

MARIKO MINOGUCHI
WRITER & DIRECTOR

LEA DRINDA
ACTOR

THEA EHRE
ACTOR

FACE TO FACE WITH GERMAN FILMS

THE FILMMAKERS



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FACE TO FACE WITH GERMAN FILMS

10 years - 10 editions of **FACE TO FACE WITH GERMAN FILMS**

It is now 10 years since German Films first presented “new faces” from the German film and TV industry in a new initiative called FACE TO FACE WITH GERMAN FILMS. Launched in 2016, German Films established this campaign to focus on exceptional upcoming German talents and present them worldwide. These talents and their projects were introduced to a global audience at international A-Festivals, film markets, festivals of German films and various industry events.

10 years means 10 editions of FACE TO FACE WITH GERMAN FILMS. In these 10 editions, very different talents have been our ambassadors, presenting German film abroad. In the first five editions of the initiative, the talents were grouped by department. It started with six female actors, followed by six male actors, then six directors, in the fourth year a selection of female and male actors, and then writers.

As from the sixth edition, the talent campaign has been slightly altered with the addition of THE FILMMAKERS. After the FACES of the previous years had come from one category, the focus was now on a broad spectrum of exceptional film talents across various disciplines. The idea was to present a cross-section of the many creative faces of German filmmaking. There are many talents in front of and behind the camera who do great work. More than any other art form, film is particularly dependent on the collaboration of creative minds with different skills and backgrounds in its complex production process. A film always requires a team that develops a project together – THE FILMMAKERS should also reflect this.

Since its first edition, the annual campaign has established itself as a flagship platform to give German film talent international visibility and draw the attention of the global film industry to some of the country’s most outstanding newcomers and professionals.

With the tenth edition, we are now celebrating our first special anniversary and are delighted that we have been able to get to know so many wonderful talents over the past campaigns who are still in touch with us today. Many of them are incredibly successful on a national and international level, and we regularly see them in major productions. They work with big names from the German and international film business, collect award nominations and are known abroad as German film stars. We are looking forward to many more editions of our FACE TO FACE campaign and many new, inspiring talents.

In these 10 editions we have featured exciting, creative, convincing and impressive talents. Here is an overview of all the FACES from past campaigns:

2016 Paula Beer Liv Lisa Fries Sandra Hüller Julia Jentsch Saskia Rosendahl Lilith Stangenberg	ACTORS	2017 Volker Bruch Alexander Fehling Louis Hofmann Jannis Niewöhner Tom Schilling Ronald Zehrfeld	ACTORS	2018 Emily Atef Valeska Grisebach Lars Kraume Anca Miruna Lazarescu Burhan Qurbani David Wnendt	DIRECTORS
2019 Maria Dragus Christian Friedel Luise Heyer Jonas Nay Jördis Triebel Fahri Yardim	ACTORS	2020 Jana Burbach Katharina Eyssen Hanno Hackfort Bernd Lange Rafael Parente Laila Stieler	WRITERS	2021 Freya Arde Ulé Barcelos Sarah Blaßkiewitz Tua El-Fawwal Annekatriin Hendel Lorna Ishema Laila Petersen-Jama Jieun Yi	THE FILMMAKERS
2022 Sarah Noa Bozenhardt Sara Fazilat Jerry Hoffmann Julia Kovalenko Matthias Luthardt Zamarin Wahdat Anne Zander	THE FILMMAKERS	2023 Sönke Andresen Welket Bungué Dascha Dauenhauer Alison Kuhn Reza Memari Lukas Nathrath Lena Urzendowsky	THE FILMMAKERS	2024 Jan Bülow Mehmet Akif Büyükdatalay Banafshe Hourmazdi Moritz Müller-Preißer Mona Cathleen Otterbach Eva Trobisch Soleen Yusef	THE FILMMAKERS

FACE TO FACE WITH GERMAN FILMS

THE FILMMAKERS

10th Edition - Meet the Faces of 2025

FACE TO FACE WITH GERMAN FILMS enters its anniversary edition.

As a supporter of the distribution of German films abroad, one of German Films' main goals is to increase the visibility of German filmmakers on an international level. In line with this mission, German Films has been organizing the annual FACE TO FACE WITH GERMAN FILMS campaign since 2016, which presents outstanding young German film talents to the international public. The initiative shines a spotlight on some of the most influential German talents currently working in the industry.

This year's FILMMAKERS comprise seven fascinating and versatile personalities. As ambassadors, they will represent German film abroad and present the work and creativity of filmmakers in Germany through their personal stories and experiences.

Each of them has taken a unique and inspiring path into the film industry. Their stories impressively illustrate the diversity and creativity that characterize the work and impact of the film industry.

The FACES 2025 are united by a deep passion for cinema and the firm will to actively shape the future of the German film industry. They are already symbols of the high quality that distinguishes German films and series on the international stage and proudly bring their productions to the world's major festivals. With their creative vision, their craftsmanship and their tireless enthusiasm, they have enriched the German film industry in the long term and continue to shape it with fresh esprit and professional dedication.

"We have a vibrant and diverse film scene in Germany. This diversity and creativity naturally thrives on its filmmakers. We have talents in all the different trades who are always coming up with new ideas, who are curious, who are constantly rethinking and redesigning the medium of film and cinema," explains Simone Baumann, Managing Director of German Films. "At German Films, we see it as our duty to support these talents from the German film industry and to accompany them on their way to becoming successful filmmakers. We are proud to be able to present seven filmmakers as ambassadors for our campaign this year, who are emblematic of innovation in the film industry."

The FACE TO FACE WITH GERMAN FILMS talents in 2025 are:

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AARON ALTARAS

Actor

Aaron Altaras, born 1995 in Berlin, is a German actor who has made a name for himself with numerous film and television roles. Before starting his acting career, he studied philosophy in Amsterdam. Aaron began his acting career at a young age and first received major attention with his role in the television film NICHT ALLE WAREN MÖRDER (directed by Jo Baier, 2006), in which he portrayed the moving story of a Jewish boy during World War II. Since then, he has established himself in the German film and television scene.

He is particularly well known for his role in MARIO (directed by Marcel Gisler, 2018), a drama about the challenges of a same-sex relationship in professional soccer. His performance earned him much praise and international recognition.

In the internationally successful Netflix series UNORTHODOX (directed by Maria Schrader, 2020), he plays a music student who shows modern Berlin to an orthodox Jewish woman searching for freedom. Aaron Altaras has also appeared in other notable projects, including the Disney+ series THE INTERPRETER OF SILENCE (DEUTSCHES HAUS, directed by Isa Prahl & Randa Chahoud, 2022) and the film THE NIGHT BETWEEN US (ZWISCHEN UNS DIE NACHT, directed by Abini Gold, 2022). Most recently, he starred in the Cannes Series Award-winning ARD series DIE ZWEIFLERS (directed by Clara von Arnim, 2023). For his performance in this series, he won the German Television Award and the Blue Panther in the "Best Actor" category.

In the past year, Aaron has worked on two other projects. His next films will be WHY ME (directed by David Schalko, 2024) and RAVE ON (directed by Chryssos & Viktor Jakolevski, 2024).

Quick Q & A

What were your first steps and beginnings in the film business?

I went to school with the son of Simone Bär, one of the most important casting directors in Germany. One day Simone came to my school and asked if anyone wanted to come to a casting. And I really wanted to do it. I was lucky and started filming NICHT ALLE WAREN MÖRDER. After that, I took a short break from film and studied philosophy. But I missed acting, so I went back to Berlin and started acting full-time.

What is your favorite German film?

RUN LOLA RUN by Tom Tykwer. I'm from Berlin and was growing up at the time the movie came out. For me, it's the most Berlin movie and one of the best movies I've ever seen. I watch RUN LOLA RUN once a year. I even have a tattoo that has to do with the movie.

What does it mean for you to be a FACE TO FACE ambassador this year?

It is an honor to represent German film abroad. I believe that German film is not appreciated enough internationally. I want to do my best to change that.

Filmography

2024 **WHY ME**

Series - Director: David Schalko

2024 **RAVE ON** (Release 2025)

Feature Film - Director: Nikias Chryssos & Viktor Jakolevski

2023 **SEXUALLY AVAILABLE**

SEXUELL VERFÜGBAR

Series - Director: Ulrike Kofler

2023 **DIE ZWEIFLERS** (Release 2025)

Series - Director: Clara von Arnim

2022 **INTERPRETER OF SILENCE** (Release 2023)

DEUTSCHES HAUS

Series - Director: Isa Prahl & Randa Chahoud

2022 **THE NIGHT BETWEEN US** (Release 2023)

ZWISCHEN UNS DIE NACHT

Feature Film - Director: Abini Gold

2022 **ASBEST** (Release 2023)

Series - Director: Kida Khodr Ramadan

2021 **SIMPLY COMPLICATED** (Release 2022)

EINFACH MAL WAS SCHÖNES

Feature Film - Director: Karoline Herfurth

2021 **LEGAL AFFAIRS**

Series - Director: Randa Chahoud & Stefan Bühling

2020 **WILD REPUBLIC**

Series - Director: Lennart Ruff & Markus Goller

2019 **UNORTHODOX**

Series - Director: Maria Schrader

2019 **9 TAGE WACH**

Series - Director: Damian John Harper

2018 **WIR SIND JETZT**

Series - Director: Christian Klandt

2018 **MARIO**

Feature Film - Director: Marcel Gisler

2017 **DIE UNSICHTBAREN**

Feature Film - Director: Claus Räfle

2015 **HOMELAND**

Series - Director: Lesli Linka Glatte

2015 **TATORT - HITCHCOCK UND FRAU WENICKE**

Feature Film - Director: Klaus Krämer

2014 **TOD AM MEER**

Feature Film - Director: Andreas Herzog

2008 **NICHT ALLE WAREN MÖRDER**

Feature Film - Director: Jo Baier



LEA DRINDA

Actor

Lea Drinda realized at a young age that film roles offered her the perfect mix of all the things she was interested in: Film, photography, philosophy, psychology, and sociology. She became known to a wider audience in 2021 with her first major role in *WE CHILDREN FROM BAHNHOF ZOO* (*WIR KINDER VOM BAHNHOF ZOO*, directed by Philipp Kadelbach, 2021). She was nominated for the German Acting Award (Best Newcomer) the same year.

This was followed by the series *MYSTERIUM* (directed by Niklas Weise, 2021), the ZDF produced tragicomedy *EVERYBODY WANTS TO BE LOVED* (*ALLE WOLLEN GELIEBT WERDEN*, directed by Katharina Woll, 2022) and the short film *REIZSTOFF* (directed by Julian Dieterich, 2023).

For her role in the series *BECOMING CHARLIE* (directed by Kerstin Polte, among others, 2022), in which she played the first non-binary character on German television, she received the Hessian Film Award, the New Faces Award, and the *Daffne* (Best Actress) in 2022, and was also nominated for the Grimme Award for Outstanding Acting Performance and the German Television Award for Best Actress.

In May 2023, Lea starred in the new high-end fantasy series *THE GRYPHON* (*DER GREIF*, directed by Sebastian Marka, among others, 2023) on Amazon Prime Video. She played the leading role in the ARD series production *WER WIR SIND* (directed by Charlotte Rolfes, among others, 2023) about young environmental activists.

In the summer of 2024, the mini-series *NIGHT IN PARADISE* (*NACHTS IM PARADIES*, directed by Matthias Glasner & Bettina Oberli, 2024) was released on Canal+ with Lea alongside Jürgen Vogel as his daughter Joni. She recently shot *CITY OF BLOOD* (directed by Philipp Kadelbach, 2024) for Disney+. Lea is currently starring as Wanda in *WHERE'S WANDA?* (directed by Christian Ditter, 2024) on Apple TV+.

Quick Q & A

What were your first steps and beginnings in the film business?

I didn't plan it. It sort of happened at a perfect time in my life. I had just taken a break from school because I was ill. And then I happened to get the opportunity to go to a casting for an Amazon Prime series. It was for a new adaptation of Christiane F.'s story **WE CHILDREN FROM BAHNHOF ZOO**. Somehow I convinced the people in charge to give me the role. I've been a part of this wonderful industry ever since.

Which German and/or international filmmakers inspired you growing up?

Not necessarily inspired but encouraged in a way. My grandfather was an actor, so acting was nothing new or foreign to me. I liked the idea of acting becoming a part of my life too. It was quite normal to have someone in the family who was an artist or an actor.

What does it mean for you to be a **FACE TO FACE** ambassador this year?

When I was asked if I wanted to take part in this year's campaign, it felt strange at first – to be honest. Because I have only been part of this community for a very short time. Realizing that I am actually now a part of this wonderful industry, where so many beautiful things are created, feels very nice. The fact that I can now represent this industry makes me feel very proud.

Filmography

2024 **CITY OF BLOOD** (*Release expected in 2025*)

Feature Film – Director: Philipp Kadelbach

2024 **DANKE FÜR NICHTS** (*Release expected in 2025*)

Feature Film – Director: Stella Markert

2024 **DYING**

STERBEN

Feature Film – Director: Matthias Glasner

2024 **WHERE'S WANDA?**

Series – Director: Christian Ditter

2024 **NIGHT IN PARADISE**

NACHTS IM PARADIES

Miniseries – Director: Matthias Glasner & Bettina Oberli

2023 **REIZSTOFF**

Short Film – Director: Julian Dieterich

2023 **BOOM**

Feature Film – Director: Hanna Seidel

2023 **WER WIR SIND**

Series – Director: Charlotte Rolfes + others

2023 **THE GRYPHON**

DER GREIF

Series – Director: Sebastian Marka + others

2022 **EVERYBODY WANTS TO BE LOVED**

ALLE WOLLEN GELIEBT WERDEN

Feature Film – Director: Katharina Woll

2022 **DAS MÄRCHEN VOM FROSCH UND DER GOLDENEN KUGEL**

Feature Film – Director: Ngo The Chau

2022 **BECOMING CHARLIE**

Series – Director: Kerstin Polte + others

2021 **BLEICHES GLIMMEN**

Feature Film – Director: Theresa Weidmann

2021 **MYSTERIUM**

Series – Season 1+2 – Director: Niklas Weise

2021 **CHECK CHECK**

Series – Director: Lars Jessen, Ole Zapatka

2021 **THERESA WOLFF - HOME SWEET HOME**

TV-Film – Director: Franziska Buch

2021 **WE CHILDREN FROM BAHNHOF ZOO**

WIR KINDER VOM BAHNHOF ZOO

Series – Director: Philipp Kadelbach



THEA EHRE

Actor

Austrian actress Thea Ehre was born in Wels in 1999. From a young age, she engaged in dance and acting courses to pursue her passion for performance. In 2018, she moved to Vienna, where she soon landed her first small role in the television series *VORSTADTWEIBER* (directed by Mirjam Unger, 2018). While initially studying Theatre, Film, and Media Studies at the University of Vienna, she opted to leave her studies to take on her first significant film role.

In 2022, Ehre portrayed Leni Malinowski, a transgender woman navigating a complex world of love and investigations, in Christoph Hochhäusler's genre thriller *TILL THE END OF THE NIGHT* (*BIS ANS ENDE DER NACHT*, directed by Christoph Hochhäusler, 2022). She received the Silver Bear for Best Supporting Performance at the 2023 Berlinale for her role. Later on, she appeared in the short film *DIE RÄUBERINNEN* (directed by Isa Schieche, 2023), which won the Max Ophüls Prize; she played one of the three lead roles in this film about three transgender women planning a robbery.

Simultaneously, Thea was featured in the play *FUGUE FOUR RESPONSE* (directed by Olivia Axel Scheucher & Nick Romeo Reimann, 2023), at the Volkstheater in Vienna. This performance art piece critically examines the commodification of the body in late capitalism, blending humor and seriousness.

In addition to her artistic pursuits, Thea Ehre actively advocates for the representation of transgender individuals, both in her public persona and through her work in film and theatre. Her commitment to portraying diverse narratives highlights the importance of visibility for trans people in contemporary media.

Thea has several upcoming projects. Among other films, Thea will be seen in Tom Tykwer's *THE LIGHT* (*DAS LICHT*, directed by Tom Tykwer, 2024) in 2025.

Quick Q & A

Why did you want to get into the film business?

The idea of becoming an actor came to me as a child. In my family, I'm known for being very stubborn and passionate when it comes to my ideas. I grew up in a very small town in Upper Austria, so maybe it was a bit naive to dream so big. Then I took dance lessons at school and joined the theater theatre, and so the idea grew bigger and bigger. My first role in a play was as one of the witches in Shakespeare's Macbeth. I think that's where my foundations was laid.

Which German and/or international filmmakers inspired you?

I was a big fan of Michael "Bully" Herbig growing up. And later on, I admired the work of Luca Guadagnino. CALL ME BY YOUR NAME was the first queer movie I watched. And Yorgos Lanthimos, I'm obsessed with POOR THINGS, as well as Coralie Fargeat, the director of THE SUBSTANCE.

What does it mean for you to be a FACE TO FACE ambassador this year?

The last year has been very hard for me because I believe that the German film industry still has difficulties casting a transgender actor. So it means a lot to me to be part of this campaign and to have the opportunity to represent my community and German film abroad.

Filmography

2024

TATORT - BOROWSKI UND DAS HAUPT DER MEDUSA (Release 2025)

Feature Film - Director: Lars Krause

2023

THE LIGHT (Release 2025)

DAS LICHT

Feature Film - Director: Tom Tykwer

2023

TATORT - BOROWSKI UND DAS EWIGE MEER (Release 2024)

Feature Film - Director: Katharina Bischof

2023

SLØBORN (Release 2024)

Series - Director: Christian Alvart

2023

DIE RÄUBERINNEN

Short Film - Director: Isa Schieche

2022

TILL THE END OF THE NIGHT (Release 2023)

BIS ANS ENDE DER NACHT

Feature Film - Director: Christoph Hochhäusler

2021

LU DEN (Release 2023)

Series - Director: Laura Lackmann
& Stefan A. Lukacs



LEONIE KRIPPENDORFF

Writer-Director

Born in 1985 and raised in Berlin, Leonie Krippendorff studied Film Directing at the Film University Babelsberg Konrad Wolf from 2009 to 2016.

Her graduation film LOOPING (screenplay & directing, 2015) was shown at various international film festivals, including the Guadalajara International Film Festival where it was awarded a prize. The film was released in cinemas throughout Germany.

In February released, her feature debut COCOON (KOKON, screenplay & directing, 2018), was selected for the Berlinale Talents Script Station in 2018.

In 2020, COCOON premiered as the opening film of the Generation 14+ section at the Berlinale. Since then, COCOON has been invited to over 70 international film festivals. In the summer of 2020, the film was released in German cinemas, followed by theatrical releases in many countries worldwide. COCOON received numerous awards, including the Iris Film Prize 2020 for Best Film and Best Actress. Leonie Krippendorff also received the Bavarian Film Award for Best Emerging Director, and Lena Urzendowsky – in the lead role – won the award for Best Young Actress.

Variety listed Leonie Krippendorff as one of the “10 European Talents to Watch 2020”.

Her upcoming film project IN HEAT received the ArteKino International Award at the Berlinale 2023.

Quick Q & A

Why did you want to get into the film business?

I was a big dreamer as a child. I was pretty bad at school and during classes I was mostly looking out the window, making up stories and putting myself in other characters' shoes. So it was a natural thing for me to make films and tell stories.

Is there a person you would love to work with?

I just got rejected by Helena Bonham Carter. But that motivates me even more.

What are 3 interesting or unusual facts about you people may not know?

I was a photographer before I started to make films and my first films didn't have any dialogue. My first short film didn't have a line at all, the second had only one line. Now I've become quite talkative. And I was the first to go on a rubber dinghy on the Landwehrkanal in Berlin. So it was actually me who started that trend. I am a mother of a two-year-old and just finished my biggest project, so I had no time to watch any films in the past few years and am pretty nervous that someone finds out.

Filmography

2024

IN HEAT (Release 2025)

GEPELLTE HAUT

Feature Film - Writer & Director

2023

2 MINUTEN

Series (Episodes 1, 4, 6) - Writer & Director

2021

LOVING HER

Series - Writer & Director

2018

COCOON (Release 2020)

KOKON

Feature Film - Writer & Director

2015

LOOPING (Release 2016)

Feature Film - Writer & Director

2011

STREUNER

Short Film - Writer & Director



TIM KUHN

Director of Photography

Before becoming a filmmaker, Tim Kuhn studied History of Latin America in Germany, Spain and Ecuador. Alongside his studies, however, he began working as a cinematographer for various documentaries in Europe, Asia, South America and the Middle East.

This led him to study cinematography at the University of Film and Television Munich. Initially, Tim shot many award-winning documentaries but he soon switched to fictional storytelling.

In 2021 and 2023, Tim Kuhn received the German Camera Award for his work on the series *BREAKING EVEN* (directed by Boris Kunz, 2019) as well as *LUDEN* (directed by Laura Lackmann and Stefan Lukacs, 2021). Tim also received the German Television Award in the Best Cinematography Fiction category for his visual design of the Amazon Prime original *LUDEN*.

Together with the Oscar®-nominated Palestinian director Scandar Copti, he shot the independent feature film *HAPPY HOLIDAYS* in 2022. The film premiered at the Venice International Film Festival in 2024, was shown at the Toronto International Film Festival, and won the Étoile d'Or Award at the Marrakech Film Festival. Most recently, the feature film *JUPITER* (directed by Benjamin Pfohl, 2022) won, alongside several awards worldwide, the award for Best Feature at the renowned Hof Film Festival. Tim is responsible for the visual design of the upcoming Apple TV+ Series *KRANK BERLIN*, premiering in 2025.

In 2024, Tim Kuhn worked as a DOP on the film adaptation of the bestselling novel *22 BAHNEN* (directed by Mia Maariel Meyer, 2024). The novel adaptation will be released in cinemas in 2025. Tim Kuhn is a member of the German Film Academy and lives in Berlin.

Quick Q & A

Why did you want to get into the film business?

After finishing my first degree – I studied History of Latin America – I realized that communicating with images and making films was a much better way to express myself. I'm kind of a late bloomer, I started working in the film business very late. My beginnings were as a prop driver and then I was lucky enough to be accepted at the Munich Film School.

Which German and/or international filmmakers inspired you?

I am strongly influenced by Korean cinema, especially the films of Park Chan-wook. His films are visually very powerful and tell stories in a very different way. In terms of cinematography, I would name Harris Savides. I'm also impressed by the work of Gaspar Noé, Jacques Audiard, Kathryn Bigelow and Kelly Reichardt – I admire their raw and physical energy. They are authentic and at the same time very stylized.

What does it mean for you to be a FACE TO FACE ambassador this year?

It's a great honor, I really love to represent my craft and my profession as a Director of Photography.

Filmography

2024 **22 BAHNEN** (Release expected in 2025)

Feature Film – Director: Mia Maariel Meyer

2023 **KRANK BERLIN** (Release 2025)

Series – Director: Alex Schaad & Fabian Möhrke

2022 **JUPITER** (Release 2023)

Feature Film – Director: Benjamin Pfohl

2021 **LUDEN** (Release 2023)

Series – Director: Laura Lackmann und Stefan Lukacs

2020 **HAPPY HOLIDAYS** (Release 2024)

Feature Film – Director: Scandar Copti

2020 **POLIZEIRUF 110: SABINE**

Feature Film – Director: Stefan Schaller

2019 **HINDAFING - SEASON 2**

Series – Director: Boris Kunz

2019 **DEAR MR. FÜHRER**

DAS GLASZIMMER

Feature Film – Director: Christian Lerch

2019 **BREAKING EVEN**

Series – Director: Boris Kunz

2018 **EICHWALD, MdB - SEASON 2**

Series – Director: Fabian Möhrke

2018 **LABAULE & ERBEN**

Series – Director: Boris Kunz

2018 **TACKLING LIFE**

Documentary – Director: Johannes List

2017 **HINDAFING - SEASON 1**

Series – Director: Boris Kunz

2016 **THE WALL**

DER AUSFLUG

Feature Film – Director: Bartosz Grudziecki



MARIKO MINOGUCHI

Writer-Director

Mariko Minoguchi was born in Munich in 1988. She made her first short film at the age of 18 and subsequently gained experience in various film productions. Her short films have been shown at the Hof Film Festival and the Max Ophüls Film Festival, among others.

Her feature film debut *RELATIVITY (MEIN ENDE. DEIN ANFANG.,* screenplay & directing, 2018) was produced by Trimafilm in co-production with Berghaus Wöbke. The film premiered at the Munich Film Festival and was subsequently shown at the London Film Festival, as well as in Warsaw and in competition at the Sanfic – Santiago International Film Festival. The film received the German Film Critics' Award for Best Debut Film and Best Screenplay, among others.

Together with director Tim Fehlbaum, Mariko wrote the screenplay for his film *HAVEN: ABOVE SKY (TIDES,* directed by Tim Fehlbaum, 2018), which premiered at the 71st Berlinale and reached number 1 in the US Netflix charts. The film received four German Film Awards.

In 2023, she realized the anthology series *ZEIT VERBRECHEN* (screenplay & directing, 2023) together with Jorgo Narjes from X-Filme. The four films premiered at the Berlinale in the Panorama section in 2024, were subsequently named German Crime Series of the Year, and received the German Acting Award for Best Ensemble.

The shooting of her new feature film *DIE ANDERE SEITE* (screenplay & directing, 2024) will take place from 2024-2025. The film is an Austrian-German co-production between Trimafilm and Vienna based Rundfilm and is scheduled for completion at the end of 2025. Together with Trini Götze, David Armati Lechner and Eva Trobisch, she is a partner in the Munich-based production company Trimafilm and develops new projects.

Quick Q & A

What were your first steps and beginnings in the film business?

I started shooting and editing video clips when I was 15. And I directed my first short film when I was 18. So those were my beginnings. That's how I gained my first experience and discovered my passion for filmmaking.

Which German and/or international filmmakers inspired you?

When it comes to international filmmakers, I would say that Steven Spielberg, Alejandro González Iñárritu and Christopher Nolan, to name just three, inspired me growing up. When it comes to German filmmakers, especially contemporary German filmmakers, I admire the work of Tim Fehlbaum, Eva Trobisch or İlker Çatak.

What are 3 interesting or unusual facts about you people may not know?

I have never attended a film school. I would love to do an internship as a make-up artist. And I love cooking after a long day of filming. It's my way of switching off and winding down.

Filmography

2025

DIE ANDERE SEITE

Feature Film - Writer & Director

2024

ZEIT VERBRECHEN: DEZEMBER

Series - Writer & Director

2021

HAVEN: ABOVE SKY

TIDES

Feature Film - Screenplay

2019

RELATIVITY

MEIN ENDE. DEIN ANFANG.

Feature Film - Writer & Director



MALA REINHARDT

Director

Mala Reinhardt completed her directing studies at Film University Babelsberg Konrad Wolf in Potsdam in 2023. Previously, she studied ethnology in Cologne, New Delhi and Kampala. As a director and producer of documentary films, she is committed to highlighting untold stories and offering counter-narratives that challenge dominant public discourses, particularly from migrant and feminist perspectives.

One of her most acclaimed works, *THE SECOND ATTACK* (*DER ZWEITE ANSCHLAG*, directing & producing, 2018), explores the impact of right-wing violence in Germany through the eyes of those directly affected. This independently produced film premiered at DOK Leipzig in 2018 as part of the German Competition, where it earned an honorable mention. It later featured at the Berlinale in 2021. In 2024, Mala premiered her feature-length documentary *FAMILIAR PLACES* (directing & producing, 2024) at Locarno Film Festival's Semaine de la Critique. The film is a deeply personal reflection on friendship, identity and belonging within a post-migrant society.

Currently, she is conducting research for her next project, *MOTHER/TONGUE* (*MUTTER/SPRACHE*, directing, 2025), a hybrid film that will explore the intricate connections between language, migration, and colonial politics. Mala continues to expand her expertise, having participated in the Into the Wild Mentoring program for female filmmakers in 2020/2021, and is now part of the Dok.Art Mentoring program of 2024/2025, hosted by the Drehbuchwerkstatt München.

In addition to her own filmmaking, Mala teaches in universities at the intersection of documentary filmmaking and ethnology. She also mentors young female filmmakers through the GirlsGoMovie program and leads artistic workshops in schools, including at the Schülerlabor of Folkwang University of the Arts and the Spots program of the German Film Academy.

Quick Q & A

What were your first steps and beginnings in the film business?

My first steps were actually baby steps. Before making my own films I always thought that the film industry was elitist. My first short film was shot with acid attack survivors in India. After that, I felt the confidence to tell the stories I wanted to tell. I then continued to work on my first medium-length film **THE SECOND ATTACK**.

What does it mean for you to be a **FACE TO FACE** ambassador this year?

I define myself as German-Asian. I come from a working-class background. And I am a mother. All of this defines me as a person. I'm really proud to be an ambassador and to be able to represent German film and German cinema.

What would be outside your comfort zone in your work? What would challenge you?

Stepping in front of the camera as the second protagonist in my movie **FAMILIAR PLACES** was definitely out of my comfort zone. I'm still very proud of the fact that I did it.

Filmography

Upcoming

MOTHER/TONGUE

MUTTER/SPRACHE

Documentary - Director

2018

THE SECOND ATTACK

DER ZWEITE ANSCHLAG

Documentary - Director & Producer

2024

FAMILIAR PLACES

Documentary - Director & Producer

2016

RUPA

Documentary - Co-Director & Producer

2024

VIVA ALEMANIA

Video Installation - Co-Director & Producer

FACE TO FACE WITH GERMAN FILMS

A special Photoshoot

The pictures of the seven filmmakers which accompany the campaign were shot by renowned photographer Marcus Höhn.

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About German Films

German Films Service + Marketing GmbH is the national information and advisory center for the promotion of German films worldwide and the official external representation for German films appointed by the federal government of Germany. The work of German Films focuses on increasing the level of awareness of German films abroad by providing information services as well as initiating PR and marketing measures in order to grant the highest possible visibility in international media.

German Films 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.

German Films' range of activities includes a close cooperation with all major international film festivals, the organization of umbrella stands for German sales companies and producers at international television and film markets, the staging of festivals of German Films in selected international territories as well as the staging of industry screenings in key international territories. Providing advice and information for representatives of the international press, buyers from the fields of cinema, home entertainment and television, and consulting German filmmakers on international festivals is also part of German Films activities.



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FACE TO FACE WITH GERMAN FILMS

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