HOME-GROWN HIT: FACK JU GÖHTE 2
OVER 6 MILLION ADMISSIONS IN 4 WEEKS!

GET REAL: DOCUMENTARY FILMMAKERS FROM GERMANY

DIRECTORS  Susan Gluth & Valentin Thurn
PRODUCERS  Bildersturm Filmproduktion, Hanfgarn & Ufer Filmproduktion
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Susan Gluth leaves us in no doubt that every film means an incredible amount of work; that she is kept busy doing, and planning, and thinking, and despairing, and now and then rejoicing – and that all this is experienced in a permanent roller-coaster ride of the emotions. It’s clear there is scarcely any time for other things in a period when she’s aiming to make progress with a project.

The director has just returned from Nepal and she is suffering from a nasty cold, but she still sits all day in a sound studio in Berlin with Israeli hang-player Hagay and Argentinian guitar-player Dominic, looking to complete her new film. It’s all about searching, feeling their way to the right sound. Susan Gluth came across the Israeli musician Hagay quite by chance, but now his music with the Swiss sound dish fits into URMILA wonderfully. The film is due to be launched in German cinemas in early 2016, telling the story of the suppression of girls and young women exemplified by Urmila Chaudhary, who had to work as a slave until she succeeded in freeing herself. Meanwhile in her mid-twenties, now she travels through the villages and towns of Nepal to rescue other girls.

“Getting old is not for sissies,” it says on Susan Gluth’s website. This is a sentence from her film PLAYING HOOKY about Sun City in Arizona, a town of retired people. The saying could also be converted into “filmmaking is not for sissies”. Gluth is not a guerilla-director à la Werner Herzog, it’s true, but like her much-traveled colleague, she is one who works with incredible consistency and absolute passion – intuitively, rather on the basis of gut feelings, with spontaneous enthusiasm and a great openness to all those things that can’t be planned when you are just starting a new project. “I don’t write well-researched exposés at the start and then look for sponsors; I will be traveling somewhere and simply start to shoot, and often the material for a new film evolves from there, quite often by sheer chance. Usually, after this I have got so deeply involved in the topic that I can’t let go again. It’s only then that the issue of expose writing and financing begins.”

Towards the end of her studies at the University of Television and Film Munich, Gluth said in an interview at the beginning of 2001: “It’s utopian to think you can exist as a documentary filmmaker. Television is the market, it’s not possible to live from cinema films. I want to make documentaries and reportages and, as far as possible, to live on that as an independent artist, with cinematography as my second fiddle, or perhaps editing.”

What the director said in that way 15 plus years ago was realistic – and roughly speaking, things have happened just as she imagined then. But since then, she has also fought her way to independence in impressive style. She founded her own production company to escape dependence. Rather than let anyone else do it half-heartedly, she also launches some of her own films in the cinemas. She has learned to see herself as an independent filmmaker, who – like an artist – has no fixed income. “So you don’t build yourself a house; you make films instead. In my case, there is no regularity but somehow something always comes in, sometimes
more, sometimes less. Earning money is not a priority anymore. Sometimes that resembles harakiri, I agree."

Visitors to Susan Gluth’s website are welcomed in English. She does not see herself as a ‘German’ director – from the very beginning, she has been international with her films. “My themes just approach me – it might be a personal encounter or, as for the first time with UR MILA, a newspaper article. I begin to do research and something evolves, often through international encounters and together with colleagues from all nations.”

For example, there was her first longer film L’AMOUR CHEZ TATI about love stories told in a bridal salon in Paris. It was followed by OSTWÄRTS about Mecklenburg-Vorpommern ten years after reunification, then by a portrait of the great Federico Fellini and two documentaries about refugee children in Darfur/Sudan. The director gives no answers to the question why wars and conflicts happen, she feels the way sensitively and with great curiosity toward the fears and hopes of displaced people. The children tell her about their earlier lives, about escape, and the trauma of violence and persecution. The scenes showing the everyday life of the camp speak for themselves, the viewer has plenty of time to engage with the protagonists, and to befriend them in a very personal, intense cinematic fashion. Susan Gluth’s most successful cinema film to date was WAS SER UND SEIFE, a film about a laundry in Hamburg made in 2009. Gluth portrays people at the bottom of the hierarchy. Tatjana, Gerti and Monika are three older women, who mangle, iron and wash in a small family business for very little money, each earning around 750 euros per month. She encounters the three unqualified workers with great respect and regards them at the same level, as they do their sweat-breaking work in the heat, with a constantly high noise level. She not only shows her protagonists at the laundry but also joins them in their private lives. For 90 minutes, WAS SER UND SEIFE affectionately focuses on these unsung heroines of work and their modest dreams of a little happiness.

Susan Gluth always admires people who are committed, who dare to venture from the cover of safety. The director investigates the force that inspires such people, asking where they get the energy for what they do, and how they manage it all. These are essential and existential questions, which the director also asks herself repeatedly. As a filmmaker she long ago became used to reaching her own limits, but she never loses her awareness of others. When she flew to Nepal in September 2015, visiting Urmila’s parents for a scene still missing in the new film, she took very little for herself other than three pairs of socks and two pairs of underewear, “if you need it, wash it!” The rest of her luggage, besides camera equipment, was made up mainly of gifts: pullovers, T-shirts, lipsticks, ballpoint pens and five kilogrammes of chocolate, “the good stuff from Switzerland and from Germany. There is none of that there, but the people like to eat it so much now, as well as gummy bears and licorice from Hamburg.”

Moritz Holfelder
FROM FILM TO COMMUNITY
They tasted nice, remembers award-winning journalist, best-selling author, food fighter and documentary film director Valentin Thurn about the fried locusts. His attempt at the Thai delicacy at a local market marks the beginning of his current film 10 BILLION – WHAT’S ON YOUR PLATE? He remembers taking a pass on the big spiders, and opting for the locusts, being flavored with a lot of garlic, basil, lemongrass and their texture resembling shrimps. Moments like these illustrate one of Thurn’s films’ most notable characteristics: His personal perspective gives the pieces their structure – fact-oriented journeys along the major current socio-political questions in which he plays the role of the “viewers’ representative”. Symbolic scenes like the fried insect snack create openness towards topics such as the necessary shift of world nutrition, preferably complemented by strong emotions that distinguish his favorite medium, the cinema, from his professional roots in journalism.

“LESS IS MORE”: The title of the film about ways towards a post-growth economy his Cologne-based production company Thurnfilm realized with director Karin de Miguel Wessendorf also summarizes his documentary approach. There are no big gestures or aesthetic extravaganzas in Thurn’s numerous films, no anger and absolutely no personality show. Yes, there are KILLER-GERMS and MILK-REBELS (2014), FOODSAVERS (2013), a WHISTLEBLOWER (2009), an Al Qaeda fighter I AM AL QAEDA, 2006 and many other spectacular human and social phenomena he portrayed and questioned for film, radio and TV as well as in books and magazines. But Thurn’s analytical background as a scientist – he studied Geography, Ethnology and Politics in Aix-en-Provence/France, Frankfurt and Cologne – and solid journalistic education prevent him from indulging in the sensational. He is more interested in logical progression, in an optimistic way to “start the narrative from the solution.” This was definitely the strategy in 10 BILLION, currently running in cinemas, and its predecessor, the highly successful TASTE THE WASTE, which premiered at the Berlinale 2011, was shown at over 30 film festivals worldwide, and won 15 awards. Those two cinematic releases provoked an intense debate about the enormous waste, destruction and distribution of food in industrialized societies. According to Thurn, TASTE THE WASTE filled a “vacuum of knowledge”, whereas 10 BILLION combined the question of feeding the ever-growing world population with arguments from both traditional farming methods and industrial food production. Artificial meat meets ecologically raised livestock, genetically modified seeds and Oekomedia. But soon the traditional role of the TV documentarist who more or less steps back behind his work opened to the bigger power of the image – the cinema. Thurn especially appreciates its compatibility with a whole package of book, online campaign and social movement and the chance to build its own community. “I want to motivate people to find their own way through our time’s social challenges. The film is the emotional starting point and leading medium, but once people are sensitized for a topic, they can immediately find the opportunity and platform to build a network.”

Even before Thurn started his production company in 1994, he founded and presided over the International Federation of Environmental Journalists (1993-2001), was a spokesman for the Environmental Co-Operation with Eastern Europe within BUND, the German Association for the Environment and Conservation (1990-1994), and later a member of the advisory board of the Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung, a foundation for environmental projects in eastern Europe (1994-1997). In 2012 he founded Foodsharing e.V. and the platform www.tasteofheimat.de to empower farmers, restaurants and shops that specialize in local products. He teaches and lectures at international conferences and workshops, for example the Goethe-Institute in Mumbai, the Miguel Alemán Foundation in Mexico, Eco-Tourism Conventions in Johannesburg and Guayaquil/Ecuador.

Does he see himself as an activist? Thurn doesn’t fight the title so many critics have given him. He even accepted invitations to talk shows to speak about ”campaign journalism” – for him, a contradiction in itself. He wants to use the term “activist” with respect and does not intend on campaigns ”Greenpeace Style”. He prefers initiating a debate instead of following a defined purpose: “And in the course of the debate, society itself directs its progress and focus.” He also distances himself from the term ”objectivity”: “As documentary filmmakers we always have a position and an opinion. Everything from choosing a topic to editing a film is opinion-making, but if this is made clear from the beginning, the viewer can decide to go along or be critical about it.” Thurn’s main objective is fairness and respect for all kinds of arguments and belief systems. While presenting TASTE THE WASTE and 10 BILLION at international festivals he especially liked the reactions among the younger audience: “They are fed up with the old black-and-white thinking and ideological battles of the past. So am I.”

Especially in the last few years, Thurn’s films cover global topics. For him, this has a logical consequence. He has to go where his stories are, work worldwide and present his films to international audiences: “Symbolic places have to get real – at least on screen”. That the styles of documentary are different in every country, he sees as a given. But the responses are universal, from the small arthouse cinema in Southern Germany to school children in the Emirates. He and his team always count on the audience’s capacity for compassion, its intelligence and creativity. These days, Valentin Thurn’s main aim is to activate the universal human capacity to find new ways of living together: “We want to open up new perspectives on living causes and current issues that have a social relevance. In so doing, we not only want to reveal what is happening in our environment, but furthermore to move something by getting active and showing why it is worth taking action and how this can be done.” Even if it takes snacking a few fried locusts. 

Christina Raftery
“Working at the interface between culture and politics is something that’s a common thread running through most of our productions,” says documentary producer Birgit Schulz of Cologne-based Bildersturm Filmproduktion, which she founded in 1993.

“We invariably look for cultural subjects which also have a socio-political significance or vice versa,” she explains, pointing to the example of THE GREENS AND THE POWER to illustrate her point.

“This film about the Green Party is a reflection on how culture in the Federal Republic developed and such a culture of debate was made possible, as well as showing how the party came to an end of an era when it held its party conference in 2012 to select the candidates for the Bundestag elections.”

Moreover, the company’s most successful production in its more than two decades of operations, THE LAWYERS – A GERMAN STORY, is, “naturally, on one level, a portrait of the three lawyers Otto Schily, Horst Mahler and Hans-Christian Stöbele, but it is also about the RAF [left-wing terrorist organization] and the associated developments up to the present day – as well as being a story about a friendship between men.”

“We like to have this kind of range in our films,” Schulz adds and points to another production, THE PROMISED LAND, about the international image of Germany. “70 years ago, in 1945, Germany was the most hated country on the planet, and now it is one of the most popular countries in the world. So, this gave us an opportunity to ask questions about the past.”

Since 1993, Bildersturm has produced more than 50 documentaries for theatrical release or for public broadcasters at home and abroad, and many of the films have been subsequently sold to TV stations around the globe from YLE through NHK to Canal+ and Aljazeera. Each year sees the company producing around eight films.

Over the past two decades, Schulz and her team have worked on an eclectic mix of subjects: from three master forgers from Berlin’s Neukölln district (THE LENINGRAD COWBOYS OF THE ART WORLD), through the relationship between religion and sex-
Raised for new documentary projects.

Part of the formula when financing is being production, pre-sales or some other forms of financing claims for the victims of major catastrophes. The project - which is set to be a theatrical release in German cinemas - is proving to be particularly beneficial when working with her directors and writers on projects. "I can be a really good corrective factor for the authors when we are talking about a film's dramaturgy. The discussions we have at the different stages of development are certainly quite different from in other companies where the producers have never made a film as a director. I think I have a greater understanding for the directors and can sense where the problems might be."

Looking back at how the documentary scene has evolved over the past two decades, Schulz notes that "there are infinitely more people making documentaries than 20 years ago. There are lots of gifted people out there, and a great diversity of formats as well as many more training opportunities. That's one side of the developments. The other side is that the budgets are shrinking and the daily routines are structured as well as recognizing the need to invest in better marketing to promote the company itself in order to raise its profile in the market."

Apart from managing her company and serving as producer, Schulz has occasionally donned the director's hat for some of the films developed at Bildersturm. These have included the TV documentaries KÖNIGS-KINDER - ROMY SCHNEIDER AND ELISA-BETH VON ÖSTERREICH, ROBERT BOSCH - LEGACY OF AN INDUSTRIAL PIONEER, A RIGHT TO LIVE - AIDS-MEDIKAMENTE FÜR MILLIONEN, and ALLAH IN EHRENFEILD through to the feature documentary THE LAWYERS - A GERMAN STORY.

Coming from a background as a photographer, Schulz says that she was originally moved to set up her own production company "because I wanted to have control over my own work and not be dependent on other producers. I have always liked directing, but have gradually limited this side of my work because of my obligations as producer," she explains.

However, her time in the director's chair has proven to be particularly beneficial when working with her directors and writers on projects. "I can be a really good corrective factor for the authors when we are talking about a film's dramaturgy. The discussions we have at the different stages of development are certainly quite different from in other companies where the producers have never made a film as a director. I think I have a greater understanding for the directors and can sense where the problems might be."

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Producers Gunter Hanfgarn and Andrea Ufer are remaining faithful to their credo as their company approaches its 25th anniversary next year. “Whatever we do is always connected with passion, passion for a story and passion for a filmmaker’s vision,” Hanfgarn says. “Documentaries are a real passion for us because there are so many strong stories to be found in reality,” he adds. “They are a bit like a puzzle that you have to solve with your collaborators. Sometimes, it can take years before you find that solution, but the end result has always been a great film.”

Hanfgarn and Ufer had originally met whilst working for the regional TV station RIAS TV in the late 1980s/early 1990s and decided in the summer of 1991 to take the step to launch their own independent production company. “I used to say that we cover everything except animals and sports,” says Andrea Ufer about the company’s output over more than two decades. “But, even that’s not the case since we made the film SPORTSFREUND LÖTZSCH in 2007 about a top East German cyclist from the 1970s who was persecuted by the Stasi secret service and could never attain international recognition because he wasn’t allowed to participate in the big competitions. Our films have frequently tackled socio-political subjects as well as very individual and personal stories told by the filmmakers themselves,” she explains.

A cursory glance at Hanfgarn & Ufer’s line-up over the past two decades shows the range of subject matter: from films delving into the world of cinema itself (Georg Misch’s CALLING HEDY LAMARR and Angela Christlieb and Stephen Kijak’s CINEMANIA) through the impact of past events on the present day (John Burgan’s documentary parable FRIENDLY ENEMY ALIEN, Maria Teresa Curzio’s VACUUM) to very personal stories by the filmmakers (Jack Rath’s BETWEEN HOME, Mo Asumang’s THE ARYANS, and Bin Chuen Choi’s MOTHER’S DAY).

“Many people come specifically to us with their stories because they have the feeling that they will be looked after well,” Hanfgarn notes. “What’s more: we don’t shy away from conflicts with commissioning editors when it’s a case of defending a filmmaker’s vision – and this results in a real feeling of trust developing between us.”

He says that the TV stations are “increasingly wanting the documentaries to be more like...”
fiction films with a narrative and clear-cut ending”, while the fiction films are often “tending to be more like documentaries as you can see with a film like VICTORIA.”

Both Hanfgarn and Ufer point to the long-standing and good working relationships that they enjoy with commissioning editors at the various German public broadcasters. They have collaborated on several occasions with ZDF’s Das kleine Fernsehspiel unit on such films as Asumang’s THE ARIANS, Christian Stahl’s 2010 portrait of a Lebanese petty criminal in Berlin’s Neukoelln district, GANGSTERLAUER, and Susanna Salonen’s 2014 feature film PATONG GIRL. ZDF/ARTE was a partner on, among others, Silvia Beck and Georg Misch’s I AM FROM NOWHERE, Rouven Rech and Gudrun Widlok’s 2010 documentary ADOPTED, while NDR served as a co-producer on Michael Richter’s 2013 parallel montage AUSGEDIENT about the training of German soldiers for their service in Afghanistan and the treatment of traumatized soldiers coming back from international hot-spots.

Hanfgarn and Ufer’s efforts have been recognized over the years as many of their documentaries have been awarded prizes at film festivals around the globe. Their 2002 production CINEMANIA won the Golden Starfish as Best Documentary at the Hamptons International Film Festival in 2002, SPORTS-FREUND LOTZSCHE picked up the Discovery Channel Audience Award at the 2007 DOK Leipzig, THE ARIANS received the Best Documentary and Audience Awards at the Phoenix Film Festival and the Magnolia Award in Shanghai last year, to name just a few.

In addition, the production of Iranian-born Ayat Najafi’s NO LAND’S SONG – the story about a young Iranian woman composer’s plans to organize a concert of legendary female singers in a country where women are forbidden for religious reasons from singing in public – has attracted a raft of awards from festivals in Leipzig, Krakow, Montreal, Gijon, Los Angeles and Berlin, among many others, since premiering last year. This successful run has now been crowned by the announcement that the European Film Academy has selected Najafi’s film for the 2015 selection for the European Documentary of the Year award.

The company has not remained a hard and fast documentary production house, having made its first foray into the fiction film arena in 2011 with Iranian writer-director Reza Serkanian’s EPHEMERAL WEDDINGS where Hanfgarn & Ufer served as associate producer. Since then, Hanfgarn’s family connections to South America has led the company to becoming sought after as a partner for feature films from Chile, Venezuela and Argentina. A start was made with Fernando Guzzoni’s CARNE DE PERRO in 2012 which won the first prize in the New Directors section at the San Sebastian International Film Festival and was followed a year later by Mariana Rondon’s PELO MALO. This co-production with Venezuela and Peru was awarded the Spanish festival’s Golden Shell, SIGNIS Award and Sebastiane Award at the 2013 edition. This autumn saw the premiere of a co-production with Argentina and Holland of Francisco Varone’s road movie CAMINO A LA PAZ.

While Hanfgarn & Ufer was a minority partner on these first co-productions, it was in the driving seat of a fiction project for the first time when it took on Susanna Salonen’s Thailand-set family drama PATONG GIRL, made as a co-production with ZDF’s Das kleine Fernsehspiel and with funding from BKM, Schleswig-Holstein. “Fiction is a quite different kind of business,” Ufer explains. “It’s a different way of dealing with people – and you have all these specialists working in their own department on the film set, thirty instead of three. As a producer, you suddenly have just one job and not five.”

“The great thing about documentaries is that you are often working with little funds and only a small crew but you can have a great film coming out at the end,” Hanfgarn observes. “I wouldn’t want to miss having this challenge.”

Thus, the company’s future as it prepares to enter its second quarter century is set to be characterized by a mix of documentary and fiction and domestic German and international projects. The current slate at the preparation or financing stage includes US-born, Berlin-based filmmaker Rick Minnich’s documentary THE STRAIT GUYS, Villa Aurora residency participant Alice Agneskirchner’s documentary HOW HOLOCAUST CAME TO GERMANY, writer-director Kathrin Frank’s German-Argentinian feature film CRUZADAS, and two co-productions planned between Germany and Poland: Lars Hubrich and Marcus Lenz co-directing the feature 1000 AMEISEN, and Igor Chojna’s documentary BORDER BARBERS.

Martin Blaney
SÄNK U GÖHTE!

The highly-anticipated sequel to 2013’s home-grown hit FACK JU GÖHTE had a sensational start in Germany. After just four days (!!), FACK JU GÖHTE 2 was seen by over 2.1 million excited German cinemagoers, making it the most successful cinema release of a German film ever. And even further records were broken on the first weekend: with a box office of approximately 17.7 million euros, 81% of all tickets sold during the weekend of 10-13 September were for FACK JU GÖHTE 2. By the beginning of October, after just over four weekends in the charts, over six million admissions were recorded.

FILM FALL IN NRW

The state of NRW is hosting quite a lot of film shoots this fall, for both television and the cinema. Sven Taddicken is working on the tragic love story GLEISSENDEN GLÜCK with Martina Gedeck and Ulrich Tukur in the leading roles, Frisbeefilms is producing. German Film Award-winner Johannes Naber is shooting the Hauff fairytale DAS KALTE HERZ as a love story with a current social twist. Frederick Lau, Moritz Bleibtreu and David Schutter are on board, with Schmidt Katze producing. Angela Schanelec is directing a film about powerlessness and happiness, DER TRAUMHAFTEN WEG, which Filmgalerie 451 is producing. The first feature film about the German painter Paula Modersohn-Becker is in the works from director Christian Schwochow. Carla Juri (WETLANDS) plays the role of the painter who became one of the most important representatives of German Expressionism and fought for her own self-realization. Pandora Film is producing PAULA. Oliver Dommenget is directing a piece of German economic history with DIE TURNSCHUH-GIGANTEN, which tells the stories of the development and rise of Adidas and Puma, with Ken Duken and Torben Liebrecht in the leading roles. Zeitsprung Pictures and G5 Fiction are producing the film for RTL.
OSCAR® WINNERS & CANDIDATE FROM GERMANY

The feature film LABYRINTH OF LIES by Giulio Ricciarelli is representing Germany as the official submission for the 88th Oscar® for the Best Foreign Language Film. The decision was made by an independent jury appointed by German Films. Beta Cinema has sold LABYRINTH OF LIES to 118 countries to date and it has already been released successfully in cinemas in Spain, Portugal, France, Belgium, Holland, Luxembourg and Israel. In France in particular, it has been one of the most successful German feature films of recent years, seen by audiences totaling 339,000 admissions thus far.

But even before the actual nominations (in January 2016), there was sensational news from the Student Academy Awards®. For the first time ever, all three medals in the Best Foreign Film category went to directors from Germany! Ilker Çatak received the prestigious award in Gold for his short FIDELITY (Hamburg Media School), Dustin Loose in Silver for THE LAST WILL [Filmakademie Baden-Württemberg], and Patrick Vollrath in Bronze for EVERYTHING WILL BE OKAY [DE/AT], which was made at the Vienna Film Academy.

HOW SHORT FILMS FIND THEIR AUDIENCE

The shortest day of the year is also a special day for short film. On December 21st, people in many different countries around the world celebrate the “short format”. The German edition of this special event, the SHORT FILM DAY, is taking place for the fourth time this year and setting on proven and new concepts. And anyone can participate and create their own short film event. Whether it be in a cinema or in more unusual locations like football stadiums, back courtyards, living rooms, phone booths or in refugee accommodations. The German Short Film Association, which organizes the German edition of the spectacle, counted over 200 events with more than 20,000 visitors in 2014. This year, young people will be in focus for the first time. The young initiative “We’ll Show You” gives 12 to 19-year-olds the opportunity to organize their own film event for the Short Film Day. Young talents can independently develop their own ideas, select the films, invite guests and carry out the event. Support is made available by the German Short Film Association in the form of comprehensive manuals. The three most fascinating, unusual and cleverest conceptual ideas will be awarded with 100 euros each. A new edition of last year’s success with the creative prize “The Lucky 8” and the cinema initiative “Three Friends” which supports cinemas in rural areas, will also be a part of this year’s events. The German State Minister for Culture and the Media, Monika Grütters, has already confirmed her patronage for the SHORT FILM DAY. More information is available at www.kurzfilmtag.com.
GERMAN SHORT FILM ASSOCIATION CELEBRATES ANNIVERSARY IN KIEV

The Long Night of German Short Films at the Molodist International Film Festival in Kiev is celebrating its 10th anniversary this fall. Since 2006, the German Short Film Association has been presenting a short film marathon with a selection of 30 German productions and the event has become a permanent program favorite. With support from German Films, German filmmakers travel to Kiev to present their films in person. This year’s anniversary program will be supplemented with an additional “best of” selection from previous years. The short film program EMERGING ARTISTS VOL. 2 will also be presented at Molodist, which is the oldest film festival in Ukraine and one of the most important industry meeting events in Eastern Europe. Since 2014, the German Short Film Association also offers workshops within the framework of the “Molodist Talent Workshops” for Ukrainian and German filmmakers. This fall, the information and discussion roundtable events with Andrea Wink (of the exGround Film Festival) will focus on the topics of film funding and international cooperations. New this year will be a workshop with the documentary filmmaker Jan Sobotka, who recently won the German Short Film Award. The aim of the workshop is to strengthen networking possibilities between German and Ukrainian filmmakers. The project is being supported by the German Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

THE PEOPLE VS. FRITZ BAUER A WORLD-WIDE FAVORITE

Lars Kraume’s THE PEOPLE VS. FRITZ BAUER won the UBS Prix du Public 2015 Audience Award at the 68th Festival del Film Locarno in August. The political thriller with Burghart Klaußner in the lead had its world premiere in front of an audience of more than 8,000 at the open-air screening on the Piazza Grande. The film then traveled to Toronto, where the lead actor, director and sales team were once again met by enthusiastic audiences and eager buyers! Beta Cinema has already sold the film to Italy, Spain, Benelux, Scandinavia, Greece, Israel, Argentina, and Japan, as well as France and Switzerland. Advanced negotiations are also underway with US distributors.

Other prizes in Locarno went to German-international co-productions: PARADISE (IR/DE) won the Ecumenical Prize and director Sina Ataeian Dena received the Swatch Art Peace Hotel Award. WONDERLAND by Lisa Blatter, Gregor Frei, Jan Gassmann, Benny Jaberg, Carmen Jaquier, Michael Krummenacher, Jonas Meier, Tobias Nolle, Lionel Rupp and Mike Scheiwiller (CH/DE) was awarded with the Third Prize of the Junior Jury Awards.

15 YEARS OF GERMAN FILMS IN BUENOS AIRES

Originally planned as the “little sister” of the popular Festival of German Films in Madrid, the event in Buenos Aires has long since developed into its very own success story with continuously growing and impressive admission figures. The 15th edition took place this year from 10 to 16 September and kicked off with the German candidate submitted for the Best Foreign Language Oscar®, LABYRINTH OF LIES, in the presence of the director Giulio Ricciarelli. VICTORIA lead actress Laia Costa also traveled to Buenos Aires and charmed the crowds with her passion and humor at lively Q&As. In total, 18 German feature films and the German Films short film program of NEXT GENERATION SHORT TIGER 2015 were shown. This year’s festival attracted some 6,400 enthusiastic cinema goers.
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2 DOCUMENTARIES
2 SHORTS
12 UPCOMING

28 new German productions are presented on the following 19 pages. Please visit our website www.german-films.de for more information on German features, documentaries and shorts.
ONE BREATH is the story of two women from different backgrounds but with the same desire: happiness. Elena, young, well-educated and with no perspective in her home-country Greece is trying to pursue a better life, away from her family and country. And Tessa, a thirtysomething mother and successful manager in Germany, married, is torn between happiness as an individual and a mother. These two women meet and their encounter changes both of their lives forever.

CHRISTIAN ZÜBERT was born in 1973 in Würzburg and studied German Philology before he became a scriptwriter and director. His films as a director include: LAMMBOCK – SHIT HAPPENS [2001], THE TREASURE OF THE WHITE FALCONS [2005], HARDCOVER [2008], THREE QUARTER MOON [2011], TOUR DE FORCE [2014], and ONE BREATH [2015]. He has also (co-)written the scripts for the films FANDANGO, GIRLS ON TOP, COMPLETE IDIOT, RED ZORA, and VICKY AND THE TREASURE OF THE GODS, among others.

GENRE Drama
YEAR OF PRODUCTION 2015
DIRECTOR Christian Zübert
SCREENPLAY İpek Zübert, Christian Zübert
CINEMATOGRAPHY Ngo The Chau
CAST Jördis Triebel, Chara Mata Giannatou, Benjamin Sadler
PRODUCER Ulf Israel
CO-PRODUCERS Costas Labropoulos, Josef Reidinger, Antonio Exacoustos, Bart van Gemert, Hubert von Spreti
PRODUCTION COMPANY Senator Film Köln, in co-production with View Master Productions, ARRI Media Productions, BVG Filmproduktion, BR
RUN TIME 110 min
LANGUAGE German, English, Greek
FESTIVALS Toronto 2015, Hof 2015

SALES
ARRI Media World Sales
aexacoustos@arri.de
mhemminger@arri.de
www.arriworldsales.de
The story of Mike Tyson. Not the boxer, a different one. It is not easy being a teenager and Mike, 16-years-old, is having the very worst of times. He lives with his mother Cynthia, a notorious nagger, in Faintville, a town based around the timber industry, set in its days and ways, deep in the Canadian forests. He has no father, no friends, not even a favorite food. Basically, his sole wish is to vanish from the face of the earth.

One day, Mike decides to put an end to the cynical joke that fate has played on him, or life as it is called in other words: he places his own obituary and shoots himself! To his greatest disappointment he wakes up the next day not in heaven but at the local hospital. And suddenly Mike’s fate takes a very different turn when, during a routine examination, the doctors discover a plum-sized tumor in his head. Mike can scarcely believe his luck and keeps the illness to himself so as to avoid undergoing the operation that would save him. Staring death directly in the eyes, however, changes Mike’s view of life. For example, it causes him to re-evaluate his opinion of the crazy and enchanting Miranda, the first human being who appears to understand him. And slowly but surely, Mike develops a completely new wish.

FLORIAN COSSEN was born in Tel Aviv in 1979 and spent his childhood in Israel, Canada, Spain and Costa Rica before completing high school in Germany. He began working as an assistant director before studying Film Directing at the Filmakademie Baden-Württemberg from 2002-2009. During that time he made several short films, including WOLF’S NIGHT and L’OUBLI (co-dir. Antonin Monmart). He was a visiting student at the Universidad del Cine in Buenos Aires in 2006 and received a scholarship to attend a Hollywood Perspective workshop at UCLA (2005). His features include THE DAY I WAS NOT BORN (2010) and COCONUT HERO (2015).

COCONUT HERO

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The Chilean coup of 1973. The masses are out on the street, protesting against General Pinochet. Amongst them, Daniel and Lena, a young couple, which, like many others, gets arrested by Pinochet’s secret police.

Shortly thereafter, Daniel finds himself trapped in a secret interrogation camp located underground, beneath the infamous Colonia Dignidad, a German sect following the leadership of the notorious Paul Schäfer. The Colonia presents itself as a charitable mission but, in fact, it is a place nobody ever escaped from. Desperate to rescue her boyfriend, Lena joins the mysterious cult, hoping to find Daniel there and make their way out. They eventually embark on a dramatic escape.

Based on true events.

COLONIA

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Based on true events.


GENRE Thriller
YEAR OF PRODUCTION 2015
DIRECTOR Florian Gallenberger
SCREENPLAY Torsten Wenzel, Florian Gallenberger
CINEMATOGRAPHY Kolja Brandt
CAST Emma Watson, Daniel Brühl, Michael Nyqvist, Richenda Carey, Vicky Krieps, Julian Ovenden, August Zirner, Martin Wuttke
PRODUCER Benjamin Herrmann
CO-PRODUCERS Nicolas Steil, Christian Becker, James Spring
PRODUCTION COMPANY Majestic Filmproduktion, in co-production with Iris Productions, Rat Pack Filmproduktion, REZO Productions, Fred Films Colonia
RUNTIME 110 min
LANGUAGE English
FESTIVALS Toronto 2015, Zurich 2015
SALES Beta Cinema
beta@betacinema.com
www.betacinema.com
Everyone loves Zeki Müller at the Goethe Comprehensive School, but he’s beginning to lose enthusiasm for his accidental vocation: waking up early, delinquent students and endless paperwork. And now, overly-ambitious principal Gerster has set her sights on stealing the Thailand school partnership away from the elite Schiller School. Her dream: to boost the image of her derelict school in order to become the model for the Ministry of Education’s new public campaign. Müller and Schnabelstedt are condemned to accompany the class on a trip to a remote Thai village.

Chantal, Zeynep, Danger & Co. are in prime form during their first trip abroad, rampantly displaying their full spectrum of social incompetence and cultural ignorance. And if that wasn’t enough already for Zeki, to have to deal with the constant teachers vs. students war, he also has to lead the charge against the snobby Schiller School and their pompous über-teacher, Hauke Wölki – whose sole goal is to end Müller’s career!

BORÁ DÁGTEKIN, born in Hanover in 1978, studied Screenwriting at the Filmakademie Baden-Württemberg, graduating in 2006 with an action version of Friedrich Schiller’s THE ROBBERS. In 2006 his first comedy also hit the big screen, WHERE IS FRED?! with Til Schweiger and Jürgen Vogel in the lead roles. In the same year, ARD first began broadcasting the prize-winning multicultural series TURKISH FOR BEGINNERS, which ran for three seasons (2006-2008) and was awarded two Nymphs at the television festival in Monaco, received the BANFF Award in Canada, the Grimme Prize, and the German Television Prize. In 2007, he wrote the pilots for DOCTOR’S DIARY, a series for RTL which also ran for three seasons and received numerous awards. His debut feature TURKISH FOR BEGINNERS – THE MOVIE was, with nearly 2.4 million tickets sold, the most successful German feature in 2012. The comedy, to which he also wrote the screenplay, received a Bambi Award, a Video Champion Award and the Bavarian Movie Audience Award 2013. He continued his collaboration with producer Lena Schömann and actor Elyas M’Barek with FACK JU GOEHTE – SUCK ME SHAKESPEER (2013), which booked over 7 million admissions in Germany alone, making it one of the four most successful German films of all times. The first FACK JU GOEHTE film won numerous prizes, including the Jupiter Award, a German Film Award, and the Bambi Award.

GENRE Comedy
YEAR OF PRODUCTION 2015
DIRECTOR Bora Dagtekin
SCREENPLAY Bora Dagtekin
CINEMATOGRAPHY Andreas Berger
CAST Elyas M’Barek, Jella Haase, Karoline Herfurth, Katja Riemann, Volker Bruch, Max von der Groeben, Gizem Emre, Aram Arami
PRODUCERS Lena Schömann, Bora Dagtekin
PRODUCTION COMPANY Constantin Film Produktion
RUNTIME 115 min
LANGUAGE German

SALES Picture Tree International yuan@picturetree-international.com www.picturetree-international.com
The story of 11-year-old Felix, whom nobody believes has “shrunk” the universally-hated school principal Dr. Schmitt-Gossenwein to a height of just 15 centimeters. Even he does not know how it happened and whether it maybe has something to do with the ghost of the school’s founder. But he now has the problem on his hands or, more accurately, in his backpack, because that is where the mini-principal is now and she is still ranting and raving. Together with his friend Ella and against his rival Mario and the latter’s father, Felix has to try everything to get her back to her normal size. If only she would just stop being so annoying!


GENRE Family Entertainment YEAR OF PRODUCTION 2015 DIRECTOR Sven Unterwaldt SCREENPLAY Gerrit Hermans CINEMATOGRAPHY Stephan Schuh CAST Oskar Kheim, Justus von Dohnányi, Axel Stein, Otto Waalkes, Lina Hüesker, Georg Sulzer PRODUCERS Corinna Mehner, Hans Eddy Schreiber CO-PRODUCERS Katja Dor-Helmer, Antonio Exacoustos, Kari Trier PRODUCTION COMPANY blue eyes Fiction, in co-production with Karibufilm, MINI Film, Deutsche Columbia Pictures, ARRI Media Productions RUNTIME 101 min LANGUAGE German

SALES ARRI Media World Sales aexacoustos@arri.de mhemminger@arri.de www.arriworldsales.de
Overweight, overworked, and disenchanted, German comedian and TV star Hape realizes he can’t keep on this way. He takes a six-month sabattical, and embarks on a pilgrimage on the St. James’ Way, the famed path to Santiago de Compostela. He sets out in search of... what, exactly? God? Truth? Peace? Himself? A film about finding and seeking – sometimes hilariously funny, sometimes moving and emotional.

Based on the best-selling book (translated into eleven languages) which helped launch the modern pilgrimage craze, I’M OFF THEN is a spiritual journey and inspiring travelogue, shot at some of the most beautiful historic locations in France and Spain. Filled with quirky fellow pilgrims and Kerkeling’s self-deprecating sense of humor, the film stars Devid Striesow (THE COUNTERFEITERS, YELLA, 3) and Martina Gedeck (THE LIVES OF OTHERS, THE BAADER MEINHOF COMPLEX) in the lead roles.

JULIA VON HEINZ was born in 1976 in Berlin. After a degree in Cinematography, she worked as an assistant to Rosa von Praunheim. In 2007 she founded Kings & Queens Filmproduktion with John Quester. Her films have won important awards including the German Film Award, Bavarian Television Award and Golden Sparrow and were shown at many international festivals. Her feature films include: WÄS A M ENDE ZÄH LT (2007), STANDES GEMÄSS (2008), HANNI & NANNI 2 (2011), ROSA KINDER (2013), an episode film with the directors Chris Kraus, Axel Ranisch, Robert Thalheim, and Tom Tykwer, HANNA’S JOURNEY (2013), and I’M OFF THEN (2015).

GENRE Road Movie
YEAR OF PRODUCTION 2015
DIRECTOR Julia von Heinz
SCREENPLAY Jane Ainscough, Christoph Silber, Sandra Nettelbeck, based on the novel by Hape Kerkeling
CINEMATOGRAPHY Felix Poplawsky
CAST Devid Striesow, Martina Gedeck, Karoline Schuch
PRODUCERS Nico Hofmann, Sebastian Werninger, Jochen Laube, Hermann Florin
PRODUCTION COMPANY UFA Cinema, in co-production with Warner Bros. Film Productions Germany, Gesellschaft für Feine Filme
RUNTIME 90 min
LANGUAGE German
SALES Global Screen
info@globalscreen.de
www.globalscreen.de
Cheeky little Raven accidentally destroyed the stocks the animals need to survive in the winter. To refill the storage, he sets out to win a soapbox car race and earn the prize money. But the tumultuous race through the forest is full of twists and surprises, and in the end Raven has gained something money can’t buy: he understands the value of teamwork, true friendship and responsibility...


GENRE Animation, Children & Youth

YEAR OF PRODUCTION 2015

DIRECTORS Ute von Münchow-Pohl, Sandor Jesse

SCREENPLAY Katja Grübel, based on the books by Nele Moost & Annet Rudolph

PRODUCER Dirk Beinhold

PRODUCTION COMPANY Akkord Film, in co-production with SWR, NDR, HR, Universum Film

RUNTIME 73 min

LANGUAGE English/German

FESTIVALS Giffoni 2015, Busan 2015

SALES Sola Media
post@sola-media.com
www.sola-media.com
Daniel knows exactly what women want: Supreme self-confidence and rock-hard muscles – everything Daniel is not, because his hippie parents raised him to be a wuss and women’s darling. But then, on vacation in Turkey, a miracle happens: Charming Aylin, with whom the whole resort is in love, takes a shine to him, of all people – the pansy, the softie intellectual. Bull’s eye! Daniel is in seventh heaven, but back in Germany, he’s confronted with cold, hard facts again. How can a sissy survive in a world of macho men? Only one thing to do: He takes a crash course in machismo by none other than Aylin’s brother Cem. Some cool new threads, Turkish discos, laughing at dirty jokes and flirting with Aylin’s cousins? No problem for Daniel, who’s starting to enjoy his new role more and more. With his newly burnished manhood, he manages to score with Aylin’s family, but with unintended effects on his better half...


CHRISTOF WAHL has worked together with such filmmakers as Til Schweiger, Wim Wenders, Tom Tykwer and Michael Ballhaus, and served as DoP (and sometimes co-director) for such award-winning German films as 1 1/2 RITTER, RABBIT WITHOUT EARS, KOKOWÄÄH, FACK JU GÖHTE – SUCk ME SHAKESPEER, CALL HER LOTTE, GESCHWISTERLIEBE, and HALF BROTHERS, as well as such international projects as BODY ARMOUR, OPERATION WALKURE, UNKNOWN, and WITCH HUNTERS. MACHO MAN is his directorial debut.

GENRE Comedy YEAR OF PRODUCTION 2015 DIRECTOR Christof Wahl SCREENPLAY Moritz Netenjakob, Roger Schmelzer CINEMATOGRAPHY Christof Wahl CAST Christian Ulmen, Aylin Tezel, Axel Stein, Dar Salim, Lukas Podolski PRODUCERS Marc Conrad, Jan S. Kaiser, Klaus Dohle PRODUCTION COMPANIES ConradFilm, Bavaria Pictures, Erfttal Film- und Fernsehproduktion RUNTIME 100 min LANGUAGE German

SALES Global Screen info@globalscreen.de www.globalscreen.de
A fairy tale land in the early Middle Ages has a dragon issue: the Duke announces a tournament to find the best knight who will fight against it. In exchange, the lucky winner will have a wish granted. Meanwhile, 10-year-old Trenk – peasant and property of evil Sir Wertolt – saves his pet piglet from the mean knight, but cannot prevent his father from being thrown into Wertolt’s dungeon. Trenk does not hesitate a minute: he must learn to fight so that he can free his family.

In the city, he embraces the unique opportunity to swap places with Zink, a cowardly page who doesn’t want to fight. Attacked again by Wertolt, Trenk is now saved by young Thekla von Hohenlob, the mistress of Hohenlob Castle. Due to unforeseen circumstances, Trenk has to replace Thekla’s father in the tournament. Trenk loses and Wertolt has to defeat the dragon, but it wins hands down. Or nearly: Trenk and Thekla have followed the dragon into the beast’s lair, where they are pushed in and locked up by the tirelessly wicked Wertolt. However, during their ordeals, the youngsters discover another side of the dragon that explains its tempestuous behavior...

ANTHONY POWER was born in Waterford/Ireland and studied Art & Design at WRTC. After working as a graphic designer and illustrator, he started working in animation. His films as a director include the series URMEL, RENADA, MIA & ME and the title sequence for the award-winning series SIMSALLAGRIMM, the features UNDER THE BLACK FLAG and TRENK, THE LITTLE KNIGHT.

GENRE Animation, Family Entertainment
YEAR OF PRODUCTION 2015
DIRECTOR Anthony Power
SCREENPLAY Gerrit Hermans
PRODUCERS Corinna Mehner, Gisela Schäfer
CO-PRODUCERS Danny Krausz, Bernhard zu Castell, Jörg von den Steinen
PRODUCTION COMPANIES blue eyes Fiction, WunderWerk, in co-production with Dor Film, Universum Film, ZDF
RUN TIME 80 min
LANGUAGE English
FESTIVALS Busan 2015, Warsaw 2015
SALES Global Screen
info@globalscreen.de
www.globalscreen.de
TORO

Toro, whose real name is Piotr, came to Germany 10 years ago, where he works as an escort, hoping to save money to return to Poland with his best friend Victor. But Victor has sold his dreams for drugs. When three small-time criminals are out to get him, Toro’s and Victor’s hostile environment loses its balance and their longstanding friendship is put to the test.

MARTIN HAWIE was born in 1975 in Lima/Peru. He studied Audiovisual Communication in Lima and Directing in Barcelona. During his studies, his photographic works were exhibited in Barcelona and Los Angeles and he worked as a freelance art director for commercials. In 2011 he enrolled at the Academy of Media Arts Cologne for post-graduate studies. His films include: IN SEARCH OF DIFFERENT COLORS (doc, 2011), IN THE END OF A NIGHT (short, 2012), CAMILLE (2013), and TORO (2015).

GENRE Drama YEAR OF PRODUCTION 2015
DIRECTOR Martin Hawie SCREENPLAY Laura Harwarth, Martin Hawie CINEMATOGRAPHY Brendan Uffelmann CAST Paul Wollin, Miguel Dagger, Leni Speidel, Kelvin Burkard, Christian Wagner, David Hürten, Judith Jakob, Suzan Erentok, Florian Anderer PRODUCER Laura Harwarth PRODUCTION COMPANY Kunsthochschule für Medien Köln (KHM) RUNTIME 83 min LANGUAGE German, Spanish FESTIVALS Montreal 2015, Hof 2015

SALES
Kunsthochschule für Medien Köln (KHM) dilger@khm.de
www.khm.de
Christmas is approaching, and with it, the desire for harmony, beauty, light and hope. Being unable to cope with her parents’ conflict, Alex (16) makes a radical decision. A day later she finds herself in the adolescent psychiatric emergency unit. There she meets three other young people: Lara (17), the striking daughter from an academic family, who’s having acid flashbacks; shy Fedja (16), who is being bullied at school; and violent Timo (17), who has just been moved from the closed ward. Under the care of the young psychiatrist Dr. Wolff (38), they will spend a Christmas together that none of them will ever forget.

THERESA VON ELTZ grew up near Cologne and studied History at Oxford University and Fiction Directing at the National Film & Television School in Beaconsfield. Her first short film GECKO was nominated for a Golden Bear at the Berlinale in 2007. Since then, her works have concentrated on award-winning documentaries and commercials. FOUR KINGS is her feature debut.

GENRE Drama
YEAR OF PRODUCTION 2015
DIRECTOR Theresa von Eltz
SCREENPLAY Esther Bernstorff, Theresa von Eltz
CINEMATOGRAPHY Kristian Leschner
CAST Paula Beer, Jella Haase, Moritz Leuwöhner
PRODUCERS Benjamin Seikel, Florian Schmidt-Prange
PRODUCTION COMPANIES C-FILMS (Germany), Tatami Films, in co-production with ZDF Das kleine Fernsehspiel, in cooperation with ARTE
RUN TIME 98 min
LANGUAGE German
FESTIVALS Rome 2015 (Alice nella Città)

SALES
C-FILMS (Germany)
lerch@c-films.de
www.c-films.de
Dorothea, an aid worker with a humanitarian organization, has launched a project to help the people of a land menaced by civil war. The luxury of her wealthy world finds a cynical reflection in the poverty evident all around. Then she embarks upon an affair with the much younger Alec, who seems to be simply an attractive 24-year-old Arab drifter. Their two worlds collide, impelled by their mutual lust for adventure. What appears to be reality becomes unbalanced, raising the question of having and being. Who exactly is helping whom? As her passion increases, Dorothea loses control, jeopardizing not only the project, but also her life.

ISABELLE STEVER was born in 1963 in Munich. After studying Mathematics in Berlin and New York, she studied Directing at the German Academy of Film & Television (dffb) in Berlin. Her films include: the award-winning features PORTRAIT OF A MARRIED COUPLE (2002), GISELA (2005), BLESSED EVENTS (2010), an episode of the omnibus film GERMANY '09 (2009), and THE WEATHER INSIDE (2015).

GENRE Drama YEAR OF PRODUCTION 2015 DIRECTOR Isabelle Stever SCREENPLAY Isabelle Stever CINEMATOGRAPHY Phillip Kaminik CAST Maria Furtwängler, Mehmet Sözer, Anne von Keller, Dorka Gryllus, Barbara Bouchet, Jim Broadbent PRODUCER Ingmar Trost CO-PRODUCER Jörg Schulze PRODUCTION COMPANY Sutor Kolonko, in co-production with cine plus Filmproduktion RUNTIME 96 min LANGUAGE German, English, Arabic FESTIVALS Zurich 2015

SALES Beta Cinema beta@betacinema.com www.betacinema.com
The village of Tam aquito lies in the forests of Colombia. Here, nature provides the people with everything they need. But the Wayúu community’s way of life is being destroyed by the vast and rapidly growing El Cerrejón coal mine. Determined to save his community from forced resettlement, Jairo Fuentes negotiates with the mine’s operators, backed by powerful resources companies such as Glencore and BHP Billiton, and communicating with their representatives isn’t easy. The villagers are promised the blessings of progress, but the Wayúu place no value on modern, electrified houses – on the so-called better life. Instead, they embark on a fight to save their life in the forest, which soon becomes a fight to survive.


“Sharp senses, lethal bite” – The unmanned war robots are modelled after their counterparts in the animal kingdom. They can spot every movement of mice and men in the water, on land and in the air. And they can kill. Autonomously. Does this war technology provides us with essential information and security, as the industry and governments promise, or are they paving the way for a state with absolute control over its citizens? Who bears responsibility for their actions – and their mistakes? How does the notion of “a soldier’s honor” change when operators thousands of kilometers away sit in front of computers and only monitor the missions carried out by the machines? And what about those below, the people in the crosshairs? This evolution is already changing warfare, civilian life and our notions of ethics, and, in effect, our status as humans in this world. Will machines ultimately become the more decisive decision-makers?


SALES MAGNETFILM georg.gruber@magnetfilm.de www.magnetfilm.de

KRIEG UND SPIELE

WAR AND GAMES

DUCER Birgit Schulz PRODUCTION COMPANY Bildersurm Filmproduktion, in co-production with ZDF/3sat RUNTIME 90 min LANGUAGE German, English, Hebrew

SALES Bildersurm Filmproduktion info@bildersturm-film.de www.bildersturm-film.de
ERLEDIGUNG EINER SACHE

THE LAST WILL

In order to fulfill the last will of his mother, the young Jakob Adler needs to meet his biological father, who was committed to a forensic psychiatric hospital over 25 years ago for murdering his own brother. But first, Jakob wishes to speak with the doctor in charge, Dr. Weiss, and then reveals the true scale of the tragedy that happened so long ago.

DUSTIN LOOSE was born in 1986 in Bonn. He began working in the theater in 2001 as an actor and director’s assistant, followed by his first theater productions and short films. He studied Directing/Scenic Film at the Filmakademie Baden-Württemberg from 2007-2014. His films include: the feature ROLLTREPPE ABWÄRTS (2006), and the short films DAS SCHUHWERK VON SOLDATEN (2008), PERSONENSCHADEN (2009), DIE HAND VOR AUGEN (2011), ZU RISIKEN UND NEBENWIRKUNGEN (2013), and ERLEDIGUNG EINER SACHE (2014).

SADAKAT

FIDELITY

Istanbul 2014 – A tense environment with demonstrations due to political repression: Asli gives shelter to a young political activist who got into a fight with the cops. The police investigate the case and end up questioning Asli’s family. Her husband gets drawn into the affair. Their lives, and also their son’s, start to become compromised. The situation escalates, as Asli is not willing to cooperate with the investigators.

A story about interpersonal ruptures during troubled times and the longing for safety. But, above it all, it is a story about courage.

ILKER ÇATAK was born in 1984 in Berlin and studied Film and TV Directing in Berlin and Mittweida. Since 2012, he has been a postgraduate student at the Hamburg Media School. He has directed several commercials and the short films FIDELITY (2014), WHERE WE ARE (2013), OLD SCHOOL (2013), and WHEN NAMIBIA WAS A CITY (2010).

CAST Sanem Öge, Özer Arslan, Baris Gönenen

PRODUCER Alexandra Staib

PRODUCTION COMPANY Hamburg Media School, in co-production with BR

RUNTIME 25 min

LANGUAGE Turkish


AWARDS Best Fiction Film Kraljevo 2015, Best Editing Short Film German Cinematography Award 2015, Studio Hamburg Newcomer Award 2015, Audience Award Wendlandshorts 2015, Producer Award Sehüchte 2015, Best Short Saarbrücken 2015, Student Oscar® 2015 [Gold], First Steps Award 2015

SALES Hamburg Media School

a.schmuck@hamburgmediaschool.com

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Bringing the best new films from Germany to the world ...
AUF AUGENHÖHE

11-year-old Michi lives in a children’s home, every day fighting to win the respect of the other kids, till the day he finds his real dad, Tom – who happens to be a dwarf, even shorter than Michi is, the opposite of his idea of manliness and strength. When the kids find out, Michi’s life becomes hell and he flees. With nowhere to go, he moves in with Tom, who is new to this fatherhood thing, while Michi tries to hide his embarrassment and shame from his fellow school kids. This forces Tom, who had coped well till now, to confront his handicap head on. As time passes, they discover they have more in common than other sons and fathers, until their relationship is again suddenly put to the hard test...

GENRE Children & Youth CATEGORY Feature
DIRECTORS Evi Goldbrunner, Joachim Dollhopf
SCREENPLAY Evi Goldbrunner, Joachim Dollhopf, Nicole Armbruster
CAST Luis Vorbach, Jordan Prentice, Mira Bartuschek, Anica Dobra
PRODUCERS Martin Richter, Christian Becker
PRODUCTION COMPANIES Rat Pack Filmproduktion, Martin Richter Filmproduktion
LANGUAGE German
CONTACT Rat Pack Filmproduktion
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JONATHAN

A graduate of the Offenbach College of Design, Piotr J. Lewandowski has made his directorial debut with JONATHAN (working-title) based on an award-winning screenplay. The moving drama about family secrets and the obstacles to achieving one’s own happiness features Jannis Niewöhner, one of this year’s European Shooting Stars, in the title role of the 24-year-old Jonathan. The young man is caring unstintingly for his terminally-ill father Burghardt, but then sees his life in a new light after falling in love with Anka, who has come to nurse his father. However, the story takes another twist when Ron, Burghardt’s long-lost friend from his youth, re-appears – and a well-kept family secret is uncovered....

GENRE Drama CATEGORY Feature
DIRECTOR Piotr J. Lewandowski
SCREENPLAY Piotr J. Lewandowski
CAST Jannis Niewöhner, André Hennicke, Julia Koschitz, Thomas Sarbacher, Barbara Auer, Max Mauff, Leon Seidel
PRODUCERS Alexandra Kordes, Meike Kordes
PRODUCTION COMPANY Kordes & Kordes Film, in co-production with SWR, HR, WDR, ARTE
LANGUAGE German
CONTACT Kordes & Kordes Film
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www.kordesfilm.de

DAS KALTE HERZ

The Black Forest in a mythical time before time itself. Peter and Lisbeth are two young but sadly ill-starred lovers – she is of wealthy, noble stock while he is poor and from the lower orders. To become rich and achieve what he believes to be the necessary standing, Peter makes an infernal pact with Dutch Michael, whereby his heart is replaced by a stone. Robbed of all warmth and feeling, indeed, his very humanity, Peter becomes a risk-taker. He rapidly comes close to achieving his goal, gaining riches and respect. But Lisbeth no longer recognizes Peter as the man she once loved and turns against him. There is only one way for him to win her back, Peter must regain his heart.

GENRE Adventure, Fantasy, Love Story CATEGORY Feature
DIRECTOR Johannes Naber
SCREENPLAY Johannes Naber, Christian Zipperle, Andreas Marschall, Steffen Reuter
CAST Frederick Lau, Henriette Confurius, David Schütter, Moritz Bleibtreu, Milan Peschel, Sebastian Blomberg, André Hennicke, Rooland Wiesnekker, Jule Böwe
PRODUCERS Steffen Reuter, Christoph Fisser, Henning Molfenter, Charlie Weebcken
PRODUCTION COMPANY SCHMIDTZ KATZE FILMKOLLEKTIV, in co-production with Studio Babelsberg, SWR, ARD Degeto, MDR
LANGUAGE German
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KUNDSCHAFTER DES FRIEDENS

Germany 2015. Four very retired, ex-GDR spies, or “Kundschafter des Friedens” as they were officially named, led by the once legendary Jochen Falk, are called on by the German government. Their mission is to rescue the interim president of the divided Republic of Katsche-kistan, who has been kidnapped by separatists, along with Berlin’s official man on the ground, Franz Kern. To keep Jochen and his maybe no longer so crack team under control, all of whom are determined to prove they were treated unfairly by history, they are put under the command of the young and enthusiastic BND agent Paula Kern. But what neither she nor her bosses back at HQ know, Jochen and his friends still have a score to settle with Franz, Paula’s father.

LOMO – THE LANGUAGE OF MANY OTHERS

DFB graduate Julia Langhof has made her feature directorial debut with LOMO – THE LANGUAGE OF MANY OTHERS which was produced as part of the “Leuchtstoff” initiative launched by the Medienboard Berlin-Brandenburg and public broadcaster RBB in 2012. The screenplay centers on the 17-year-old blogger Karl who spends most of his time gathering images and videos for his blog “The Language of Many Others”. Life suddenly seems to have a purpose when he falls in love with fellow student Doro, but he suffers crushing disappointment when she drops him. Disillusioned, Karl lets his life increasingly be controlled by his “followers” in a dangerous game between life and death.

DIE MITTE DER WELT

This summer has seen Berlin-based filmmaker Jakob M. Erwa making a long-cherished dream come true by bringing Andreas Steinhöfel’s best-selling 1998 novel The Center of The World to the cinema screen in his third feature film. The coming-of age-tale centers on 17-year-old Phil who lives with his non-conformist mother Glass and twin sister Dianne in a crumbling mansion on the edge of town. When not poring over books in the library at home, Phil spends time with his best friend Kat going shopping or just hanging out. But this all changes when the school term begins again and his sights fall on Nicholas, the enigmatic new boy in class, with whom he embarks on a passionate affair...
NELLYS ABENTEUER

Thirteen-year-old Nelly’s holiday in Romania takes a very dramatic turn when she accidentally discovers her family’s secret plan to relocate there. Running away to avoid the reality of her fate, she walks straight into the hands of kidnappers! Their leader is an unscrupulous German engineer, plotting to destroy her father’s energy project by forcing the family to leave the country. Together with the help of the mysterious Mr. Holzinger, Nelly’s parents mount a desperate search for their daughter. Nelly, in turn, befriends two young Roma siblings, Tibi and Roxana, who aid her in her adventurous escape. Together, they cross mountains and rivers, flee from a dungeon, board a moving train, ‘borrow’ a car and become the heroes of the day!

ROBBI, TOBBI UND DAS FLIEWATÜÜT

This is the story of Toby, the most creative 11-year-old child and inventor you can think of. One day, the little robot Robbie enters into his life. He’s been separated from his robot parents when his spaceship crashed and now he’s looking for them. Toby decides to offer his help and the two of them become friends. Team up, they build an invention that can fly, float, and drive on a road – a fantastic Voyager especially designed to help their search. Meanwhile, the unscrupulous Sir Joshua and his super bad agents are hot on their heels, wanting to use Robbie and the fantastic Voyager for their own evil plans. But even super bad agents should never, ever underestimate the power of best friends!

DER SWIMMINGPOOL AM GOLAN

Actress Esther Zimmering’s directorial debut covers three generations of German-Jewish life in Germany, the GDR and Israel. Using archive footage and interviews with her family members, Zimmering uncovers the secrets and inconsistencies in her family’s history. A history which saw Esther’s grandmother Lizzi and her cousin, great-aunt Lore, being the only ones in the family to survive the Holocaust and then become involved in the creation of two new states – constructing Socialism in the former GDR or as part of the Kibbutz movement in Israel. Are those ideals still kept alive in their descendants today?
TIMM THALER ODER DAS VERKAUFTE LACHEN

After directing films as diverse as GRILL POINT and SUMMER IN BERLIN, Andreas Dresen is now making his first foray into family entertainment with a big screen adaptation of James Krüss’ 1962 novel which has been the director’s favorite book since his childhood days. 12-year-old Berliner Arved Friese has been cast in the title role as TIMM THALER who trades his enchanting laughter to the mysterious Baron Lefuet (played by actor-director Justus von Dohnányi) in exchange for the ability to win any bet he makes. However, Timm soon realizes that a person is not complete without laughter, but Lefuet is not that easy to outwit when he tries to regain this gift of laughter...

VORSTADTROCKER

Martina Plura’s feature-length debut focuses on the former investigative journalist Viktor facing a frustrating existence as a house-husband who is caring for his one-year-old daughter Nele while his veterinary surgeon wife Alex brings home the bacon. Viktor sees his chance of landing a big story when Rolf Olsen, the former gang leader of the Devil Bros., moves in next door under an assumed name. Viktor makes friends with his new neighbor in order to gather concrete evidence of Olsen’s past for his former editor. But Viktor’s actions put his marriage on the line and inadvertently help the hostile biker gang to trace Olsen to the sleepy suburbs...

DIE WILDEN KERLE – DIE LEGENDE LEBT

To this very day, kids believe stories of the WILD SOCCER BUNCH are the best in the whole world. That’s why Leo, Elias, Finn, Joshua, Oskar and Matse, all 8 to 12 years old, replay their heroes’ legendary games every spare minute. One day a darkly dressed young man hands them a mysterious map which leads the boys into unknown territory. Here they realize they’re in the middle of Wild Bunch country and that they have been chosen to be the successors of the real, now grown-up Wild Soccer Bunch. Now Leo and Co. have to start training, activate coach Willi, the best coach of them all, get the Devil’s Gulch pitch ready and deal with the fact that they’re joined by a seventh “man”, Müller, who happens to be a girl... Are they wild enough to succeed?
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 Deutsche Kinemathek, the German Documentary Association, FilmFernsehFonds Bayern, Film- und Medienstiftung NRW, Medienboard Berlin-Brandenburg, and the German Short Film Association.

German Films’ budget of presently €4.55 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, Film- und Medienstiftung 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.

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

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

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Bernhard Simek Regional Coordinator: Eastern Europe & Australia, Documentary Film
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RANGE OF ACTIVITIES
- Close cooperation with major international film festivals, including Berlin, Cannes, Venice, San Sebastian, Locarno, Rome, Karlovy Vary, Montreal, Toronto, New York, Shanghai, Warsaw, Moscow, and Busan
- Organization of umbrella stands for German sales companies and producers at international television and film markets (Berlin, Cannes, AFM Los Angeles, Shanghai, Toronto, Clermont-Ferrand, Annecy)
- Staging of Festivals of German Films in selected international territories in cooperation with the Goethe-Institut
- Staging of industry screenings in key international territories
- Providing advice and information for representatives of the international press and buyers from the fields of cinema, home entertainment, and television
- Providing advice and information for German filmmakers and press on international festivals, conditions of participation, and German films being shown
- Organization of the annual Next Generation Short Tiger short film program, which presents a selection of shorts and is internationally premiered at Cannes
- Publication of informational literature about current German films and the German film industry, as well as international market analyses and special festival brochures
- A website (www.german-films.de) offering information about new German films, a film archive, information and links to German and international film festivals and institutions
- Organization of the selection procedure for the German entry for the Oscar® for Best 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
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