German Films

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*film exporters*

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How hard can it be to find Matthias Glasner in a café where there are only three male customers, one of whom I know anyway? Let’s just call it a close encounter of the third attempt! But with my face recognition software now rebooted and coffees to hand, the platform is open for a film fan’s film fan!

Just coming off his psycho-drama GNADE, Glasner is now “working on a film about the creation of the universe from the Big Bang to... No! Just kidding! I’m a total Terrence Malick fan. Jürgen Vogel and I didn’t name our production company Badlands for nothing. It took us a minute to decide. No other director does what he does: he’s so idiosyncratic.”

Prompted by the original question, whether he was in Cannes this year, Glasner, who admits to “being a long-distance fan: some of the most important films for me, THE CONVERSATION, TAXI DRIVER, APOCALYPSE NOW – they all won in Cannes”, expounds further on the man who is clearly more than an inspiration: “Malick shows us man is not the whole thing, as Jean Renoir said, but part of something. Malick can be just as interested in the wind in the grass as the person. He leaps boundaries in cinemas. He writes such great voice overs: BADLANDS, DAYS OF HEAVEN. He’s a really good author.”

His love of film started at a very early age and, as usual, the parents are to blame! In Glasner’s case, for not knowing their son was “going to the cinema in the Turkish district straight after school! They showed Turkish action and melodrama, Japanese monster films, Kung-fu: I went every day. And they had non-stop screenings!” We both pause for a nostalgia break, for those days when you could go in and out as you pleased, with double features too. “You never knew where the film was when you went in, but it didn’t matter because you sat there...”
till you got back to your starting point,” Glasner explains for those too young to know. “I’d watch two, three films, not caring what was on, as long as it was loud, colorful, action. These are the roots of my films! They’re basically genre variations, crime and genre.”

For Glasner, there is no other art form to match cinema, and he wishes his fellow filmmakers would sometimes ‘get over themselves’, being too bound up in “social comment. I call it Bad Conscience cinema. It’s like they are saying ‘I know I must do something, not exploit, atone for the original sin of the German people!’ The core of German filmmakers is a bad conscience!”

And now some Shock! Horror! because Glasner is riding a very different groove: “I want to do sci-fi and horror,” says Glasner. “The Fantasy Filmfest is important for me as the Berlinale. They show the most innovative fantasy films. The makers have little money and have to use their imagination. Watching a horror film is a whole body experience. I come out and the ground is moving!”

He made his first film with friends, at the age of sixteen, telling me “I knew I wanted to do this. I’ve worked since then in every film job possible, learning on set, not in film school. I also wrote my own scripts.”

Not that he needed pressing, but Glasner cites Jim Jarmusch and the latter’s STRANGER THAN PARADISE as a key experience. “I met him in Hamburg. My girlfriend worked in NY for him for a couple of years. He is my role model. He’s never ‘gone Hollywood’, neither is his fancy, writes his own stuff, is very human and friendly on set. He never shouted. My first film, SCHICKSAL UND ZUFALL, is very Jim Jarmusch!”

Throwing himself into 1990s pop culture, Glasner turned out DIE MEDIocreN, SEXY SADIE, and FANDANGO, all of which “were my first real three features, all having Berlinale premieres. They’re a kind of trilogy for me: pop culture, violence, sex – all without a bad conscience. SEXY SADIE is a total B-movie, crime, black and white. FANDANGO is gangsters, models, sex. It was liberating and also different for Germany.” And how did they go down? “People looked at me like I smelt bad, for not following Wim Wenders or casting Bruno Ganz. It’s like they are saying ‘I know I must do something, not exploit, atone for the original sin of the German people!’ The core of German filmmakers is a bad conscience!”

“I have two tracks,” Glasner continues, “exploitation cinema and hardcore arthouse. Both run parallel, sometimes fight one another, sometimes combine, both quite outside the mainstream. Kim Ki-duk or Lars von Trier for arthouse, and Malick of course. THE FREE WILL was the first time I tried combining the two.”

This “story of a rapist belongs to exploitation and I made it as radical arthouse. The film is almost three hours, has no music, nothing to make it light and easy and romantic. That’s when I think I was born as a filmmaker. This is what interests me for the future, combining these two directions.”

Glasner’s next project is an untitled sci-fi film, set in a parallel universe, a multiverse, which “I want to combine with a cinema that goes more radical ways. I’ve always produced my own films, except for FANDANGO. It’s no question about not having ultimate control. I always take a risk, often commercial, with my own head! Jürgen Vogel and I, we want to do our own things the way we want it, so we need economic and artistic freedom.”

Once behind the camera, Glasner likes to do the same for his actors, “give them a lot of space. It’s about creating an atmosphere to let their creativity flow. It’s not about making a product but a team going on a journey. They’re not just costume wearers. I’m interested in the real person, not the fictional character,” he explains. “That’s what makes the work so exciting and sexy. You never know what’s coming out. It’s mutual seduction, this eroticism, the love relationship is what I appreciate so much.”

With a home cinema set-up to die for, Glasner prefers not to wait for the local release or accepting shortened or re-cut international versions: “You can be happy when the Palme d’Or winner comes to Germany at all! There are far more DVDs in England sooner than here.”

“I loved I SAW THE DEVIL,” Glasner continues. “It’s a really disturbing serial killer film. I think the genre is over-milked but this whole revenge thing was driven to a point where it hurt! I bought the uncut version from Amazon but it’s no longer available. Splendid Film are trying a Black Edition series, with no rating. I’m waiting to see if they’ll be banned! Sooner or later. The problem of German cinema is we don’t make films that are banned!”

In his own words, Glasner believes “Germany has become nice and okay. There are no repressed taboos like in Japan. I was there a few times and they are so repressed it’s no wonder they break out, storm into love hotels etc. That’s why their cinema is so different. They show things they dream of. Our Western, German, world is that things work well, the economy, culture, subsidies, we’re okay. Our subconscious no longer rebels. There are films that have to be made! The subconscious screams to be let out but that’s not the case here. The result is one big harmlessness!”

Unlike GNADE, Glasner’s last project, then: “We filmed in the Polar Sea, -40 degrees in eternal snow and ice, eternal darkness, or Terrence Malick light, if you like! It was an absolutely original experience. This is real cinema with big pictures, a touching, intense story with Jürgen Vogel and Birgit Minichmayr, the best actors in Germany, the best shoot of my life!”

Does he have a life outside film? “Not really! Oh yeah! Film music!” Why are we not surprised?

Simon Kingsley
It’s her characters’ disquiet and irritation that interest Pia Marais – she has no desire to actually cure them.

Stevie is a “little girl lost” in the middle of Germany. She may be only 14, but she needs to find her own way, as her parents are no help whatsoever. Pia Marais’ full-length film debut THE UNPOLISHED is a strange story: a coming-of-age tale set between drugs and parties, sex and a society based on egoism; a sensitive and subtle film about the daughter of late hippies who still refuse to settle in the petit-bourgeois establishment. “To some extent, I suppose my film is autobiographical,” she remarked at that time. “The basic idea was to describe the conditions of my earlier life, a day in my childhood. It could have become a comedy, but I wanted to express seriousness with my images as well.”

Pia Marais is a very unusual director. She does not present bourgeois conditions like many of her contemporaries, but portrays a dangerous life with no firm foundation; women who are seeking to find themselves either because they have lost that foundation or have never known it. And it is always a matter of what society does to people: in THE UNPOLISHED Stevie encounters curiosity and fascination, but they soon turn to the disgust of a child’s instinctive narrow-mindedness.

THE UNPOLISHED is an extremely intense work, filmed with a feverish camera, panning in a searching, hesitant and nonetheless highly confident way through Stevie’s life, almost like a collector. The colors are reminiscent of old photographs, and although the action takes place in the present day, one repeatedly feels oneself transported back to the unfamiliar territory of the past. It is an unpolished film in the very best sense: unrefined, sometimes rough, always intense. And at the same time, this is a very mature work, which won the Tiger Award in Rotterdam.
Her second feature film, AT ELLEN’S AGE, was a psycho-thriller of a very different kind – about liberation that went along with abandonment of the bourgeois, even a turn to the wild. From one minute to the next, Ellen leaves her former life behind her and travels on a journey through modern life, armed with only one suitcase and her flight attendant’s uniform. She moves as if in a trance – first through the professional world of traveling businessmen who have suddenly got lost between meetings and hope to find themselves again at depressing parties in hotel rooms. Then she meets up with a group of left-wing activists, opponents of globalism and animal experimentation, and tries out new ways of life with them, but she is equally unsuccessful there. In the end, Ellen lands in Africa, and so the whole film can be interpreted as a modern fairy-tale about a woman who has been put under a spell. “AT ELLEN’S AGE could be the continuation of THE UNPOLISHED, featuring Stevie 30 years later,” Marais suggests. To date, she has written both of her own screenplays in cooperation with Horst Markgraf.

In all this, it is also possible to discern signs of a movement away from the bourgeois, a search for the forgotten hopes and dreams of our civilization, and an equally sad and mildly ironic swan song to the decline of the West, which betrayed all its promises of freedom and happiness long ago. And there is a Rousseau-inspired grand tour of alienation, which leads to the same “Heart of Darkness” in the end as Coppola’s APOCALYPSE NOW, albeit in a very different way.

Everything is open at the end, but it could also be interpreted as emptiness. This outstanding film is a philosophical work, certainly, but it is also an ill-bred, anti-academic film that remains permanently unpredictable, very bold and experimental, and again includes great scenes with animals – an ape, hundreds of hens, cats and dogs – which seem most full of life, most free; their behavior seems to mirror that of the human beings. It is a film of great openness with dry humor and dialogue, full of minor dirty moments and considerable magic. Pia Marais examines possible ways of living and seems to be more interested in her characters’ disquiet and irritation than in treating or even curing them.

In the meantime, Marais has started work on the screenplay for a new project: “It is about fear and paranoia, about the privatization of security, which I think is terrible. I wanted to look at this theme years ago, but I had a feeling that it was the wrong time to do it. The film is very different from the first two, insofar as this one is a genre film which is primarily about the tension before the truth comes out.”

Rüdiger Suchsland
Ludwigsburg-born Jochen Laube studied Production at the Baden-Württemberg Film Academy from 2000-2005, graduating with Neele Leana Vollmar’s VACATION FROM LIFE (URLAUB VOM LEBEN) which won the 2006 Studio Hamburg Newcomers’ Award in the category of Best Feature Film. During his studies, he worked as a production assistant in Luxembourg on Peter Greenaway’s THE TULSE LUPER SUITCASES and was also involved in setting up UNESCO’s Magic Lantern children’s cinema initiative in Germany. In 2006, he founded his own company, Sommerhaus Filmproduktion, whose productions included Niko Apef’s Adolf Grimm Prize and First Steps Award-winning documentary SONBOL – RALLYE DURCH DEN GOTTESSTAAT, Christian Schwochow’s feature debut NOVEMBER CHILD (NOVEMBERKIND) and the Lola-winning short documentary DIE HAUSHALTSHILFE. Laube has been working for teamWorx Television & Film GmbH as the manager of its Ludwigsburg office since 2008. His production of Florian Cossen’s feature debut THE DAY I WAS NOT BORN (DAS LIED IN Mir) received the FIPRESCI Prize, ex aequo Ecumenical Prize and the People’s Choice Award at the World Film Festival in Montreal last summer and followed this with the Golden Eye for Best Film in the German-Language Feature Film Competition at the Zurich Film Festival in October 2010. This year, the film won two Lolas for Best Music Score and Best Supporting Actress at the German Film Awards. Laube’s other production credits include: BLINDFLUG (dir: Ben von Grafenstein, 2006), HOFFENHEIM – DAS LEBEN IST KEIN HEIMSPIEL (dir: Rouven Rech und Frank Pfeiffer, 2010, documentary), THE GOALGETTER’S SHIP (DAS SCHIFF DES TORJÄGERS, dir: Heidi Specogna, 2010, documentary), WER RETTET DINA FOXX (dir: Max Zeitler, 2011 TV/online), CRACKS IN THE SHELL (DIE UNSICHTTBARE, dir: Christian Schwochow, 2011), PAPAKIND (dir: Sarah Judith Mettke, 2011), REMAKE, REMIX, RIPOFF (dir: Cem Kaya, documentary, 2012), and DREI ZIMMER/KÜCHE/BAD (dir: Dietrich Brüggemann, 2012).

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There’s evidently no place like home, as far as producer Jochen Laube is concerned.

Born and bred in the town of Ludwigsburg near Stuttgart, he stayed there to study Production at the Baden-Württemberg Film Academy from 2000-2005 and graduated with his production of Neele Leana Vollmar’s VACATION FROM LIFE which won the 2006 Studio Hamburg Newcomers’ Award in the category of Best Feature Film.

In the meantime, he had started a family which was another reason not to move away to one of the bigger film centers in Germany like Berlin, Munich or Cologne, and thus stay in Ludwigsburg to set up his own production company Sommerhaus Filmproduktion.

The output from this company gives an idea of the areas Laube has preferred to specialize on in subsequent years: Sommerhaus was behind Ludwigsburg-graduates Christian Schwochow’s award-winning NOVEMBER CHILD, starring Anna Maria Mühe and Ulrich Matthes, and Ben von Grafenstein’s BLINDFLUG, the opening film of the Berlinale’s Perspectives German Cinema in 2007, as well as the documentaries SONBOL – RALLYE DURCH DEN GOTTESSTAAT, which won an Adolf Grimme Prize and First Steps Award, and the Lola-winning short DIE HAUSHALTSHILFE.

From the outset, Laube had considerable success with the films coming out of his fledgling outfit, but the lot of a freelance producer is nevertheless not an easy one, as he soon realized.
Thus, an offer from Nico Hofmann of teamWorx couldn’t have come at a better time. Laube recalls: “Nico knew me from the Film Academy and liked my films, and he also knew that I was someone who wasn’t planning to move away from the area, so he asked if I would be interested in taking over the running of the teamWorx office in Ludwigsburg.”

“The most important thing for me was to have my freedom in this new function and that’s what Nico wanted to ensure as well. I have 100% support from him on the projects I do,” he continues.

“teamWorx is often seen by many as being only involved in producing for television with its big event productions, but it has also made inroads into the feature film world through our productions,” he explains.

Being located just 400 meters away from the Film Academy campus, the Ludwigsburg teamWorx office is a natural port of call for talented film students looking for a producer to handle their graduation film. “This can progress to their debut feature and later a TV film. We want to grow from the debuts more into the area of arthouse films,” Laube notes.

An example of this development is Christian Schwochow, whose graduation film NOVEMBER CHILD had been produced by Laube. Last year, they followed this with his feature debut CRACKS IN THE SHELL which was selected for the International Competition in Karlovy Vary in July. And the mother company of teamWorx has now hired the young director for a prime-time TV series, DER TURM, based on the epic novel by Uwe Tellkamp, to go into production later this year.

However, Laube isn’t concentrating only on students coming out of the Film Academy, despite the obvious geographical proximity.

This year, for instance, saw him working with Berlin-based director Dietrich Brüggemann on DREI ZIMMER/KUCHе/BAD. “It’s a wonderful story about seven young people in their mid 20s who keep moving flats because of changes to their lives for various reasons – they change jobs, a relationship comes to an end, etc..” Laube says. “We are shooting over a whole year in four blocks for the four seasons and have already completed the first two blocks.”

Moreover, he is aiming to have a mixture of new talents and established names as directors for his slate of productions at teamWorx in Ludwigsburg.

Thus, Laube is currently working on two feature debuts by Film Academy students. PAPAKIND, the debut of Sarah Judith Mettke, with award-winning lead actor Devid Striesow, and 5 JAHRE, written and directed by Stefan Schaller, which deals with the true story of Murat Kurnaz, a young Turkish-German man who was detained for five years in the camp at Guantanamo despite being innocent.

Apart from this, he is developing a new project with Florian Cossen with whom he produced the critically acclaimed first feature THE DAY I WAS NOT BORN last year, and he is planning new feature film projects with such established directors as Andreas Dresen and Philip Gröning.

At the same time, he has also been given a free hand by Nico Hofmann to pursue his “great passion” of producing documentaries. There are already plans for a new project with Heidi Specogna – whose THE GOALGETTER’S SHIP was shown in Locarno last year – and Laube is in the midst of production on REMAKE, REMIX, RIPOFF by Cem Kaya about the Turkish cinema of the 1970s and 1980s.

“There was a point when directors started to remake everything that had been successful in the West, so there were Turkish remakes of SOME LIKE IT HOT, STAR WARS and even THE EXORCIST!” he explains. “On the one hand, I find it really funny, but it also says a lot about the Turkish culture. We have interviewed the stars from those films and have made a compilation film after looking at some 1,140 films for the film clips. It will be an ode to cinema.”

The teamWorx outpost has also tried its hand at developing new formats with the production of the DINа FOXX series for public broadcaster ZDF. “This was the first time that an interactive production had been made for ZDF: a detective film which stops after 60 minutes and the audience then has to decide in the Internet who committed the crime,” Laube observes. “The show was very successful on ZDF as well as in the online version. In fact, it went down so well that ZDF’s server crashed on the first night!”

While the company will naturally continue producing projects and stories that are specifically set in and about Germany, Laube is nevertheless interested in becoming more international in the future.

He had already had experiences of shooting abroad with the production of THE DAY I WAS NOT BORN. “The shoot in Buenos Aires was a great challenge, but we had good partners locally in Argentina,” he recalls. “In fact, Florian’s next project will be set in Canada, so I was in Cannes this year to look for partners.”

A step in this direction for a more European dimension had already been taken last year with Christian Schwochow’s new film CRACKS IN THE SHELL which cast the lead role with the Danish actress Stine Fischer Christensen, known to international audiences from such films as Susanne Bier’s AFTER THE WEDDING.

Meanwhile, international partners are likely to be needed for the Philip Gröning feature project Laube has in development. The story is set in Genua during the demonstrations at the G8 summit when one of the demonstrators was tragically killed by the police and the seeds of the ATTAC movement were sown.

Martin Blaney
Steffi Kühnert studied at the “Ernst Busch” Academy of Performing Arts in her native Berlin from 1981-1985 and began her first acting engagement at the Thüringer Landestheater in Eisenach. In 1988, she moved to the Nationaltheater in Weimar to become part of the ensemble and was awarded the first Alfred Kerr Acting Prize in 1991 for her performance as Nora in Ibsen’s A Doll’s House directed by Leander Haußmann. The collaboration with Haußmann continued in the following years at theaters in Salzburg and Bochum, and Kühnert has also appeared on stage at the Schauspielhaus in Zurich, Berlin’s Deutsches Theater and the Schaubühne. Her film acting career began in 1996 with Detlev Buck’s JAILBIRDS (MÄNNERPENSION) and has seen her working again with Haußmann on such feature films as SUN ALLEY (SONNENALLEE), NVA, DINOSAURIER and HOTEL LUX. Another close working relationship has developed with director Andreas Dresen, beginning with GRILL POINT (HALBE TREPPE) which earned her a Silver Hugo in the Best Ensemble at the Chicago Film Festival in 2002. She was also cast in Dresen’s CLOUD 9 (WOLKE 9) and STOPPED ON TRACK (HALT AUF FREIER STRECKE) which had its world premiere in Un Certain Regard at Cannes this year. In 1993, Kühnert received the Federal Cross of Merit for her work in the theater. Her other film credits include roles in: BERLIN BLUES (HERR LEHMANN, dir: Leander Haußmann, 2003), THE WEDDING PARTY (DIE BLUT-HOCHZEIT, dir: Dominique Deruddere, 2004), NO SWEAT (IM SCHWITZKASTEN, dir: Eoin Moore, 2005), NOVEMBER CHILD (NOVEMBERKIND, dir: Christian Schwochow, 2007), ROBERT ZIMMERMANN IS TANGLED UP IN LOVE (ROBERT ZIMMER-MANN WUNDERT SICH ÜBER DIE LIEBE, dir: Leander Haußmann, 2007), WARUM MÄNNER NICHT ZUHOREN UND FRAUEN SCHLECHT EINPARKEN (dir: Leander Haußmann, 2007), THE WHITE RIBBON (DAS WEISSE BAND, dir: Michael Haneke, 2008), WE ARE THE NIGHT (WIR SIND DIE NACHT, dir: Dennis Gansel, 2009), THE DISPENSABLES (DIE ENTBEHRLICHEN, dir: Andreas Armstedt, 2009), and SUNNY UND ROSWITHA (dir: Barnaby Metschurat, short, 2010).

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it is very intimate. You have to have mutual trust because, as an actor, explains that “there is always a small team of about ten at most and speaking about working on the three improvised films, Kühnert Zeugenstand in the theater in his productions of A Doll’s House directed by Leander Haußmann. The collaboration with Haußmann continued in the following years at theaters in Salzburg and Bochum, and Kühnert has also appeared on stage at the Schauspielhaus in Zurich, Berlin’s Deutsches Theater and the Schaubühne.

During her time in the theater, Kühnert made the occasional appearance in television, but the direction towards cinema really started with Detlev Buck’s JAILBIRDS and Leander Haußmann’s SUN ALLEY. “That was, of course, all connected with Leander with whom I had been working at the theater in Bochum,” she recalls. “He was cast in JAILBIRDS and then directed SUN ALLEY, and Detlev Buck had directed a play in Bochum.”

However, Andreas Dresen’s 2002 film GRILL POINT was the decisive factor for Kühnert to concentrate in future on film roles. “It had been wonderful, but hard work without any holidays for almost 25 years,” she says, looking back on her time in the theater. “Film was quite new territory for me, but I was interested in learning more.”

In fact, she had known Dresen for a long time having met him as a first-year drama student when she became a last-minute replacement for another actress at the theater in Schwerin where he was working as an intern.

Since GRILL POINT, she has now worked with him on two other films – CLOUD 9 and this year’s STOPPED ON TRACK – as well as in the theater in his productions of The Threepenny Opera and Zeugenstand.

Speaking about working on the three improvised films, Kühnert explains that “there is always a small team of about ten at most and it is very intimate. You have to have mutual trust because, as an actor, you have to let yourself go and be allowed to do everything without getting embarrassed. It works very well because we all know each other so well, we can rely on one another. One always thinks with improvisation that everything is topsy-turvy, but it is all highly professional in every department. In fact, I would wish that many other actors had the chance to have such an experience.”

“When we were in Cannes with CLOUD 9, we didn’t know how the film would go down with the audience,” she recalls. “You can never tell with such subject matter. This year was similar, although STOPPED ON TRACK is a really tough film and gets to your emotions. People in the audience were very moved and quite exhausted by what they saw. There was lots of crying during the screening, but that’s as it should be.”

In the last ten years Kühnert has worked on productions ranging from Christian Schwochow’s drama NOVEMBER CHILD and Dennis Gansel’s vampire film WE ARE THE NIGHT to Michael Haneke’s Golden Palm-winner THE WHITE RIBBON and Andreas Arnstedt’s THE DISPENSABLES.

How does she select her projects?

“It often depends on who the people are that are connected with the film,” she says. “If it’s Leander or Andreas, I don’t need much convincing. On other films like WE ARE THE NIGHT, I like having small guest appearances where I can have fun disguising myself. A project must get my attention and appeal to me in some way or other. With NOVEMBER CHILD, I thought that the screenplay was so good, and it was his debut. You like to support young directors when you feel that they have the potential to develop into interesting filmmakers.”

At the same time, when the offer came to appear in Haneke’s THE WHITE RIBBON, Kühnert jumped at the chance.

“When we were in Cannes with CLOUD 9, we didn’t know how the film would go down with the audience,” she recalls. “You can never tell with such subject matter. This year was similar, although STOPPED ON TRACK is a really tough film and gets to your emotions. People in the audience were very moved and quite exhausted by what they saw. There was lots of crying during the screening, but that’s as it should be.”

Meanwhile, she may have moved away from the theater, but Kühnert has continued to work with Leander Haußmann through his film projects. “I have never had any major parts in Leander’s films, but I’ve always been a kind of mascot for him. He gives me little parts which I really enjoy playing and I am particularly proud of my role in BERLIN BLUES where I appear towards the end of the film. It all happened on the off-chance when he asked if I’d like to come by for a scene being shot in a pub after the Wall has opened. I’m there all disguised, even with some teeth missing. We had so much fun that it looks as if my character may appear again if they make KLEINER HUND, the third part in Sven Regener’s trilogy!”

Martin Blaney
The 13th Festival of German Films was held in Madrid from 31 May – 4 June and attracted over 4,500 admissions from the Spanish public. Seven feature films were presented in the main program: GOETHE! by Philipp Stölzl, KOKOWÄÄH by Til Schweiger, PICCO by Philip Koch, THE POLL DIARIES by Chris Kraus, ROMEOS by Sabine Bernardi, SLEEPING SICKNESS by Ulrich Köhler, and VINCENT WANTS TO SEA by Ralf Huettner. Furthermore, the program also included screenings of the documentary TRANSIT by Angela Zumpe, the TV series WEISSENSEE by Friedemann Fromm, the young people’s film WINTERTOCHTER by Johannes Schmid, a retrospective on the subject of the German Film Award, and numerous short films.

GOETHE! opened the festival at the Cine Palafox in the presence of this year’s German Shooting Star Alexander Fehling and producer Christoph Müller. The audience at the sold-out screening was very enthusiastic and later voted the film as winner of the Audience Award, which was sponsored by Kodak.

Other guests in Madrid were the actor Florian Lukas (WEISSENSEE), the producers Philipp Budweg (WINTERTOCHTER), Janine Jackowski (SLEEPING SICKNESS) and Tobias Walker (PICCO) as well as the directors Ralf Huettner (VINCENT WANTS TO SEA), Sabine Bernardi (ROMEOS), Angela Zumpe (TRANSIT), and Jan Erik Schmitt and Stephan Müller (NOW FOLLOWS).

There was also great response to the annual industry get-together that German Films hosted, bringing together Spanish distributors, German sales companies and filmmakers for a round of informal but efficient networking.
The Villa Aurora has announced the recipients of its 2012 scholarships, which give talented artists the opportunity to spend three months in Los Angeles to further develop artistic projects. The selection criteria are based on the artistic quality and authenticity of the submitted projects. Scholarships were offered in the following categories: Fine Arts (to Michael Just, Alexej Meschtschanow, Jan-Peter E.R. Sonntag, and Peter Welz), Film (to Maren Ade and Ulrich Köhler, Dietrich Brüggemann, Erik Schmitt and Stephan Müller), Composition (to Claudia Doderer, Jens-Uwe Dyffort and Roswitha von den Driesch, and Chiyoko Szialwincs), and in Literature (to Dorothee Elminger, Felicitas Hoppe and Sibylle Lewitscharoff). The members of the selection jury for the category Film were: journalist Knut Elstermann, Nicole Kaufmann (German Films), Kirsten Niehuus (Medienboard Berlin-Brandenburg), Gabriele Röthemeyer (MFG Baden-Württemberg), and director and previous scholarship recipient (2007) Sven Taddicken.

Villa Aurora is an artist’s residence and historic landmark located in the former home of exiled German-Jewish writer Lion Feuchtwanger and his wife Marta. To promote and foster German-American cultural exchange and to remember the European exiles that settled in Southern California, Villa Aurora offers a variety of public lectures, screenings and performances. The artists-in-residence program and Feuchtwanger Fellowship are at the core of Villa Aurora’s activities. Together with the Villa Aurora, German Films also hosts an annual reception for the German Oscar® nominees there. More information about the Villa Aurora can be found at: www.villa-aurora.org.

**FOCUS GERMANY SHOWCASE IN SHANGHAI**

On June 12th German Films opened the 8th FOCUS GERMANY at the Shanghai International Film Festival with the screening of VINCENT WANTS TO SEA by Ralf Huettner, followed by an opening reception in cooperation with the German consulate. The Chinese audience was charmed by actor Johannes Allmayer, who presented the film. The next day, leading actress Jasna Fritzi Bauer of the competition film ALIVE AND TICKING by Andi Rogenhagen was also overwhelmed by the warm reactions of the audience.

This year’s festival presented two German films in competition: the other candidate for the Golden Magnolia was THE GOOD NEIGHBOUR by Stephan Rick. Out of competition screenings for PINA by Wim Wenders and METROPOLIS by Fritz Lang as well as nine new productions in FOCUS GERMANY (ALMANYA by Yasemin Samdereli, BLESSED EVENTS by Isabelle Stever; GOETHE! by Philipp Stölzl, HENRY OF NAVARRE by Jo Baier; LUK’S LUCK by Ayse Polat; SUICIDE CLUB by Olaf Saumer; and TRANSIT by Philipp Leinemann), 3 films in Spectrum (BEFORE TOMORROW by Joachim Schönheld, THE PALLOW DIARIES by Chris Kraus and ROCK IT! by Mike Marzuk) and 8 shorts in the SIFF Mobile section made up the impressive German participation at this year’s festival edition.

The shorts prove that newcomer talent is on its way: three films were awarded at the closing night ceremony of the festival: THE SOUP by Fred R. Willitzkatz was awarded for Best Director; OUT ON A LIMB by Falk Schuster for Best Animation, and LEAVE WITHOUT RUNNING by Jürgen Tonkel received the Jury Prize. The eve before the awards ceremony, Shooting Star Alexander Fehling was welcomed with enormous applause at the screening of his film GOETHE! The festival in Shanghai is looking forward to welcoming a strong delegation of German films again next year.

**SHORT FILM ASSOCIATION AT BALCHIK FILM MARKET**

The 9th In the Palace International Short Film Festival took place from 18-25 June 2011 in Balchik/Bulgaria. For the first time this year, the festival organizers extended their previous industry section to an independent film market, taking place during three days of the festival. Although the market is still in its early development stages, it has great potential and is likely to attract more industry professionals in the future. The German Film Association (AG Kurzfilm) was invited to present the German short film scene with a stand at this market. In cooperation with German Films, the association informed about the latest German short film productions, film funding and production possibilities in Germany as well as about short film festivals, sales and distribution agencies. Furthermore, the AG Kurzfilm was given the opportunity of a market screening, for which the films from the latest edition of the Soirée Allemande were chosen. The films were well received by the audience, with an informative Q&A after the screening. Established in 2003, the festival has grown from a competitive forum for student films into one of the largest short film festivals in Bulgaria and the region. It has now advanced to the point that nearly 250 short films from 44 countries, selected out of over 4000 titles, compete in the competition programs of the festival.

Among those, nine German shorts were screened in the three competitive sections of the festival: BEACH BOY by Hannes Hirsch, GITTI BADER by Daniel Lang, HERMANN by Hanna Geßendoerfer and TIGHT by Eckhard Kruse in the main competition, OLIVIERO TOSCANO – THE RAGE OF IMAGES by Peter Scharf and Katja Duregger, PINK ANGER by Dorothe Doerholt in the TV film competition as well as A LOST AND FOUND BOX OF HUMAN SENSATION by Martin Wallner and Stefan Leuchtenberg, THE MONEY HOLDING PEOPLE SHOW by Mariya Hristova and TRUTH by Lili Krasteva. More information on the festival can be found at: www.inthepalace.com.
The historical steamboat Hohentwiel during the shooting of A DANGEROUS METHOD on Lake Constance (photo courtesy of MFG Baden-Württemberg)

PROMINENT FILM PROJECTS IN GERMANY’S SOUTHWEST

Not only do German directors like Andres Veiel (IF NOT US, WHO) and Florian David Fitz (JESUS LOVES ME) shoot their projects in Baden-Württemberg, international productions are also active in the area: David Cronenberg shot his latest film A DANGEROUS METHOD at Lake Constance. The film, which deals with the relationship between Sigmund Freud (played by Viggo Mortensen) and Carl Gustav Jung (Michael Fassbender) to the patient Sabrina Spielrein (Keira Knightley), will be celebrating its premiere this year in Venice.

The attractiveness of Baden-Württemberg as a film location can be traced to the work of the unique network of film commissions in Germany, which was initiated by MFG Baden-Württemberg. In six regions, the network offers services for filmmakers with local service providers: from artistic and technical professionals to young up-and-coming talent as well as assistance in securing shooting permits. The state of Baden-Württemberg has been able to impress German and international film producers alike with great diversity in the area — the famous Black Forest and Lake Constance being just two such prominent examples of impressive locations; fortresses, castles, factories and modern metropolitan cities are also plentiful in the region.

SHORTFILM.DE CELEBRATES 10TH ANNIVERSARY

In October this year, the online short film portal shortfilm.de celebrates its tenth anniversary. A cooperation between the International Short Film Festival Oberhausen and the German Short Film Association, the website informs about the latest developments of the German and international short film scene. The section “Kurzfilmmagazin” (short film magazine) reports in its sections “topic”, “reports” and “news” on recent trends worldwide, and the section “Kurzfilmszene Deutschland” portrays German filmmakers and informs about news and changes in regard to short film in Germany. Furthermore, both sections contain an extensive service area with festival dates and deadlines, the “Kurzfilmszene Deutschland” also offers contacts to German film schools, producers, short film related and film funding institutions. As such, shortfilm.de is a unique website that offers in-depth background material on short films and is supported by the Federal Government Commissioner for Culture and the Media.

NEW NAME, NEW LOOK

In June, the Filmstiftung NRW changed its name to Film- und Medienstiftung NRW to take into account its new, integrated funding set-up. “The new name reflects our program: we will continue to place our main emphasis on film funding, but have added new areas of funding activity and support,” said Petra Müller, managing director of the funding institution, which is also celebrating its 20th anniversary in 2011. In addition to film funding, the Film- und Medienstiftung NRW is now also branching out to include support for strategic location marketing of the state of North Rhine-Westphalia and integrated the Mediencluster NRW to further develop location marketing efforts in the field of new media. Another new initiative is the pilot funding program for innovative audiovisual media content which will be launched at the Gamescom in August. To document all the new programs on offer, a location brochure Medienland NRW was published to present the multitude of media companies based in NRW. The 48-page brochure offers background information as well as facts and figures on businesses active in the fields of film, television, games, radio, publishing, music, internet, mobile communication, information technology, advertising, telecommunication and cable in the state of NRW.

FESTIVAL HOPPING IN THE NORTH

More than 10 film festivals in Hamburg and Schleswig-Holstein will be presenting a wealth of different productions in the coming weeks and months. The spectrum ranges from science fiction, horror and thrillers at the 25th Fantasy Film Fest Hamburg (17-24 August) to current nature film productions at the 5th Green Screen International Nature Film Festival Eckernförde (7-12 September) and independent films at the 4th Radar Hamburg International Independent Film Festival (24-29 October). Other important festivals with national and international programs include the 19th Filmfest Hamburg (29 September-8 October), the 26th Husum Filmfest (29 September-6 October), the 22nd International Queer Film Festival (18-23 October), the 11th Flensburg Short Film Festival (9-12 November), the CineFest – 8th International Festival of German Cinematic Heritage (12-20 November), the 23rd Filmforum during the 53rd Nordic Film Days in Lübeck (2-6 November), and the festival Abgedreht – Hamburg’s Young Film (8-9 December) for newcomers and young talents.

74 INTERNATIONAL BUYERS AT THE GERMAN FILMS PREVIEWS 2011 IN HAMBURG

The 11th German Films Previews took place this year from 10-13 July for the second time in Hamburg. 74 international film buyers from 32 countries took advantage of German Films’ invitation and concentrated their attention on current German productions for three days. In cooperation with the Association of German Film Exporters (VDFE), 17 new theatrical features were shown in the Cinemaxx Dammtor theaters. In addition to the screenings, the representatives of the 11 participating German sales agents had plenty of opportunities to present their current line-up to their international clients. Achim von Borries’ film 4 DAYS IN MAY and Tim Fehlbaum’s film HELL, both of which are screening this year in Locarno on the Piazza Grande, met with particular interest among the buyers, as did Christian Schwochow’s CRACKS IN THE SHELL and Ziska Riemann’s LOLLIPOP MONSTER, both just following their Karlovy Vary competition screenings, and the pre-premieres of Maggie Peren’s latest
film COLOR OF THE OCEAN and Robert Thalheim’s new film WESTWIND. Another 80 film titles were available in the DVD library to round off the film program.

The evening program during the German Film Previews was reserved for networking, and Hamburg offered a wonderful setting. The opening evening started things off on a positive note and saw the participants taking an Alster Cruise followed by a get-together at the Alsterufer. The River Elbe and HafenCity were the impressive backdrop for a dinner hosted by the Filmförderung Hamburg Schleswig-Holstein, with Eva Hubert welcoming the group of international guests to the harbor city on the second evening. And the closing party offered Mediterranean flair at the Park Café-Schöne Aussichten, where representatives of the local Hamburg film scene and event participants came to a positive conclusion about this year’s German Films Previews which offered up a diverse program of promising German films.

Mariette Rissenbeek, German Films’ managing director: “The German Films Previews 2011 were a great success. The international distributors were enthusiastic about this year’s concept. We welcomed a dozen new buyers from all over the world and offered an exclusive program of brand new German productions. Sales deals to buyers from Spain, France and the USA were signed in Hamburg and the finalization of other deals in negotiation is expected soon.”
**1000 KÖNIGE**

**Genre** Fantasy, Science Fiction  
**Category** Feature  
**Director** Bidzina Kancheveli  
**Screenplay** Bidzina Kancheveli  
**Director of Photography** Patrick Popow  
**Cast** Effi Rabsilber, H.G. Fries, Wolfgang Müller, Frank-Otto Schenk, Dominik Stein, Krista Birkner, Christian Backhaus, Hannes Lindenblatt, Jörg Schönborn, Arne Fiedler, Falko Freitag, Matthias Spahn, Harald Effenberg  
**Producer** Pierre Durst  
**Production Company** Thirsty Goldfish/Berlin  
**Original Version** German  
**Shooting Dates** April-May 2010  
**Contact** Thirsty Goldfish, p.durst@thirsty-goldfish.com, www.thirsty-goldfish.com

Post-production began in summer 2010 on Georgian-born director Bidzina Kancheveli’s feature film debut 1000 KINGS (1000 KONE) which is one of the first films worldwide to be shot completely with the green screen.

Kancheveli’s screenplay is set in a distant future where mankind has been transformed into a society completely reduced to the intellect. Living in an obscure system of immense spaces, people can only be distinguished from one another by their different social positions, like in a beehive.

One of them is admired, exploited and kept under control for this ability to recognize which resource can produce light. However, one day, he manages to escape their domineering influence and is ruthlessly punished as a result...

“We wanted to retain the greatest artistic freedom possible and so didn’t spend time filling in application forms for funding,” recalls producer Pierre Durst of Berlin-based Thirsty Goldfish. Thus, the film was financed by deferrals from the cast and crew, from private investors who had been involved in a previous Kancheveli project, as well as from sponsors and partners such as Berliner Union-Film, Ludwig Broadcast & Media, Ice Animations and the theater supplier Hausmann.

As Durst explains, the director spent more than two months casting stage actors from all over Germany “because he wanted to find particularly interesting characters and faces.”

“The fact that Bidzina began his career in the theater and has a lot of experience of working with actors helped him get them prepared for working in this special environment of the green screen. He knew how to motivate them.”

Previous to 1000 KINGS, Kancheveli had been invited by the Baden-Württemberg Film Academy in Ludwigsburg to direct the controversial short film 7½ WOMEN. Starring Russian-born actor Ivan Shvedoff, the film was shown at many international film festivals and received the award for Best Experimental Short Film from a jury headed by Ridley Scott at Milan’s I’ve Seen Films International Film Festival in 2008.

**ANLEITUNG ZUM UNGLÜCKLICHSEIN**

**Genre** Comedy  
**Category** Feature  
**Year of Production** 2011  
**Director** Sherry Hormann  
**Screenplay** Sherry Hormann  
**Director of Photography** Wojciech Szepel  
**Cast** Johanna Wokalek, Iris Berben, Richy Müller, David Kross, Katharina Marie Schubert, Margarida Broich, Itay Tiran, Benjamin Sadler, Rüdiger Vogler, Michael Gwisdek  
**Producer** Peter Herrmann  
**Co-Producers** Bettina Reitz, Hans-Wolfgang Jurgan, Bettina Ricklefs, Hubert von Spreti, Wolfgang Braun, Senta Menger, Christoph Fisser, Henning Molfenter, Carl L. Wobeck, Antonio Exacoustos  
**Production Company** Desert Flower Filmproduction/Munich, in co-production with ARD Degeto Film/Frankfurt, BR/Munich, Kinowelt Filmproduktion/Leipzig, 8. Babelsberg Film/Potsdam, Studio Babelsberg/Potsdam, B.A. Produktion/Munich, MTM West/Cologne  
**Original Version** German  
**Shooting Dates** June-August 2011  
**With backing from** German Federal Film Board, Film- und Medienstiftung NRW, Medienboard Berlin-Brandenburg, FilmFernseh Fonds Bayern, German Federal Film Fund  
**World Sales** Bavaria Film International, international@bavaria-film.de, www.bavaria-film-international.com

Based on the best-selling psychology book of the same title by Paul Watzlawick, ANLEITUNG ZUM UNGLÜCKLICHSEIN ("The Situation Is Hopeless, But Not Serious"), tells the story of Tiffany Blechschmid, a neurotic, moony, superstitious, contradictory and, no surprises here, single young woman in her late-twenties.

The Berlin gourmet shop she owns sells fortune cookies, although Tiffany herself has a great personal mistrust of good fortune, and especially happiness. Previously, every time she has felt happy has been followed immediately by some kind of disaster. It’s enough to make her question the whole concept of happiness. Why, she asks herself, is everyone so crazy to find it? What does love have to do with happiness anyway? And how come we always trip ourselves up just when we might actually be getting closer to it, such as even when the man of Tiffany’s dreams appears suddenly and unexpectedly too?

Fortunately, helpful maternal advice from beyond the grave, a nervous toucan, floating concert grand pianos, herds of cattle in the city traffic, egocentric wannabe lovers, off-center kisses and a painful secret are all there to give Tiffany what she needs to get herself sorted for life in this wistful and moving, light and breezy romantic comedy full of melancholic nuances and which combines images of gentle fantasy with surprising humor.
BLUTZBRÜDAZ

**Genre** Comedy, Music  
**Category** Feature  
**Director** Özgür Yıldırım  
**Screenplay** Nicholas J. Schofield, Jan Ehler  
**Director of Photography** Matthias Bolliger  
**Cast** Sido, B Tight, Alpa Gun, Milton Welsh, Tim Wilde, Alwara Hofels, Claudia Eisinger, Florian Renner  
**Producers** Oliver Berben, Fasih Akin, Klaus Maack  
**Co-Producer** Stefan Gärtné  
**Production Companies** corazon international/Hamburg, Constantin Film Produktion/Munich, in co-production with SevenPictures Film/Unterföhring  
**Original Version** German  
**Shooting Dates** February-April 2011  
**With backing from** Medienboard Berlin-Brandenburg, Filmförderung Hamburg Schleswig-Holstein, German Federal Film Fund, BKM  
**Contact** maggi@corazon-int.de, www.corazon-int.de

BLUTZBRÜDAZ (working title), German rap-speak for “Blood Brothers”, is the story of Otis and Eddy, two pals since whenever. They share the little they have, and above all, a love for music. Two talented rappers, they lack money and connections. But they’re talented and always looking for trouble!

An attempt to crash a rap-off at a local club fails dismally, but does get the promoter, Fusco, agreeing to listen to their demo. Only problem is … they don’t have one! Efforts to scrape up a production budget lead to more grief, with Eddy landing in the ER with a badly cut backside and Otis in a parking garage. With everything sucking, the boys’ only silver lining is an attempt to offload the package to an ominous business partner instead. And so it comes to the inevitable: Bomber is totally ripped off and his journey ends with him drowning his sorrows, his pockets empty, at a Paris kiosk.

Bomber is 28, short, very short, a dwarf in fact, and an unpolished Berlin life. When he is sacked from his lousily paid job as a courier, he decides to take his last delivery to Paris, but not deliver it to the customer! Bomber plans to offload the package to an omenous business partner instead. And so it comes to the inevitable: Bomber is totally ripped off and his journey ends with him drowning his sorrows, his pockets empty, at a Paris kiosk.

Bruno is a giant of a man who prefers to keep to himself. He’s also a mute. His main occupation happens to be this very kiosk. He has also only very recently come out of the hospital. Nothing serious, of course. So Bruno helps the small, swearing man – and takes Bomber home to his flat. Nothing breaks down language barriers like beer. Bruno is even able to persuade Bomber to take him to Berlin. The next day, this extremely odd couple sets out on their way.

En route, the mute giant encounters the now abandoned Europe at a petrol station. The duo becomes a trio on a dynamic journey with slight communication problems, initial confusion and many open questions. But as with so many journeys, it’s the getting there that counts and, on this comedic road trip, being a dwarf, deaf, dumb and blind don’t have to get in the way of having a good time in life.
GOLD

**Genre** Sports  **Category** Documentary  **Director** Marc Brasse  
**Screenplay** Ronald Kruschak  **Director of Photography** Michael Hammon  
**Cast** Kirsten Bruhn, Henry Wanyoike, Kurt Fearnley  
**Producers** Andreas F. Schneider, Ronald Kruschak, Wolfgang Latteyer

GOLD is about three extraordinary world-class athletes and their journey to the Paralympics 2012: Henry Wanyoike, a blind marathon runner from Kenya, Kirsten Bruhn, a paralyzed swimmer from Germany, and Kurt Fearnley, an Australian wheelchair racer.

“These athletes show most impressively what people can do,” says producer Andreas F. Schneider. “They show how sport can change society for the better.” Schneider knows: he has been wheelchair-bound after a swimming accident when he was eighteen. The now head of the Internet TV channel ParalympicSport.TV has personally experienced the efforts required to fight for a new life: “It is time society recognizes the inspiring strength of Paralympic sport and uses it for itself.”

GOLD was initiated by the DGUV (German Social Accident Insurance), the umbrella association of the accident insurance institutions for the industrial and public sectors.

Director Marc Brasse was “attracted by the protagonists’ struggle not to give up and accept fate. The film is about bringing this to the fore, conveying it visually and then showing the turning point, the affirmation of life, narrating the escape and return to the world of a new, normalized life.”

Brasse’s award-winning documentary credits include SCHABOWSKIS ZETTEL (2009, Best Docudrama, New York Film Festival) and OPERA- TION CAESAR – JAGD AUF U 864 (2006-7, Award of Excellence, Canadian Society of Cinematographers).

DoP Michael Hammon’s filmography includes HOLLENTOUR, about the Tour de France, and features such as Andreas Dresen’s GRILL POINT, WILLENBROCK, and CLOUD 9.

GOLD’s team also includes Ronald Kruschak and Wolfgang Latteyer. Kruschak, a journalist and script writer, has fifteen years film and TV fiction production experience (RED ZORA, THE THREE INVESTIGATORS). Latteyer started in fiction films and now specializes in documentaries and teaches production at Munich’s University of Television and Film.

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HOTEL DESIRE

**Genre** Drama  **Category** Feature  **Director** Sergei Moya  
**Screenplay** Sergei Moya  **Director of Photography** Armin Franzén  
**Cast** Saralisa Volm, Clemens Schick, Anna Maria Mühe, Herbert Knaup, Carlo Ljubek, Jan-Gregor Kremp  
**Producers** Julia Lischinski, Christopher Zwickler, Sascha Schwingel

Will they or won’t they? The clock is ticking away for the producers of Sergei Moya’s film HOTEL DESIRE, who have set themselves a deadline this summer to raise 170,000 Euros crowdfunding via the Internet.

A media campaign and a dedicated home page (www.hotel-desire.com) were launched on June 6th to raise donations from private individuals or backing from potential investors interested in acquiring rights or profit participation.

Backers can decide between six categories of donation and, depending on the level of their financial commitment, will receive various kinds of gimmicks as incentives. Thus, someone donating five Euros or more (Category 1) will receive a coupon to stream the completed film, while 5,000 Euros or more (Category 6) will earn the donor a streaming coupon and a private screening in Berlin with the filmmakers and cast.

Should the goal of 170,000 Euros – heaven forbid – not be reached in the 80 days from June 6th for the filmmakers to start shooting at the end of August, the producers have announced that all of the monies raised to that point will nevertheless benefit young directors in Germany by being channeled into the First Steps Award.

After directing HOLLYWOOD DRAMA and DIE BLAUE PERIODE, actor-director Sergei Moya has now turned to the multifaceted subject of human sexuality for this 45-minute film.

“With HOTEL DESIRE, I would like to make a film which unconditionally sets itself the task of doing justice cinematically to sexuality as an expression of the human zest for life,” Moya explains. “A film which self-assuredly borrows from the porn genre, but isn’t a porn film.”

He describes the film, which has Saralisa Volm (from Klaus Lemke’s FINALE) and Clemens Schick (known to international audiences as one of the baddies in CASINO ROYALE) in the leads, as “a pornNEOgraphic film. A film where we want to speak with sensitivity and directness about the interplay of longing, lust, desire, intimacy, sexuality and spontaneity.”

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**in production**
**JESUS LOVES ME**

**Genre** Romantic Comedy  
**Category** Feature  
**Director** Florian David Fitz  
**Screenplay** Florian David Fitz  
**Director of Photography** Stefan Unterberger  
**Cast** Jessica Schwarz, Florian David Fitz, Henry Hübchen, Hannelore Elsner, Peter Prager, Christine Schorn, Palina Rojinski, Nicholas Ofczarek  
**Producers** Nico Hofmann, Thomas Peter Friedl, SteffiAckermann  
**Production Company** UFA Cinema  

The team of JESUS LOVES ME (photo courtesy of UFA Cinema)

here on the set under Florian’s direction.”

seldom have humor and sensitivity become so wonderfully intertwined as Fitz

Hofmann says. “And the first rushes show that one can expect big things:

commit with zest and passion to Florian David Fitz in his directorial debut,”

Meanwhile, producer Nico Hofmann of UFA Cinema explains that Fitz and

the producers worked together on having such a lineup as Henry

Hübchen, Hannelore Elsner, Peter Prager, Christine Schorn and Michael

Gwisdek supporting the two leads.

“The idea was to have a prominent and enthusiastic ensemble who would

commit with zest and passion to Florian David Fitz in his directorial debut,”

Hofmann says. “And the first rushes show that one can expect big things:

seldom have humor and sensitivity become so wonderfully intertwined as

here on the set under Florian’s direction.”


**KANN DENN LIEBE SÜNDE SEIN?**

**Genre** Religion, Society  
**Category** Documentary  
**Director** Saara Aila Wasnner  
**Screenplay** Saara Aila Wasnner  
**Director of Photography** Eva Maschke  
**Producer** Caroline Daube  
**Production Company** Royal Pony Film/Munich  
**Original Version** German  
**Shooting Dates** December 2010-July 2011  
**With backing from** FilmFernsehfonds Bayern  
**Contact** Caroline Daube, daube@royalponyfilm.com, www.royalponyfilm.com

Posing the titular question, CAN LOVE REALLY BE A SIN? (KANN DENN LIEBE SÜNDE SEIN?), the film takes an in-depth look at the fate of three

Roman Catholic priests who are no longer permitted to follow their calling because they have chosen to live in partnership, eschewing celibacy. It examines both the radical changes they faced by falling in love and the enormous challenges involved in starting afresh, both professionally and privately.

The basic problem is, of course, celibacy: a basic obligation to which all

Catholic priests must adhere. They either have to keep their relationship secret or come out publicly, and then no longer be allowed to remain in office and perform church functions. Damned if they do, damned if they don’t, many priests are thus forced to keep their status a permanent secret.

Just how many Catholic priests have founded a family or are living in a secret relationship can only be speculated upon, but the number is certainly high. At present, there are 10,500 men officiating as priests in Germany. Each year, an estimated 30 of them resign from office because they wish to marry or acknowledge their relationship. Only the very few actually make this decision. The majority who are in relationships are not ready to take this final step. But what is it like, how is it possible to love in secret?

Because living a double life is the most common situation, CAN LOVE REALLY BE A SIN? also narrates the story of one woman who was the lover of a Roman Catholic priest for eight years. After much agonizing and debating, he decided against the relationship and returned to a life of celibacy. The film also allows the other excommunicated priests’ new partners to have their say.

By featuring the women’s perspective, writer-director Saara Aila Waasner adds an important facet to the film, giving voice to those who represent the desires, hopes and especially the challenges that have to be overcome in such secrecy.

SK
KLEINE MORDE

Genre Drama, Film Noir  
Category Feature  
Director Adnan G. Köse  
Screenplay Adnan G. Köse  
Director of Photography James Jacobs  
Cast Paul Falk, Olaf Krätke, Adnan G. Köse, Ann-Katrin Kramer, Uwe Ochsenknecht, Jimi Blue Ochsenknecht, Günther Kaufmann, Jasmin Schwiers  
Producers Neshlan Duy, Adnan G. Köse, Eyyuphan Duy  
Co-Producers Alexander von Glenck  
Production Company SteelWorX Filmproduction/Oberhausen  
Original Version German  
Shooting Dates April-May 2011  
With backing from Film- und Medienstiftung NRW, German Federal Film Fund  
Contact info@steelworx-film.com, www.steelworx-film.com

KLEINE MORDE (translation: Little Murders) is set in Germany in the near future. With criminality out of control, the laws have been toughened drastically. This goes too for the all-encompassing draft law on combating child and youth crime. The age of criminal responsibility has been abolished: children under fourteen who are accused of a major crime must answer to the courts. In the eyes of the law they are now adults.

Of all people it is 12-year-old Martin, the son of a respected judge, a child with an unusually high IQ, who spends his free time in his father’s courtroom, who is suspected of murder. And this of a boy who does not waste his time with empty computer games or violent videos, but one who knows jurisprudence almost as well as a lawyer, who devours his father’s legal textbooks, who spends a great deal of time with his adult and close friend, the taxi-driver Viktor Gumm, who passionately listens to his grandfather’s old vinyl records and who dreams along to classical music.

Everyone who knows Martin finds the accusation absurd; Martin not only looks like an angel but is a boy who loves justice, is loyal and fair to everyone, perfectly able to entertain himself and others, and thanks to his brilliant knowledge of Latin – he is even better than his teacher – always has a Latin saying ready for use in whatever situation.

But now Martin is a murderer, a child of whom the courts should make an example? The media are beside themselves, this is going to be sensational! But now Martin is a murderer, a child of whom the courts should make an example? The media are beside themselves, this is going to be sensational!

Top lawyer Julia Comer, who still has not recovered from the suicide of her last client, which took place in front of her own eyes, believes Martin to be innocent and undertakes his defense.

MB

DER KLEINE RABE SOCKE

Genre Children & Youth, Animation  
Category Feature  
Directors Dirk Beinhold, Roland Junker, Dirk Dozert  
Production Companies Akkord Film  
Shooting Dates January-December 2011  
With backing from MFG Baden-Württemberg, German Federal Film Board, German Federal Film Fund, MEDIA, HessenInvest  
Contact Akkord Film Produktion, info@akkordfilm.com, www.akkordfilm.com

Berlin-based production house Akkord Film has made its first foray into the world of animation this year to bring children’s author Nele Moost and Annet Rudolph’s Little Raven book series to the big screen in the feature film DER KLEINE RABE SOCKE which is targeted at 3 to 8-year-olds and their families.

“We acquired the rights to the books about 4 years ago,” recalls producer Dirk Beinhold, whose previous credits have included the feature films KLEINRUPPIN FOREVER and L’AVION and the international TV event mini-series BEN HUR. “It has been a great adventure although it is not so different from my other films, in that one has to develop a good story and screenplay and gather the money.”

“But we knew that we needed a strong co-producer for the animation and so approached Studio 88 in Baden-Baden,” he continues. “They have proven to be the ideal partner for us.”

Indeed, Studio 88 has extensive experience in the animation field, having worked in the past on such projects as THE THREE ROBBERS and LITTLE KING MACIUS. Hungarian-born Sandor Jesse, who is part of the Studio 88 team, is co-directing with Ute Münchow-Pohl, a collaborator with Thilo Rothkirch on such productions as THE LITTLE POLAR BEAR and DODO.

Moreover, top-class names have been recruited for the voices for the German version with the musician Jan Delay cast as Little Raven and Katharina and Anna Thalbach as Mother Badger and Little Badger. “The unique thing about the character of Little Raven is that he’s really cheeky and he does all the things that are forbidden for children at that age – but things every child would like to do,” Beinhold explains.

He adds that a test screening of the animatic was already organized by the film’s distributor Universum Film in Munich and came in with very good results from the children and their parents. There are plans for a 400-print release in Germany in autumn 2012 and Beinhold has already pre-sold the film to French distributor Gebeka who specializes in children’s animation.

MB
SAME WAY

From the set of SAME WAY (photo © Aleksandrija Ajdukovic/NEUESUPER)

Producers

Genre

SAME WAY SCHILF

Ruslana, a middle-aged Ukrainian, lives a lonely life in Munich, desperately trying to learn German and hoping her only son Bogdan will finally come to visit. Just when she fails her German exam yet again and a broken pipe floods her modest home, her luck changes when her neighbor Vladen, a Russian girl, moves in opening her eyes to a completely new Belgrade – the city of his hopes and dreams, a city with a future, for Jelena too.

Zoran, Vladen’s son, has never forgiven his parents for emigrating. He has never left Belgrade, where he still sees his future and, together with his attractive girlfriend Aida, lives a simple but satisfying life. When he witnesses an extortion attempt whilst working on a handyman job, he meets Jelena, the indecisive but loveable wife of the Austrian restaurant owner Günther. But Jelena intends to leave her homeland the next day, forever, and begin a new and safer life in Germany. In this last night Zoran succeeds in opening her eyes to a completely new Belgrade – the city of his hopes and dreams, a city with a future, for Jelena too.

SCHILF

Genre Drama, Thriller

Category Feature

Director Claudia Lehmann

Screenplay Claudia Lehmann, Leonie Terfort, based on the novel Schilf by Juli Zeh

Director of Photography Manuel Mack

Cast Stipe Erceg, Mark Waschke, Bernadette Heerwagen, Sandra Borgmann, Paul T. Grasshoff, Christoph Tomanek, Bernhard Conrad, Nicolas Treichel

Producer Manuela Stehr

Co-Producers Bettina Ricklefs, Barbara Buhl, Jochen Kolsch, Monika Lobkowicz

Production Company X Filme Creative Pool/Berlin, in co-production with BR/Munich, WDR/Cologne, ARTE/Strasbourg

Original Version German

With backing from Mitteldeutsche Medienförderung, German Federal Film Board, German Federal Film Fund

Contact X Filme Creative Pool, info@x-filme.de, www.x-filme.de

I had always been interested in quantum physics and parallel universes and the connection between philosophy and esoterism,” producer Manuela Stehr recalls. “And Claudia Lehmann was just the right person to make a film set in this world because of her scientific background.”

“We were looking for inspiration when, by chance, I received Juli Zeh’s novel Schilf as a Christmas present,” Stehr continues. “I gave it to Claudia to read and we both agreed that this is what we had been looking for.”

Described as “an exceptional physical thriller about different perceptions of truth, reality and incidents happening in parallel universes” and as “a film about friendship, love and guilt”, SCHILF focuses on Sebastian, a professor of Physics (played by Mark Waschke), who is close to a breakthrough on his research into the existence of parallel universes. In order to be able to devote himself completely to his work, he has sent his young teenage son Nick (newcomer Nicolas Treichel) to scout camp and wife Maika (Bernadette Heerwagen) is holidaying in the mountains. His world is turned topsy-turvy when his son suddenly disappears and an alleged kidnapper demands that he murder the head physician of a local clinic.

The shoot at locations in Jena, Weimar and Erfurt is the first time that X Filme Creative Pool will have completely produced a film in Thuringia, and Stehr is full of praise for the crew recruited from the region.

Meanwhile, speaking about Lehmann’s qualities, she points out that “in her shorts, one could see this mixture of a warm, human approach to directing the actors combined with her clear, scientific and analytical way of working, Claudia has everything very well prepared and thought-out.”

MB
**UNTER FRAUEN**

**Genre** Romantic Comedy  
**Category** Feature  
**Director** Hansjörg Thurn  
**Screenplay** Sarah Schnier  
**Director of Photography** Markus Hausen  
**Cast** Sebastian Strobel, Alexandra Neidel, Fahn Oguen, Yardim, Grit Boettcher, Martin Brambach, Nina Petri, Emilia Schule, Collien Fernandes  
**Producer** Ivo-Alexander Beck  
**Co-Producer** Christian Franckenstein  
**Production Company** Ninety-Minute Film/Berlin, in co-production with Filmpool Film & Fernsehproduktion/Cologne, ZDF/Mainz  
**Original Version** German  
**Shooting Dates** May-June 2011  
**With backing from** Film-und Medienstiftung NRW, Medienboard Berlin-Brandenburg, German Federal Film Fund  

**Contact**  
Ninety-Minute Film, info@ninetyminutefilm.de, www.ninetyminutefilm.de

**WAS WEG IS, IS WEG**

**Genre** Comedy  
**Category** Feature  
**Director** Christian Lerch  
**Screenplay** Christian Lerch  
**Director of Photography** Stefan Bielb  
**Cast** Florian Bruckner, Mathias Kellner, Maximilian Brückner, Siegfried Terpooten, Marie Leuenberger, Johanna Bittenbinder, Heinz-Josef Braun, Jürgen Tonkel, Nina Proll, Johann Schuler, Jess Jochimsen  
**Producers** Anatol Nitschke, Helge Sasse  
**Co-Producers** Hubert von Spreti, Hans-Wolfgang Jurgan  
**Production Companies** deutschfilm/Berlin, Senator Film Produktion/Berlin, in co-production with BR/Munich, ARD Degeto Film/Frankfurt  
**Original Version** German  
**Shooting Dates** May-June 2011  
**With backing from** FilmFernsehFonds Bayern  

**Contact** deutschfilm, team@deutschfilm.de, www.senator.de

UNTER FRAUEN is a romantic comedy about an übermacho who, quite unexpectedly, is forced to become much more intensively involved with the world of women than he would like: in fact, he is thrust into his own personal, private hell of a world populated only by women!

Alex has the perfect life: he is young, smart, good looking and able to wrap women around his little finger before zooming off in his sports car from one to the next. He’s maybe heard the words “steady relationship” but does he know what they mean? Does he even care? His vocabulary likewise lacks the words “team player” and as for “understanding women” … p-huh-lease! He leaves that to others.

But when his playmates, all of whom believe they’re “the one”, discover they are anything but, they team up to get their own back, with astonishing results: after a traumatic incident, Alex awakes in a world populated only by women! Even worse: he himself is also accepted as being one of them, albeit with a small anatomic peculiarity.

Alex has now become Alexandra, his best friend Silvio is now Silvia. Instead of sex there is cuddling, children are what happens when you really, really, really want them because they’re so great and there’s a w-h-o-l-e lot of talking things through and hardly any arguing. Everyone takes consideration of everyone else’s feelings and all are on a harmonious “cloud 9”.

For macho Alex this is his own personal, private hell! And right now, of all times, he develops feelings for a woman such as he has never known before. Slowly but surely, Paula has found her way into his heart. But how should he conquer hers?

Somehow, Alex has to show Paula he’s more than her best (girl)friend – and he also has to find his way out of this damned parallel world, together with her.

A new genre has been born – the eco-comedy (Okomödie) – with actor-screenwriter Christian Lerch’s feature film directorial debut WAS WEG IS, IS WEG which couldn’t be more topical following the Fukushima reactor catastrophe and the German government’s decision against nuclear power this year.

Inspired by Jess Jochimsen’s novel Bellboy, Lerch’s screenplay takes us back to rural Bavaria in the 1980s and a story touching on such global issues as saving the environment, friendship, family, love and reconciliation.

Young Lukas has had his fill of life in Bavaria and wants to become a Greenpeace activist on the Rainbow Warrior to save the world. But a series of unexpected events puts a halt to these high-minded plans: the gorgeous Luisa is suddenly one good reason to stay, all hell is let loose by a lower arm separated from its owner, and a family secret finally comes to the surface after 20 years …

According to Lerch, who was the screenwriter on Marcus H. Rosenmüller’s feature films GRAVE DECISIONS, LITTLE WHITE LIES, and RAUBER KNEISL, WAS WEG IS, IS WEG is about “wanting to go away and then finding love at home after all. The film should also stand a bit for the hope that things aren’t already too late and that one could perhaps still manage to save the world: first of all, on a small scale, in one’s circle, in the family, and then also on a larger scale.”

Saving the environment has not only been played in front of the camera, as producer Anatol Nitschke explains: “We have tried to keep our CO2 emissions to a minimum during the production by, for example, avoiding unnecessary journeys and using local produce for the catering.”

He points out that the production has worked with the agency sustainable AG which advises companies on strategies for sustainable development. “It is the first time they have worked on a film production, and our experiences could be a pilot project for future more eco-friendly film productions,” Nitschke suggests.
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The BR film magazine
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livestream and podcast
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What happened in Room 205? Why has no one lived there for over a year? Katrin couldn’t care less: the 19-year-old student has landed a room in the dorm, and that means freedom! Freedom from home and her over-protective father. The semester is just beginning, and it’s time to make new friends, go to parties, have sex, and, of course, go to classes. Then, strange things happen in her room, and she begins to understand why no one wanted to move into Room 205 before her...

One night, she makes a horrifying discovery in the cellar: Christian, a young man she had slept with, is dead. And it’s only the first in a series of grisly ‘accidents’ in which Katrin is involved. When she finds the video diary of her predecessor, Annika, she becomes convinced that Annika was murdered by a clique of students who are now accusing her of killing Christian. Katrin feels increasingly terrorized... Annika’s video messages seem to be the desperate cries of a tormented young woman. But are they really? Fearful of going mad and suffering the same fate as her predecessor, Katrin wants to clear up the mystery – even if it means confronting herself with terrifying truths about her fellow students, herself, and the former occupant of Room 205...


**Genre** Horror  **Category** Feature  **Year of Production** 2011  **Director** Rainer Matsutani  **Screenplay** Eckhard Vollmar  **Director of Photography** Jan Fehse  **Cast** Jennifer Ulrich, Julia Dietze, Hans-Uwe Bauer, André M. Hennicke  **Producers** Boris Schönfelder, Michael Kölml  **Production Company** Neue Schönhauser Film/Berlin, in co-production with Filmaufbau/Leipzig, ARRI Film & TV/Munich, Medienkontor Movie/Berlin  **Length** 103 min  **Format** 35 mm, color  **Original Version** German  **Subtitled Version** English  **With backing from** Medienboard Berlin-Brandenburg, German Federal Film Fund, Mitteldeutsche Medienförderung, German Federal Film Board

**Rainer Matsutani** was born in 1964 in Hockenheim. He worked as a freelance film critic from 1984-1987, receiving a scholarship for the Berlin Script Workshop in 1987. He then attended the University of Television & Film in Munich. In 1989, he founded the production company Engram Pictures, writing and shooting various commercials and shorts, including the cult thriller KLINIK DES GRAUENS (1992). For his debut feature OVER MY DEAD BODY (1995) he won the Bavarian Film Prize. His other films include: GEISTERSTUNDE – FAHRSTUHL INS JENSEIT (TV, 1997), 666 – TRAUE KEINEM, MIT DEM DU SCHLÄFST! (2002), DIE STIMMEN (TV, 2003), DAMALS WARST DU STILL (TV, 2005), DAS INFERNO – FLAMMEN ÜBER BERLIN (TV, 2007), GANGS (2009), and ROOM 205 (2011).
After his father committed suicide, Richard decides to stay in a youth center rather than staying with his mother. There, he finds a bizarre bunch of teenagers. Each of them experienced pain from early on, having their own desires and fighting for happiness with peculiar humor and fantasy. Richard doesn’t want to get involved with any of this – if it weren’t for her: Kyra.

Genre Coming-of-Age Story, Drama, Love Story
Category Feature
Year of Production 2011
Director Catharina Deus
Screenplay Ulli Leonore Stephan
Director of Photography Birgit Möller
Producer Martin Heisler
Production Company Lichtblick Media/Berlin, in co-production with ZDF Das kleine Fernsehspiel/Mainz
Length 90 min
Format 35 mm, color, cs
Original Version German
Subtitled Version English
With backing from German Federal Film Board, BKM

Is there really a life before death? Maybe so, but it is really, really cold.

Two men and a freezer truck: the cynical ex-businessman Berg just wants to be left alone. But his new partner, the naive former hairdresser Moerer, likes to talk. “This truck is definitely too small for the two of us!” But there’s no point in complaining, Berg can’t get rid of his annoying co-pilot until he has turned him into a great salesman, orders from the new Dutch boss lady, Lieke. All of a sudden, Mr. Ice Guy has to develop a thing called team spirit. After what feels like 876 frozen pizzas, 4322 fish sticks and 12,887 shrimp, he actually starts to thaw – but that’s when the problems really start …

NO MORE MR. ICE GUY is a comedy about seeing failure as an opportunity and the different aggregate states of human relationships.

Genre Comedy, Love Story, Road Movie Category Feature Year of Production 2011 Director André Erkau Screenplay André Erkau Director of Photography Dirk Morgenstern Cast Herbert Knaup, Johannes Allmayer, Elke Winkens, Peter Franke, Thorsten Merten Producers Björn Vosgerau, Uwe Kolbe, Stefan Schubert, Ralph Schwingel Co-Producer Hejo Emons Production Company Wüste Film/Hamburg, in co-production with Wüste Film West/Cologne, ZDF Das kleine Fernsehspiel/Mainz, in cooperation with ARTE/Strasbourg Length 85 min Format 35 mm, color, cs Original Version German Subtitled Version English With backing from Filmförderung Hamburg Schleswig-Holstein, Film- und Medienstiftung NRW, Nordmedia, German Federal Film Fund

André Erkau was born in Dortmund in 1968. While studying Psychology, he served as a directing intern at the Bremen Schauspielhaus. He then started acting and founded the Junge Theater in 1993 with other acting colleagues. He studied at the Hamburg Actors’ Studio from 1994-1997 and then became a member of the ensemble at the Württembergische Landesbühne in Esslingen until 2001, followed by studies in Directing at the Academy of Media Arts Cologne (KHM). A selection of his films includes: DER COACH (short, 2004), 37 OHNE ZWIEBELN (short, 2006), his first feature SELBSTGESPRÄCHE (2007) which won the main prize at the Max Ophüls Festival in Saarbrücken, and ARSCHKALT (2011).
Jan is currently completing his last year of job training. He wants to please everybody, but that becomes increasingly difficult to do. The pressure on Jan and his colleagues is constantly growing, due to the restructuring of the company. Frustrated and stressed, Jan seeks solace in fast cars and retail therapy. When Jenny joins the company as a temporary employee, a fresh love blooms. But Jenny’s stay is short. Jan is caught up in his inability to make decisions, in his fear to loose his job, his love and his status …

THE EDUCATION describes the system of modern working environments and shows to what extent it has an effect on peoples’ lives.

Genre Drama Category Feature Year of Production 2011  
Director Dirk Lütter Screenplay Dirk Lütter  
Director of Photography Henner Besuch Cast Joseph K. Bundschuh, Anke Retzlaff, Stefan Rudolf, Dagmar Sachse, Anja Beatrice Kaul, Frank Voß  
Producer Titus Kreyenberg Production Company unafilm/ Cologne, in co-production with WDR/Cologne  
Length 85 min Format HDCam, color, 1:1.85 Original Version German  
Subtitled Version English  
Festivals Berlin 2011, Montreal 2011 (Official Competition)  
With backing from Film- und Medienstiftung NRW

Dirk Lütter was born in 1970 Neuß. After studying Cinematography in Berlin, he studied Directing at the Academy of Media Arts in Cologne and Script Writing at the German Academy of Film & Television in Berlin. Since 2000, he has worked as a cinematographer and gained recognition with his award-winning short films HEROES (2005) and THE INVISIBLE HAND (2007). THE EDUCATION (2011) is his feature debut as a director.
It’s mid-summer. Dimi has to spend the vacation with his older brother by the Baltic Sea. On a country road he meets beautiful Isabelle. He is fascinated by her, but disillusioned when they arrive at the campsite together: Isabelle is in a relationship, and her boyfriend is Dimis’ older brother Steffen. But Dimi doesn’t give up and keeps on struggling for her attention. He shares an inflatable mattress with her, scares her in the shower and takes her on a boat trip. Even if Isabelle is unreachable for Dimi – in the end he will have reached something and will have made everyone reflect a little.

**Genre** Coming-of-Age Story, Drama, Love Story

**Category** Short

**Year of Production** 2011

**Director** Hannes Hirsch

**Screenplay** Hannes Hirsch

**Director of Photography** Philip Leutert

**Cast** Tom Gramenz, Lore Richter, Timo Jacobs, Linda Pöppel, Andrea Gabrin

**Producers** Hannes Hirsch, Diemo Kemmesies

**Co-Producer** Manuel Kinzer

**Production Company** Milieufilm/Berlin, in co-production with Filmgestalten/Berlin

**Length** 32 min

**Format** HD, color, 16:9

**Original Version** German

**Subtitled Versions** English, French, Spanish

**Festivals** Max Ophüls Festival Saarbrücken 2011, Achtung Berlin 2011, 29th International Film Festival Uruguay 2011, 9th In the Palace International Short Film Festival Bulgaria, European Short Film Festival Cambrils-Reus 2011

**Awards** New Berlin Film Award Achtung Berlin 2011

**Hannes Hirsch** was born in 1983. After a year studying Italian and Cultural Studies in Italy, he returned to Germany and worked as a video operator on various film and television productions. Inspired by these experiences, he developed and published the software Fuzzlecheck, which has been used by many big TV channels and film production companies. Since 2006, he has been studying at the Filmarche in Berlin and has shot several shorts, including PINK BOYS (2007), DOGS BARKING (2007) and BEACH BOY (2011), which have screened and won awards at numerous film festivals.
Marga has never shown many feelings towards her daughter Sofia. Now, however, she reveals fears, wounds and a deep longing for her long-dead husband Juris. She loses herself more and more in her forgetfulness and suddenly craves tenderness like a child. An unaccustomed situation for Sofia, who, after years of almost no contact with her mother, unexpectedly finds herself having to take care of her. A difficult situation, too: Marga can sometimes be brusque and sometimes funny; she lives now in the moment, now far away. As though yearning to be free of her memories, Marga begins relating stories of things that happened many years ago. Things that Sofia has never heard of. Prompted by a faint suspicion that the secrets of Marga’s past are important to understanding her own past, Sofia sets off for Riga with her mother at the spur of the moment. This is where Marga grew up and where she married Juris. But the more Sofia learns about her mother, the less certain she becomes about her own identity. As the past becomes clearer, it also emerges that what Marga had told her about their past together was nothing more than a story carved out of thin air…

**Genre** Drama  **Category** Feature  **Year of Production** 2010

**Director** Hans Steinbichler  **Screenplay** Robert & Josephin Thayenthal  **Director of Photography** Bella Halben  **Cast** Juliane Köhler, Hannelore Elsner, Karoline Herfurth, David Kross, Niklas Kohrt, Matthias Brandt, Rüdiger Vogler  **Producer** Uli Aselmann  **Co-Producers** Ewa Karlström, Andreas Ulmke-Smeaton  **Production Company** die film/Munich, in co-production with Sam Film/Munich  **Length** 100 min  **Format** 35 mm, color, 1:1.85

**Original Version** German, Latvian  **Subtitled Version** English  **Sound Technology** Dolby Digital  **Awards** Bavarian Film Prize 2010 (Best Producer)  **With backing from** German Federal Film Fund, Film- und Medienstiftung NRW, FilmFernsehFonds Bayern, Medienboard Berlin-Brandenburg, German Federal Film Board, Wirtschaftliche Filmförderung Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, BKM

**Hans Steinbichler** was born in 1969 in Solothurn/Switzerland. He studied Law in Passau and Film at the University of Television & Film in Munich. His films include: ABSTIEG (short, 1996), MONO (short, 1998), VERSPIEGELTE ZEIT – ERINNERUNGEN VON ANGELIKA SCHROBSDORFF (documentary, 1999), DIE GERMANIKER – RÖMISCH-DEUTSCHE KARRIEREN (documentary, 2000), HIERANKL (2003), DER MORALIST – VITTORIO HOESLE ENTDECKT AMERIKA (documentary, 2003), INSeln IM CHIEMSEE (documentary, 2003), WINTER JOURNEY (WINTERREISE, 2005), AUTISTIC DISCO (2007), MY MOTHER, MY BRIDE AND I (DIE ZWEITE FRAU, 2007), and PROMISING THE MOON (DAS BLAUE VOM HIMMEL, 2010).
Donald is a different kind of superhero. In his real life he is sick and feels like a peeled potato. But the 15-year-old has an outstanding talent to animate with pen and ink a dark world in which an invincible superhero battles a deadly nemesis and his sexy sidekick. But while Donald’s cartoon hero is unbreakable and unable to love, he himself is utterly breakable and bound for love.

In a rollercoaster coming-of-age film he learns of life through his unorthodox psychologist Adrian King, discovers love with the rebellious Shelly and makes peace with his terrified parents while his time is running out. And so, on the edge of the Irish Sea and on the precipice of existence, Donald finds himself in the heart of love: an ordinary superhero who proves the important thing is not how you leave this life but how you live it.

With its innovative mix of live action and animation, DEATH OF A SUPERHERO tells a blisteringly modern love story that is tender, comic and truthful.

Genre Coming-of-Age Story, Drama, Love Story, Animation
Category Feature
Year of Production 2011
Director Ian FitzGibbon
Screenplay Anthony McCarten, based on his novel of the same title
Director of Photography Tom Fährmann
Cast Andy Serkis, Thomas Brodie-Sangster, Aisling Loftus, Michael McElhatton, Sharon Horgan, Jessica Schwarz
Producers Astrid Kähmke, Philipp Kreuzer, Michael Garland
Production Companies Bavaria Pictures/Geiselgasteig, Grand Pictures/Dublin, in co-production with Picture Circle/Salzburg, Cinemendo/Munich, TRIXTER Productions/Munich, Cine Postproduction/Geiselgasteig
Length 95 min
Format 35 mm, color, cs
Original Version English
With backing from FilmFernsehFonds Bayern, Bayerischer Bankenfonds, German Federal Film Board, German Federal Film Fund, Bord Scannán na hÉireann/The Irish Film Board, MEDIA Programme of the European Community

Ian FitzGibbon was born in Dublin and raised in Brussels. He graduated from Trinity College in Dublin with degrees in French and Spanish, followed by training as an actor at the Royal Academy of Dramatic Arts in London. He has had an extensive acting career, principally on English television, with roles in such series as PRIME SUSPECT and FATHER TED. His films as a director include: the short BETWEEN DREAMS which screened in competition in Venice, the award-winning series PATHS TO FREEDOM, his critically acclaimed first feature A FILM WITH ME IN IT which premiered at Toronto in 2008 and won the Special Jury Prize in Istanbul, PERRIER’S BOUNTY which also premiered at Toronto in 2010, and DEATH OF A SUPERHERO. He is currently working on a new comedy series entitled THREE SOMES.
If it is true that art can be a universal language, why should it not be possible to use it with people of totally different social, religious, educational and cultural backgrounds? Two visual and performing artists from Berlin traveled to remote Mali villages without electricity or other comforts where people speak only Bambara. For the projects, they used traditional techniques of smelting ore, blacksmithing, music, dance and singing traditional songs from different cultures. They were amazed to see how easily authentic contact could develop between different worlds.

“My idea was to explore what can be said in the language of art using different media. To do so, the artist Markus Schaller and I traveled to Mali where we learned about the deep spiritual importance of blacksmithing and dreams. They were to form the basis of our work there. But also the direct and joyful musical communication in the final session was very important for me. Later, back in Berlin, I translated the Bambara song texts and was touched by how fitting the Bambara and the German songs were. A total coincidence! Which proves how we were all in the same poetic space without knowing what the other was singing about.”

(Barbara Kowa)

**Genre** Art, Ecology, Education, Experimental, Family Entertainment, History

**Category** Documentary

**Year of Production** 2010

**Director** Barbara Kowa

**Screenplay** Barbara Kowa, Markus Schaller

**Director of Photography** Barbara Kowa

**Cast** The people of the villages Sikoro and Diola Fonda in Mali

**Producer** Barbara Kowa

**Co-Producer** Markus Schaller

**Production Company** barakowaprod°/Berlin

**Length** 83 min

**Format** DigiBeta PAL, b&w/color, 16:9

**Original Version** German, English, French, Bambara

**Subtitled Version** English

**Festivals**

- Texas Black Film Festival Dallas 2010 (In Competition)
- Ecu Film Fest Paris 2010 (In Competition)
- New Jersey International Film Festival 2010 (In Competition)
- Awards Best Feature Film Dallas 2010

**With backing from** Centre Culturell Germano Malien, Bamako

**Deutsch-Malischer Kulturkreis**

**Barbara Kowa** grew up in Hamburg, where she also attended the Stage School of Dance and Drama. She then moved to Berlin to study Theater at the “Ernst Busch” Academy of Performing Arts from 1992-1996 and participated in the Production seminar at the Bavarian Film & Television Academy in Munich. After producing numerous video installations and multimedia performances, DREAMING MALI is her first feature documentary.
The young teacher Konrad Koch is hired to teach English at a strictly-run German school for boys in 1874. The reform-minded headmaster von Merfeld has hired Koch as one of the very first English teachers of all at a German secondary school in order to let a fresh new wind into his musty institution. Koch sees how badly this is needed in his very first class. Everything that the boys know about England is common prejudices handed down from one generation to the next. In order to stir up some enthusiasm for the foreign language, Oxford graduate Koch resorts to unusual means and introduces his students to a curious sport that comes from Britain: football. Unfortunately, Koch’s unconventional ways soon make him many enemies: influential parents, local dignitaries and, above all, his colleagues, who only believe in Prussian drills and discipline. They all want to get rid of Koch at any price. But then his students take the initiative …

Genre Drama Category Feature Year of Production 2010
Director Sebastian Grobler Screenplay Philipp Roth, Johanna Stuttman Director of Photography Martin Langer Cast Daniel Brühl, Burghart Klaußner, Justus von Dohnányi, Kathrin von Steinburg, Thomas Thieme, Jürgen Tonkel, Axel Prahl, Henriette Confurius, Theo Trebs, Adrian Moore, Till Valentin Winter Producers Anatol Nitschke, Raoul Reinert Production Companies deutschfilm/Berlin, Cuckoo Clock Entertainment/ Hamburg, Senator Film Produktion/Berlin, in co-production with Rialto Film/Berlin, ARD Degeto Film/Frankfurt Length 113 min Format 35 mm, color, cs Original Version German Subtitled Version English With backing from German Federal Film Board, German Federal Film Fund, Filmförderung Hamburg Schleswig-Holstein, Nordmedia, Medienboard Berlin-Brandenburg, BKM, MEDIA

Sebastian Grobler studied German Language Studies, Psychology and History in Hamburg, followed by work as a director’s assistant on various film and television productions. His graduation film from the Baden-Württemberg Film Academy, MORGEN FRÜH IST DIE NACHT RUM, won the 2003 Studio Hamburg Up-and-Coming Filmmakers Award. Also active as a screenwriter, instructor and TV director, LESSONS OF A DREAM (DER GANZ GROSSE TRAUM, 2010) marks his theatrical feature debut.
The doctor told the truth. The days are numbered. Why me and why now? A man leaves wife and children behind, parents, friends, neighbors and yesterday’s lover, the people in his life. Day by day a little farewell. Words are getting rare, longer the silence. In front of the window the year changes its colors. Dying is a final work to do. Not being alone while you are left behind alone, maybe that’s a good thing.

**Genre** Drama  
**Category** Feature  
**Year of Production** 2011  
**Director** Andreas Dresen  
**Screenplay** Andreas Dresen, Cooky Ziesche  
**Director of Photography** Michael Hammon  
**Cast** Milan Peschel, Steffi Kühnert, Tatissa Lilli Lemke, Mika Nilson Seidel, Ursula Werner, Otto Mellies, Bernhard Schütz, Marie Rosa Tietjen  
**Producer** Peter Rommel  
**Production Company** Rommel Film/Berlin, in co-production with RBB/Potsdam-Babelsberg, ARTE/Strasbourg  
**Length** 110 min  
**Format** HD/35 mm, color, 1:1.85  
**Original Version** German  
**Subtitled Version** English  
**Festivals** Cannes 2011 (Un Certain Regard), Karlovy Vary 2011 (Horizons)  
**Awards** Prix du Un Certain Regard Cannes 2011  

**Andreas Dresen** was born 1963 in Gera. In the early 80s he began working in theater and making short films. He studied directing at the “Konrad Wolf” University of Film & Television in Potsdam-Babelsberg. Since 1992, he has been working as a writer and director for film, TV and theater. A selection of his award-winning films includes: SILENT COUNTRY (STILLES LAND, 1992), NIGHT SHAPES (NACHTGESTALTEN, 1998), THE POLICEWOMAN (DIE POLIZISTIN, 2000), GRILL POINT (HALBE TREPPE, 2001), VOTE FOR HENRY! (HERR WICHMANN VON DER CDU, 2003), WILLENBROCK (2004), SUMMER IN BERLIN (SOMMER VORM BALKON, 2005), CLOUD 9 (WOLKE 9, 2008), WHISKY WITH VODKA (WHISKY MIT WODKA, 2009), and STOPPED ON TRACK (HALT AUF FREIER STRECKE, 2011).
HELL

It was once the source of life, light and warmth. But now the sun has turned the entire world into baked and barren wasteland. Forests are scorched. Animal carcasses line the roads. Even the nights are dazzling bright. Marie, her little sister Leonie and Phillip are heading for the mountains in a car with covered windows. Rumor has it there is still water there. Along the way they run into Tom, a first-rate mechanic who becomes indispensable. But can they trust him? Tension grows in the small group. As if things weren’t bad enough, they are lured into an ambush. Their real battle for survival begins …

**Genre**: Thriller  
**Category**: Feature  
**Year of Production**: 2011  
**Director**: Tim Fehlbaum  
**Screenplay**: Tim Fehlbaum, Thomas Wöbke, Oliver Kahl  
**Director of Photography**: Markus Förderer  
**Cast**: Hannah Herzsprung, Stipe Erceg, Lars Eidinger, Lisa Vicari, Angela Winkler  
**Producers**: Gabriele M. Walthers, Thomas Wöbke  
**Co-Producers**: Ruth Waldburger, Stefan Gärthner  
**Executive Producer**: Roland Emmerich  
**Production Company**: Caligari Film/Munich, in co-production with Vega Film/Zurich, SevenPictures Film/Unterföhring  
**Length**: 90 min  
**Format**: 35 mm, color, cs  
**Original Version**: German  
**Subtitled Version**: English  
**Festivals**: Munich 2011, Locarno 2011 (Piazza Grande)  
**Awards**: Förderpreis Deutscher Film Best Director Munich 2011  
**With backing from**: German Federal Film Board, FilmFernsehFonds Bayern, German Federal Film Fund, Kuratorium junger deutscher Film, Medienboard Berlin-Brandenburg, BAK Bundesamt für Kultur

**Tim Fehlbaum** was born in Basel/Switzerland in 1982. From 2002-2010, he studied Film Directing at the Munich University of Television and Film. He has made numerous shorts, music videos and commercials and won the Shocking Shorts Award at the 2004 Munich Film Festival.
HOMIES

HIPHOP EXPRESS

A modern fairytale between hiphop, dreams and the first great love.

Marvin is a passionate rapper. He lives with his successful mother in a stylish villa in the hip part of town. Marvin can’t relate at all to the arrogant and nouveau-riche kids from his neighborhood. He would much prefer to live in a real hood. Misunderstood by everyone, he escapes into a fantasy world where he is accepted as a genuine rapper. After an accident and a mysterious encounter with a long-deceased rapper idol, he ends up with Osman, head of “Pizza-prontoturkexpress” and the district’s big boss, and with Stella, the most beautiful girl in the world. When Marvin begins rapping, everyone is convinced that he is a genuine ghetto child who has spent a hard life on the streets of his hood. The news spreads like wildfire that a real rapper is in the ghetto and Marvin becomes completely wrapped up in his new identity.

Genre Coming-of-Age Story, Family Entertainment, Love Story, Music Category Feature Year of Production 2011 Director Adnan G. Köse Screenplay Adnan G. Köse, Andrea Kriegl Director of Photography James Jacobs Cast Jimi Blue Ochsenknecht, Sabrina Wilstermann, Ismail Deniz, Günther Kaufmann, Ann-Katrin Kramer, Detlef D. Soost, Tai Jason Producers Clarens Grollmann, Fritjof Hohagen Co-Producers Rainer Kölmel, Wasiliki Bleser, Stephan O. Hansch, Wolfgang Herold Production Company enigma film/Munich, in co-production with Starhaus Filmproduktion/Munich, Odeon Pictures/Geiselgasteig, Herold Productions/Frankfurt Length 90 min Format 35 mm, color, 1:1.85 Original Version German Subtitled Version English With backing from German Federal Film Board, German Federal Film Fund, FilmFernsehFonds Bayern, HessenInvest

Adnan G. Köse grew up in Germany as the son of German-Turkish parents. Interested in all aspects of film at an early age, he is active as an actor, screenwriter and director. His films as a director include: GO TO HELL (ZUR HÖLLE MIT DIR, short, 2003), DER KLAGERUF DER SAZ (short, 2005), his feature debut RUN FOR YOUR LIFE – FROM JUNKIE TO IRONMAN (LAUF UM DEIN LEBEN – VOM JUNKIE ZUM IRONMAN, 2008), and HOMIES (HOMIES, 2011).

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KÜMMEL GOES EAST – living five years for a shopping center. Five years with its developers and local residents. Five years between Germany and Poland. Five years until the dawn of the NEW WORLD.

Hermann Kümmel building a school house in Nicaragua. That was in the ‘80s. Today the native Hessian is working in Rzeszów, east Poland. He’s building the NEW WORLD shopping center. At Kümmel’s side stands Polish manager Viola Wojnowski, who negotiates with trade partners and financiers. But she doesn’t want to continue living in Poland – she’s having her dream house built in the German capital. Investor and art collector Dr. Erich Marx works in the background. The shopping center project is controversial amongst inhabitants of the local prefab estate where it is to be built. But contracts have been finalized and construction vehicles are rolling in.

Director Paul Hadwiger and his team followed the creation of the shopping center over five years. He encounters developers and inhabitants, pursues their stories. Despite their differences, all concerned are united by one question – that of how one wishes to live.

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Two girls, Ari and Oona, dream of breaking free. The Baron, singer of their favorite band Tier sings: “We sense everything, you won’t fool us. We’re desire, lust and instinct …”. But in their families, nobody feels, nobody talks. Ari’s mother refuses to realize that her kids are grown up and her brother terrorizes the family in her colorful design world. Lolita-like Ari gets some missing affection by having sex with grown-up men and competes for the attention of mysterious, black-clad Oona. Oona feels guilty about the suicide of her dad, scratches her arms bloody and paints dark pictures of violence.

The two girls follow their instinct and go on a manhunt, sneak through the jungle of the city, dance with the Baron and bare their teeth. “We’re one of a kind. We understand each other intuitively. Because we are the same species.” Through their friendship, Oona learns how to extrovert her anger and Ari finally feels some kind of self-respect. But Ari starts an affair with Oona’s hated uncle Lukas. When Oona catches them red-handed, she is deeply hurt. The girls see only one last chance to save their friendship … “You should never forget that I could easily eat you …”

genre Coming-of-Age Story, Teenage Pop Drama category Feature year of production 2011 director Ziska Riemann screenplay Ziska Riemann, Luci van Org director of photography Hannes Hubach cast Jella Haase, Sarah Horváth, Nicolette Krebitz, Thomas Wodianka, Sandra Borgmann, Rainer Sellien producers Wolfgang Cimera, Bettina Wente, Andi Wecker co-producer Christian Cloos production company Network Movie/Cologne, in co-production with ZDF Das kleine Fernsehspiel/Mainz length 96 min format 35 mm, color, 1:1.85 original version German subtitled version English festivals Berlin 2011, Karlovy Vary 2011 (In Competition) awards Special FICC Jury Mention Karlovy Vary 2011 With backing from Film- und Medienstiftung NRW, Filmförderung Hamburg Schleswig-Holstein, Nordmedia, Kuratorium junger deutscher Film, German Federal Film Fund

Ziska Riemann was born in 1973 and grew up in Berlin. She published her first graphic novel in 1991, together with Gerhard Seyfried. They published another five graphic novels (Space Bastards, Future Subjunkies, Starship Eden, Die Comics. Alle!, and Kraft durch Freunde). Her first own comic strip Rascal & Lucille appeared in 1997. She trained as a shiatsu therapist from 1994-1997 and organized the Internet comic magazine Dr. Inka & Colores in 1999, a forum for young graphic novel artists. Besides her work as a graphic novel artist, she also writes short stories (Fleckenfeger) and film scripts. She received a scholarship from the Munich Screenplay Workshop in 1999/2000 and was awarded the Tankred Dorst Film Script Award for BLAME IT ON THE DOGS (DIE HUNDE SIND SCHULD), which was produced in 2000. In 2004, she founded the record label MerMer and published her solo album Wo hier bitte geht’s nach Shambhala?. She directed several short films between 2003 and 2010. LOLLIPPOP MONSTER is her feature film debut.
A Turkish family in Germany wins the lottery jackpot. While the parents want to buy a hotel in Cappadocia to fulfill their dreams, their youngest son Luk has no clue what to do with his part of the fortune. His parents assume that he will contribute to the hotel, but Luk wants to record a song with his ex-girlfriend Gül, which ends in a tragically comic catastrophe, guiding him to discover his real fortune.

**Genre** Romantic Comedy  
**Category** Feature  
**Year of Production** 2010  
**Director** Ayse Polat  
**Screenplay** Ayse Polat  
**Director of Photography** Patrick Orth  
**Cast** René Vaziri, Aylin Tezel, Sumru Yavruçuk, Kida Khodr Ramadan, Sinan Bengier, Serkan Kaya, Maximilian Vollmar, Linda Steinhoff  
**Producers** Christian Kux, Ayse Polat  
**Production Companies** Intervista Digital Media/Hamburg, PunktPunktPunkt Filmproduktion/Berlin  
**Length** 91 min  
**Format** 35 mm/HDCam, color, 1:1.85  
**Original Version** German/Turkish  
**Subtitled Version** English  
**Festivals** Shanghai 2011  
**With backing from** German Federal Film Board, Filmförderung Hamburg Schleswig-Holstein, German Federal Film Fund, Nordmedia

Extension 11 – one of many districts in the Mamelodi township in South Africa. Welcome to the “shack side”. Running water, electricity and paved roads are nowhere to be found. But even here there is of course daily life, which the Mtsweni family masters with routine and ingenuity. Father Steven puts all his energy into his small kiosk located in the township, thus keeping his family afloat and enabling his children an education. His daughter “Mosquito” is fighting her way through the confusion of puberty and dreams of a career as a professional footballer or paleontologist. Born in 1993, during the abolition of apartheid, she is part of a new generation that believes in the chance of a career and a better life. Will the 2010 Soccer World Cup hosted in their country have an impact on the daily life of the family?

A portrait of a family made up of two South African generations, their hopes, disappointments, dreams and realities.

Genre Family, Society Category Documentary Year of Production 2011 Director Benjamin Kahlmeyer Director of Photography Stefan Neuberger Producer Boris Frank Production Companies Filmakademie Baden-Württemberg/Ludwigsburg, Jolle-Film/Ludwigsburg, in co-production with SWR/Baden-Baden Length 75 min Format HD, color, 16:9 Original Version English Dubbed Version German With backing from MFG Baden-Württemberg

Benjamin Kahlmeyer was born in 1982 in Marburg. After graduating from high school and completing his civilian service and a stay abroad in France, he studied Philosophy and Literature at the Freie Universität Berlin from 2003-2005. He went on to work at the community radio station Offener Kanal Berlin, supervising the youth editorial team. This was followed by a succession of internships at various commercial and feature film production companies, where he gained experience as a sound mixer, production assistant and co-director. It was also around this time that he first started to create and develop his own video work and film music projects. From 2005, he studied Documentary Film at the Film Academy Baden-Württemberg in Ludwigsburg. He graduated in 2011 with his documentary MEANWHILE IN MAMELODI.
Every weekend at an illegal drag show in a suburb of Havana, Sebastián, a 17-year-old Cuban teenager, transforms into “Mila Caos”. He suffers from his mother’s indifference and dreams that one day she will see him on stage.

**Genre** Art, Coming-of-Age Story, Drama  
**Category** Short  
**Year of Production** 2011  
**Director** Simon Jaikiriuma Paetau  
**Screenplay** Simon Jaikiriuma Paetau, Fabián Suárez  
**Director of Photography** Charlotte Michel  
**Cast** Yaniel Castillo, Rebecca Rodríguez Aragón, Paula Ali, Jaime Reyes  
**Producers** Simon Jaikiriuma Paetau, Claudia Olivera Pena, Viana Gonzalés  
**Production Company** Kunsthochschule für Medien Köln (KHM)/Cologne, in co-production with EICTV/Cuba  
**Length** 18 min  
**Format** HD/35 mm, color, 1:1.66  
**Original Version** Spanish  
**Subtitled Versions** English, French  

**World Sales**  
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Louisa lives a drab and gloomy life. Living in the apartment of her recently deceased grandmother, she works for an insurance company and is mainly lonely. All volition to change what seems to be her faith has gone. The world of literature sets her mind at rest, gives her shelter and joy. Books aren’t asking anything from Louisa, but give back so much. Louisa can relax entirely while reading. She forgets the world around her and immerses herself completely in those fantastic worlds of wonder. But in all these books, it’s stories about the lives of other people. What about her own?

One day, Louisa takes home a book from the library about lucid dreaming – dreaming in which you can control your actions and are fully aware of being in a dream. Quickly Louisa understands the new and unknown possibilities. The door is open, a bizarre play unravels … and there is still the real world waiting …
In Pinkovia, Princess Lillifee and her friends are enjoying a beautiful summer. One night, however, the unicorn Rosalie appears to Lillifee in a dream and urgently asks for her help; she needs Lillifee to look after her baby Lucy. When Lillifee awakes, she discovers that Lucy has magically stepped out of her dream and is now sitting on her bed, fresh as a daisy. But what has happened to Rosalie?

Lillifee decides to bring Lucy back to her mother. In order to find Rosalie, she sets off with the unicorn baby and her friends to the neighboring country Bluetopia. Upon their arrival, they are shocked to discover that the land has been cast under a dreadful spell! Although it’s the middle of summer, it is frosty and cold, and everything is covered with ice and snow.

Lillifee quickly finds out who is responsible for the disaster: Steel, the winter prince of Bluetopia. Jealous of his twin brother, the summer prince, he has frozen the country in a deep winter sleep. The enchanted ice can only be melted by the unicorns’ magical powers. Steel, of course, wants to prevent this at all costs. So he has kidnapped Lucy’s parents and imprisoned them in impenetrable ice.

Lucy is now Bluetopia’s only hope. Steel has the baby unicorn searched for all over the country, and finds her with Lillifee. The fairy princess manages to flee at the last moment, but now she must act quickly. Lillifee can only free Bluetopia from the evil curse with Lucy’s help …

**Genre** Animation, Children & Youth, Family Entertainment

**Category** Feature

**Year of Production** 2010

**Director** Ansgar Niebuhr

**Screenplay** Mark Slater, Rachel Murrell, Gabriele M. Walther

**Producers** Gabriele M. Walther, Frank Piscator

**Production Companies** WunderWerk/Unterföhring, Caligari Film/Munich, in co-production with Beta Film/Oberhaching, Universum Film/Munich, WDR/Cologne

**Length** 78 min

**Format** 35 mm, color, 16:9

**Original Version** German

**Subtitle Version** English

**With backing from** German Federal Film Board, Film- und Medienstiftung NRW, German Federal Film Fund, Mini-Traité

**Ansgar Niebuhr** had his debut with animated film as an FX assistant on FELIDAE. Since then, he has worked on numerous projects, including: WERNER – DAS MUSS KESSELN, DAS KLEINE ARSCHLOCH, PIPI LANGSTRUMPF, TOBIAS TOTZ, GLOBI UND DER SCHATTENRAUBER, TKKG, and PRINCESS LILLIFEE.
20-year-old Lukas is right in the midst of male puberty – medically triggered – for he was in fact born a girl. Full of the zest for life, he enters big-city life but even upon arrival encounters a major screw up: recruited for his community service, he is the only male quartered in the female nurses’ residential hall. What would be a dream for any other boy is acute, everyday stress for Lukas: being transgender means always finding yourself trapped in the wrong social compartment. Fortunately his best friend Ine sticks by him and sweeps him into the scene of homosexuals in Cologne, where she is very well integrated. Here Lukas experiences his first real flirt – with the cheeky, daredevil and outwardly attractive Fabio. Fabio embodies all that Lukas lacks: disproportionately positive self-confidence and highly erotic masculinity. The initial attraction between the two boys gradually develops – until Fabio accesses the secret of Lukas’s identity when suddenly all are compelled to risk something for their feelings.

ROMEOS dares to give a most unusual insight into the subject of transgender and humorously and cheekily sets out to do away with conventional thought on such roles. It is a film about love, friendship and a quite remarkable sexual awakening.

**Genre** Tragicomedy  
**Category** Feature  
**Year of Production** 2011  
**Director** Sabine Bernardi  
**Screenplay** Sabine Bernardi  
**Director of Photography** Moritz Schultheiss  
**Cast** Rick Okon, Maximilian Befort, Liv Lisa Fries, Felix Brocke, Silke Gerertz, Gilles Tschudi, Sigrid Burkholder, Johannes Schwab, Tessa Lukat, Ben Gageik, Ralf Rotterdam  
**Producers** Janna Velber, Kristina Löbbert  
**Production Company** BOOGIEFILM/Cologne, in co-production with ZDF Das kleine Fernsehspiel/Mainz  
**Length** 94 min  
**Format** HD, color, 1:1.85  
**Original Version** German  
**Subtitled Version** English  
**Festivals** Berlin 2011, Seattle 2011  
**With backing from** Film- und Medienstiftung NRW

Sabine Bernardi initially studied Political Science, followed by studies at the international film school (ifs) in Cologne, where she graduated in 2005. Since then, she has been working as a freelance director and writer. A selection of her award-winning films includes: Greta (short, 2004), LUDMILLA’S LOVE SONG (short, 2005), TRANSFAMILY (documentary, 2005), GG19 – KINDERSICHERUNG (short, 2006), POWERFUL PUNCH (documentary, 2009), ES HAT SICH EINE WELT EROFFNET (documentary, 2009), and ROMEOS (2011).
In Germany, jazz had a voice: Inge Brandenburg.

Inge Brandenburg had a difficult upbringing and soon had to learn to stand on her own two feet, but by the late 1950s she was being acclaimed as Europe’s finest female jazz singer. TIME magazine compared her with Billie Holiday, while musicians in general admired her. But the German record industry ignored her or tried unsuccessfully to reduce her to singing hit songs.

This is the story of a woman in the 1950s and 1960s, when there was no place in Germany for self-assured women with international aspirations, a dramatic performance style and an emancipated attitude to love.

Through SING! INGE, SING! it is possible to discover a great German artiste.

**Genre** History, Music  
**Category** Documentary  
**Year of Production** 2011  
**Director** Marc Boettcher  
**Screenplay** Marc Boettcher  
**Director of Photography** Oliver Staack  
**Cast** Inge Brandenburg, Klaus Doldinger, Udo Jürgens, Joy Fleming, Fritz Rau, Emil Mangelsdorff, Paul Kuhn, Max Greger, Wolfgang Sauer  
**Producer** Marc Boettcher  
**Production Company** MB-Film/  
**Berlin, in co-production with NDR/Hamburg, ARTE/Strasbourg, HR/Frankfurt**  
**Length** 117 min  
**Format** DigiBeta/HD/Blu-ray, color/b&w, 16:9  
**Original Versions** German, English  
**Subtitled** Version English With backing from Filmförderung Hamburg Schleswig-Holstein, German Federal Film Fund

**Marc Boettcher** was born in Berlin and trained as an actor, while also attending courses in Theater Studies and German Language and Literature. He was still at school when he made his first films. Since 1988 he has been active as a dramaturge, actor and director working in Stuttgart, Lübeck and Berlin, where he ran his own theater, kunstgriff e.V., in the 1990s. He also works as a freelance television director and dubs foreign-language films. He has published numerous essays as well as a book on Henrik Ibsen and a biography of the iconic singer of hit singles, Alexandra. He founded the production company MB-Film in 1999, and it was with this company that he went on to make his successful television documentary ALEXANDRA: THE LEGEND OF A SINGER. His biography of the world-famous composer Bert Kaempfert was published in book form in 2002 and was followed by the 120-minute television documentary of the same name, STRANGERS IN THE NIGHT – THE BERT KAEMPFERT STORY, in 2003. In 2004 Parthas published his book Alexandra: The Legend of a Singer. In 2006 his film I WANT IT ALL: THE GITTE HAENNING STORY was shown at film festivals and on television and nominated for the 2007 Adolf Grimme Prize and NRW Culture Prize. He has also worked on productions for Discovery Channel and undertaken research into the lives of Daliah Lavi and Esther Ofarim. In 2011 his documentary on the 20th anniversary of the stage début of the band Rosenstolz was shown on German television. SING! INGE, SING! is his first cinema documentary.
On the search for personal happiness in Havana where people believe that what they seek is only to be found elsewhere.

Faces, sounds and voices from Havana. Off-screen and with complete honesty, Cubans tell us about their idea of freedom. “It is a lie I have repeated so often, I have started to believe it: I am free.” They are very well aware of the restrictions placed on them as human beings: “I can do whatever I want, but only within a clearly defined context, place and time.” Public enemy number one is Yoani Sánchez, a female blogger who exposes the nature of the system in her articles. Her aim with her blog, Generacion Y, is to overcome her apathy and silence. “Freedom is the freedom to scream in public that you are not free,” she says. Many desperate Cubans have braved the hazardous crossing to the United States. But in the words of poet Konstantinos P. Kavafis you will always be walking the streets of Havana wherever you go – you can’t shake off the past. The peaceful, beautifully framed street scenes and exceptional soundtrack supplement the stories told in this production by Andrea Roggon. The people shown in the film are not those speaking. We watch them as they get crammed onto the bus, or wash their hair. We see puddles on the street, rolling waves, like mirrors.

**Genre** Society, City Symphony  
**Category** Documentary  
**Year of Production** 2010  
**Director** Andrea Roggon  
**Screenplay** Andrea Roggon  
**Cast** Yoani Sánchez  
**Producers** Andrea Roggon, Hagen Schönherr, Daniellis Hernandez  
**Production Company** Filmakademie Baden-Württemberg/Ludwigsburg  
**Length** 87 min  
**Format** HDCam, color, 1:1.85  
**Original Version** Spanish  
**Subtitled Versions** English, German  

Andrea Roggon was born in 1981. After several internships in photography and film production, she studied in the Documentary Film department at the Baden-Württemberg Film Academy. She received a scholarship to study at the EICTV international film school in Cuba in 2006-2007. Her films include: MARKUS IN HIGH HEELS (2005), I AM THE CENTER OF THE WORLD (2004), REFLEXIONES (2007), ENRIQUE Y JUDITA (2008), and SOY LIBRE – I AM FREE (2010).
Hannes, who attends fourth grade at a small-town primary school, doesn’t really fit in with the rest of his class. He can track like a Native American Indian, catch fish with his bare hands and communicate with animals. But in the “real” world he’s a complete klutz, everything he does turns into a catastrophe.

Lucky for him he has great friends: Bergman, his loyal dog, Laika, with her fantastic inventions like machines for time-travelling or cloning, the two mice Tutu and Schisch, and of course the gang’s mascot, the magical Tigerduck.

Their worst enemies are The Gringos, the biggest bullies in school, and Mice-Sheriff Browning, who would do anything to get his hands on Tigerduck and his magical powers.

Together, however, The Tigerduck Gang can master any challenge that comes their way. In the course of their extraordinary adventures, Hannes slowly gains self-confidence, learns to use his skills, and realizes that he has the best friends in the world.

Irina Probost studied at the Vienna Teacher’s Academy where she specialized in Children and Media and began working in various positions for the Children & Youth department of the Austrian public broadcaster ORF in 1986. She then set up the Animated Children’s Films & Distribution department at Bavaria Film in 1994 and founded the Papa Löwe Filmproduktion in 1998, which produces animated and live-action theatrical and TV formats in a variety of genres.
“You’re invisible!” Can there be a worse judgment for an actress? Young Josephine definitely lacks self-confidence, but when renowned director Kaspar Friedmann appears at the acting school and casts her for her first main role, nobody understands his motivation, least of all Josephine herself. The character to play is “Camille”, quite different to herself, but Josephine wants to come as close as possible. As Camille, she awakens to her femininity, but loses her own strengths in dealing with her everyday life because Camille is not only self-conscious and sexually hyperactive, but at the same time also fragile and self-destructive. Josephine puts herself into the hands of a director, who sends her on an emotional roller coaster ride. A dangerous game is set off, bound to turn Josephine into her own worst enemy …

After her award-winning star turn in Susanne Bier’s Oscar®-nominated AFTER THE WEDDING (2006), Stine Fischer Christensen delivers a subtle yet full-blooded performance as a young woman on the path to self-discovery and, perhaps, self-destruction... Director Christian Schwochow follows up his award-winning NOVEMBER CHILD (2008) with the powerful and gripping journey of ambition and abuse.

Genre Drama Category Feature Year of Production 2011
Director Christian Schwochow Screenplay Heide Schwochow, Christian Schwochow Director of Photography Frank Lamm
Cast Stine Fischer Christensen, Ulrich Noethen, Anna Maria Mühe, Dagmar Manzel, Ronald Zehrfeld
Producers Jochen Laube, Fabian Maubach
Production Company teamWorx Television & Film/ Ludwigsburg, in co-production with SWR/Baden-Baden, ARTE/ Strasbourg, RBB/Potsdam-Babelsberg, Berliner Union Film/Berlin, Media Factory/Berlin, Sommerhaus Filmproduktion/Ludwigsburg
Length 113 min Format 35 mm, color
Original Version German Subtitled Version English
Festivals Karlovy Vary 2011 (In Competition) Awards Ecumenical Jury Award & Best Actress Karlovy Vary 2011

Christian Schwochow was born in 1978 in Bergen on the island of Rügen. As a child, he was involved in numerous radio plays and was the young publisher and editor-in-chief of the youth magazine SHOT. After finishing school he worked as an author, speaker and reporter for various television and radio broadcasters, followed by studies from 2002-2008 in Film Directing at the Baden-Württemberg Film Academy. His films include: SÜLZE (short, 2000), SCHNEE-WITTCHEN IST TOT (short 2001), STRASSENSCHLACHT (short, 2002), SOAPSTAR (documentary, 2003), Der GROSSE FRANZ (short, 2004), TANTALUS (short, 2005), MARTA UND DER FLIEGENDE GROSSVATER (2006), JÄGER VERLORENER SCHÄTZE (documentary series, 2007), NOVEMBER CHILD (NOVEMBERKIND, 2007), and CRACKS IN THE SHELL (DIE UNSICHTBARE, 2011).
The first thing Gratzik defiantly announces is that there will be no discussion on the Stasi... On the one hand, it is a psychological profile of an extraordinarily paradoxical figure, a ‘man of extremes’: satyr, seducer, radical and hermit. On the other hand, it tells a story about the GDR, its critics and the Stasi of the kind that has never been told before in all the 20 years since the end of East Germany.

When Gratzik terminated his activities as a confidential informant because he began to feel the functionaries were betraying the people of the GDR, he came out of the closet in a radical manner. He was ready to put up with the consequences of no longer being able to publish anything and of even being under surveillance himself.

The fact that a man, who clearly enjoys reckless talk, is not under pressure to serve any expectations is thanks to the sensitive approach of the filmmaker. And thanks to her unwavering curiosity, he ends up opening up to her, while being allowed to remain faithful to himself, his inner conflicts and his obstinacy. From the outset, the director refrained from seeking a ‘moral to the story’, thus allowing perpetrator and victim to be neutralized and even ‘humanized’ in one person.

Annekatrin Hendel was born in Berlin. After finishing her studies in Design, she began working as a freelance costume and set designer for film and theater. In 1989 she was one of the founders of the Berlin-based Theater 89. In 1999 she directed her first film, the short CHIQUITA FOREVER. In 2004 she founded It Works! Medien. The company’s first production ZUR ZEIT VERSTORBEN won numerous festival prizes and was nominated for the 2004 German Short Film Award. A selection of her other films as a director includes: EIN STAR IM OFF (2000), MIT FANTASIE GEGEN DEN MANGEL (2008), and FLAKE – MEIN LEBEN (2011).
Doreen und Isabel are 17-year-old twins from rural Saxony in East Germany. The two are successful oarswomen practicing hard to be accepted at a renowned boarding school for athletes. In 1988, a year before the Berlin Wall came down, they have the chance to spend the summer at Lake Balaton in the Soviet satellite state of Hungary. Already on their way to the young pioneer camp, the twins meet a group of guys from the West German city of Hamburg. Doreen falls in love with Arne. For the first time, the sisters don’t share everything and need to take the most momentous decision of their lives.

Robert Thalheim was born in Berlin in 1974. After his schooling in the USA and Germany, he worked as an assistant director for the Berlin Ensemble theater and studied at the Free University Berlin and the “Konrad Wolf” University of Film & Television. He is the publisher of the cultural periodical Plotzki and has written a book about Andrzej Wajda. Also a theater writer and director, his films include: UM VIER UHR PLOTZLICH GING DIE WELT UNTER (documentary, 1996), ZEIT IST LEVEN (short, 2000), GRANICA (short, 2002), THREE PERCENT (short, 2002), ICH (short, 2003), NETTO (2004), AND ALONG COME TOURISTS (AM ENDE KOMMEN TOURISTEN, 2007), and WESTWIND (2011).
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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 Association of German Film Producers, the German Producers Alliance, the Association of German Film Exporters, the German Federal Film Board (FFA), the Stiftung Deutsche Kinemathek, the German Documentary Association, FilmFernsehFonds Bayern and Filmstiftung NRW representing the seven main regional film funds, and the German Short Film Association.

Members of the advisory board are: Martin Moszkowicz (chairman), Peter Dinges, Antonio Exacoustos, Sylke Gottlebe, Prof. Dr. Klaus Schaefer, Ulrike Schauz

German Films itself has 11 members of staff:
- Mariette Rissenbeek, managing director
- Julia Basler, project coordinator/documentary film
- Katherine Grzelak, managing director’s assistant
- Angela Hawkins, publications & website editor
- Barbie Heusinger, project coordinator/distribution support
- Nicole Kaufmann, project coordinator
- Verena Köstler, accounts
- Kim Liebeck, festival coordinator
- Martin Scheuring, project coordinator/short film
- Konstanze Welz, project coordinator/television
- Stephanie Wimmer, project coordinator

In addition, German Films has foreign representatives in key territories around the world.

German Films’ budget of presently €4.7 million comes from film export levies, the office of the Federal Government Commissioner for Culture and the Media, and the FFA. The seven main regional film funds (FilmFernsehFonds Bayern, Filmförderung Hamburg Schleswig-Holstein, Filmstiftung NRW, Medienboard Berlin-Brandenburg, MFG Baden-Württemberg, Mitteldeutsche Medienförderung, and Nordmedia) make a financial contribution – currently amounting to €319,000 – 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.

**German Films' range of activities includes:**

- Close cooperation with major international film festivals, including Berlin, Cannes, Venice, San Sebastian, Locarno, Rome, Karlovy Vary, Montreal, Toronto, New York, Shanghai, Warsaw, and Moscow
- Organization of umbrella stands for German sales companies and producers at international television and film markets (Berlin, Cannes, AFM Los Angeles, Shanghai)
- Staging of “Festivals of German Films” in selected international territories
- Staging of the “German Premieres” industry screenings in New York, London, Tokyo, and other selected territories
- Providing advice and information for representatives of the international press and buyers from the fields of cinema, video, 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 premièred at Cannes
- Publication of informational literature about current German films and the German film industry (German Films Quarterly), as well as international market analyses and special festival brochures
- An Internet website (www.german-films.de) offering information about new German films, a film archive, information and links to German and international film festivals and institutions, and a VOD platform for buyers and festival delegates
- Organization of the selection procedure for the German entry for the Oscar® for Best Foreign Language Film
- Collaboration with Deutsche Welle’s DW-TV KINO program which features the latest German film releases and international productions in Germany
- 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

In association and cooperation with its shareholders, German Films works to promote feature, documentary, television and short films.
Promotion and Marketing of European Films Worldwide

32 European Countries – 1 Network

THE NETWORK

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ANCC, Albania
ICA, Spain
Austrian Film Commission
ICA, Portugal
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Baltic Films
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