THE FALL ISSUE

DIRECTORS NIELS LAUPERT & THERESA VON ELTZ
PRODUCERS THOMAS KUFUS & VOLKER HEISE of ZERO ONE FILM
ACTRESS LIV LISA FRIES
Welcome to Blockbuster Street”, says Niels Laupert, laughing as he welcomes me to the office of his company Jumpseat Filmproduktion, located in a salesroom on one of Berlin-Mitte’s most idyllic streets. Two other filmmakers, responsible for some of the biggest mainstream hits of German cinema in recent years, live in the immediate neighborhood. “All just coincidence,” Laupert says in denial when asked whether there is a connection between this choice of location and his colleagues’ success.

Laupert’s new film WHATEVER HAPPENS – the first since his debut with SEVEN DAYS SUNDAY ten years ago – tells a love story with no resemblance to the cheery comic monotony with which German cinema often seeks to win over mass audiences. But nor does this view of the broken relationship, told on various levels of time, between Julian (Fahri Yardım) and Hannah (Sylvia Hoeks) have anything in common with what Laupert calls “great German arthouse cinema.”

“Unfortunately, there is not much between those two poles in cinema here,” says the filmmaker who has chosen to live in Berlin and to adopt more of a middle approach. And in this case, that has nothing to do with doing things by halves, but with the right perspective. “I wanted to make a film that tells its story profoundly but also has light, entertaining moments without ultimately slipping into toilet humor. It was vital for me that the characters take themselves seriously, and I also wanted to show a baby that doesn’t automatically pee in someone’s face the minute it appears on screen. Nevertheless, viewers ought to find the film accessible in ways that don’t just demand an intellectual approach.”

WHATEVER HAPPENS is the first film by Jumpseat Filmproduktion, which Laupert founded together with his close friend Benjamin Grosch, a strategy advisor, in 2013. However, it was actually born of necessity. There were problems (as yet) funding another, much more complicated project, not least due to its setting abroad during the period of the First World War. “That felt as though I had lost four years of my time,” Laupert says, who had a subsequent rethink and looked out for a small story that could be realized with as few protagonists and locations as possible. “I always see an opportunity when things don’t work out – and in every farewell, which is dealt with thematically in WHATEVER HAPPENS, of course.”

In this case, the director also came across his leading actors almost by chance. Initially, he had not considered Yardım, who has made a name for himself in films primarily
as a joker recently. But once again, a fresh perspective helped. Rather than looking at the demo-tape, Laupert watched a video on YouTube showing a laudatio the actor gave when presenting a prize for integration: “I noticed then how much warmth and intelligence Fahri has – and that he usually plays roles in which he doesn’t use his immense abilities to the full.” He had already encountered Hoeks at the start of both of their careers, at the film festival in Sofia/Bulgaria, where Laupert was showing his crime drama SEVEN DAYS SUNDAY – as well as in Rotterdam, Tribeca or Warsaw. He was very taken by the Dutch actress’ presence (she is currently attracting international attention with BLADE RUNNER 2049); it was fortuitous that she also speaks German.

Although they were not looking specifically for a foreign leading actress for their film, it is no secret that Laupert and his business partner at Jumpseat very consciously try to see beyond the narrow boundaries of Germany. Among other things, they are currently pushing the development of an English-language series in Berlin. The two see their chance in a new global market for quality entertainment – and not least Laupert, with his experience of festivals, enthuses about the opportunities offered by international co-productions: “Such joint projects always open up fresh perspectives – and nothing is more important for filmmakers than to keep on changing the way they look at things.”

Born in Frankfurt, he himself learned to enjoy changes in perspective during his study course at the University of Television and Film in Munich. As from 1997 he studied production there, only to re-register thanks to a special dispensation – after four years and a successful diploma thesis entitled “The Producer Between Businessman and Artist”. This time, his chosen subject was direction. “Before my studies, I thought that you were only capable of becoming a director if you were a driven artist like Scorsese, and I was always rather a lazy pupil,” Laupert recalls. In his youth he had read about Bernd Eichinger and was so impressed that it triggered his own desire to study production. “But then I learned a huge amount about directing there, simply because you work together with such a large number of directors. And later, when studying direction, I was able to see how important the right attitude and the process of convincing people can be with regards to funding, and that the director can and must also play a decisive part in that.”

At Jumpseat, where among other things an English-language love story and a German coming-of-age story are in development, the intention is for Laupert’s skill in the unusual double function of director/author and producer to bear fruit beyond WHATEVER HAPPENS. The question of what success means exactly is also a question of perspective, of course. “Naturally, as a filmmaker you dream about a big audience. To make films just for yourself is the most expensive form of onanism, as one of my professors always said to us in warning,” the 42-year-old declares, with a view to the future. “But there is a difference whether you make films because you think that the masses will enjoy them, or whether you have the sense that what moves you personally might also move other people. The latter is what continues to drive me.”

Patrick Heidmann
AN EMPATHETIC STORYTELLER

A PORTRAIT OF DIRECTOR THERESA VON ELTZ

Theresa von Eltz needs changes of scenery. It’s true that the filmmaker, whose directing debut 4 KINGS generated an international sensation, lives in Berlin – currently, however, she also has a “little place to stay” in Vienna, where she is working on new projects. “I love to explore new cities, I seem to require it for my creativity,” she says.

Born in the Rhineland, she has always been curious and enjoyed an adventure. When only 19 she applied to the documentary filmmaking course at the University of Television and Film in Munich, submitting a document about an Albanian woman from the Kosovo, LULJETTA. She was invited to interview but at the time she was considered too young. And so she studied History and Political Science in Berlin first and completed a Master’s degree in Oxford, more from interest than in preparation for a profession.

After graduating, she applied again to every conceivable film school, receiving two offers of admission: she decided in favor of the National Film & Television School in Beaconsfield/England.

“There, they took a sensitive and careful look at the individual, and supported the directors in their approaches to storytelling,” she says, explaining her choice. Another deciding factor was two teachers there who are themselves legendary filmmakers, Stephen Frears and Ken Loach. “I learned a great deal from both of them,” she says, and adds with a smile, “but they were also very strict.” Frears paid most attention to dramaturgy, “He didn’t hold back with criticism and he also fell asleep in the editing room quite regularly,” the director recalls, “then I knew that something was amiss with the pace of my work”. In contrast, Loach was concerned about how the students worked with actors.

“They supported me and made huge demands,” she says, but the academy was also important for her because it offered the structure and means to make her first films.

Theresa von Eltz chose a screenplay by author Esther Bernstorff for her full-length film debut. 4 KINGS tells the story of four youths sent to a youth psychiatric unit’s crisis center over Christmas in order to avoid escalating conflict at home. “I was immediately interested in the situation, that is, in Christmas at a youth psychiatric unit,” von Eltz says. She was able to relate to the characters and to empathize. “I myself come from a big family and I have worked with difficult youngsters.” To the present day, she accompanies handicapped and sick children on holiday once a year. This is a time that helps to ground her because “I am interrelating with people with whom I feared the contact at first, but who have taught me a lot.
about life and above all about happiness in misfortune”. It is possible to sense this empathy, this view of life from a different perspective in every moment of 4 KINGS.

She sees the greatest challenges of direction as being in realizing – with great sensitivity – the screenplay through moving (in both senses of the word) images, and in the right casting for the characters. “But it’s not just a question of having a good film at the end; it’s also about cultivating an interesting and challenging atmosphere during shooting, and continuing to develop personally.”

The four young leading actors, Jella Haase, Paula Beer, Jannis Niewöhner and Moritz Leu, were at the threshold to adulthood themselves during the shooting in winter 2014. “I caught them in the final moments of their youth, and something very special emerged as a result. They gave 100% of themselves, and that’s only possible when you are able to trust one another 100%. That is also the director’s task. Empathizing with the characters is something that’s impossible to learn, either you can or you can’t. Ultimately, this can distinguish directors considerably.”

And this emotional awareness is shown during shooting work, e.g. when von Eltz, for the rape scene in a TV crime story, first played through the scene herself and so enabled the 14-year-old actress to overcome her nervousness. “It was important for me to experience what it feels like, putting myself in the situation and so understanding exactly what I am demanding from my young actress. I can only create trust in this way. Behind the camera, otherwise, you are very much protected.”

4 KINGS celebrated its world premiere at the Rome film festival, where it won an award as Best Directing Debut, and later it also received the German Film Award in bronze. “A lot changed following those prizes,” the director says. “Before that, you are just as passionate but you have very few opportunities to make films because the industry doesn’t know you or have faith in you. Film festivals, film awards and a bit of attention are really helpful in that sense. In addition, you have to follow a long and rocky path first. For some, this path is shorter, and for others it may be longer.”

Currently, she is preparing her next TV film and working on two lots of material for the cinema, a tragicomedy and an historical drama. She also finds the world of series very exciting. She enjoys the artistic freedom that cinema productions offer her by comparison to films for television.

Despite her training in Great Britain, first of all she intends to remain true to German film. “The idea of an international production is very stimulating, certainly, but that’s a big step,” she says. “I prefer to take small steps.” Anyway, the content is more relevant for the filmmaker than the country of production. “The main thing is, you tell good stories.”

Thomas Abeltshauser
Making a Mark

Portrait of the Production Company Zero One Film

Over the past 27 years, Thomas Kufus of Berlin-based zero one film has independently produced more than 120 documentaries, TV series and feature films as diverse as Lars Kraume’s Lola-winning THE PEOPLE VS. FRITZ BAUER, Christian Schwochow’s WEST, Andres Veiel’s BLACK BOX GERMANY and BEUYS through Corinna Belz’s GERHARD RICHTER PAINTING and Markus Imhoof’s MORE THAN HONEY to Aleksandr Sokurov’s highly-acclaimed MOLOCH, FATHER AND SON and FRANCOFONIA.

Together with partner Volker Heise, who joined the company in 2008 with his creative input, he has also explored new avenues of factual entertainment for television with such series as BLACK FOREST HOUSE 1902, ADVENTURE 1900 – LIFE IN A MANOR and OUR 19-FIFTIES.

Ground-Breaking Format

Furthermore, Kufus threw the gauntlet to public broadcasters when he and Volker Heise proposed the format for 24H BERLIN which saw TV channels abandoning the traditional schedule structure over a whole day for a 24-hour documentary. This multimedia documentary project chronicling a day in the life of a European metropolis was shot all day and night throughout Berlin on 5 September 2008 and aired exactly a year later over 24 hours without any breaks. The format’s success encouraged Kufus and Heise to create a follow-up – this time 24H JERUSALEM – which was broadcast on 12 April 2014, and then 24H BAVARIA which aired on German TV screens in 2016.

“We are now planning a fourth format entitled 24H EUROPE - NEXT GENERATION, where the focus will be on the young people of the so-called Generation Y and will follow 24 young Europeans between 15 and 30 and explore their vision of a future Europe.”

While zero one had already made quite a name for itself in the international arthouse scene with films by the likes of Andres Veiel, Aleksandr Sokurov, Stefan Schwietert and Corinna Belz, the success of the 24H format as a unique broadcasting event thrust the Berlin-based outfit even more into the international spotlight.
“The associated social media activities are particularly important for such event productions and that definitely made the company’s name even better known internationally,” Kufus explains. “What’s more: we have amassed a special kind of know-how of how to deliver such a level of high-quality television punctually to fill 24 hours of a schedule.”

POLITICAL AND POLARIZING

“Our feature documentaries have invariably centered on politically polarizing subjects,” he notes. “This was the case, for example, with Andres Veiel’s BLACK BOX GERMANY and the same goes for Markus Imhoof’s new film ELDORADO about the current refugee crisis in Europe.”

Meanwhile, another strand in the company’s documentary output has focused on biographical themes such as Corinna Belz’s GERHARD RICHTER PAINTING or Veiel’s 2017 Berlinale Competition film BEUYS.

“My ambition is always to make important films that will leave a mark and reach their particular audience,” Kufus declares. “BEUYS is a case in point: we spent a long time working on this film so that it would turn out as we all wanted it to be, and the resulting film performed well in the cinemas.”

“I started my career in the film industry as a director and so that has led me as a producer to be actively involved in shaping the content of the films,” he explains. “In fact, my favorite activity is sitting together with the writers and directors in the editing suite and discussing whether everything is going in the right direction or should some changes be made.”

POLITICAL SLANT

At the same time, Kufus’ documentary background has also informed his fiction output and the subjects are almost always politically charged, as shown by such past productions as Andres Veiel’s IF NOT US, WHO? about the events leading up to the onset of German terrorism in the 1970s or Lars Kraume’s drama THE PEOPLE VS. FRITZ BAUER centering on the man who brought the high-ranking German Nazi criminal Adolf Eichmann to justice in post-war West Germany.

zero one addresses another highly topical political issue in Emily Atef’s latest film, the WDR commissioned production DO NOT WORRY!, which sees a father succeeding in finding and bringing home his son who had been recruited by ISIS to fight in Syria and, on an international level, with Jonathan Littell’s WRONG ELEMENTS about child soldiers who have been both perpetrator and victim in the Ugandan LRA rebel movement.

And the relevance of the 1920s Bauhaus movement for our present day outlook on architecture, art and design will be explored in the fiction series BAUHAUS which will reunite the company with director Lars Kraume for a planned airing to tie-in with the Bauhaus 100th anniversary celebrations in 2019.

Meanwhile, shooting began this autumn on Connie Walther’s experimental feature film THE RUDE in co-production with Cologne’s Hands on Production about violence and counter-violence focusing on the clash between vicious shelter dogs and young violent offenders.

SHAPING THE FUTURE

As if Thomas Kufus didn’t have enough on his plate running his production company and keeping tabs on the various projects at different stages of development and production, he has also shown a keen interest in shaping film policy on both a national German and international level by promoting the role of feature documentaries and the importance of co-production treaties. Indeed, he served as the chairman of the German Film Academy from November 2009 until early 2015 and doesn’t regret taking on this extra commitment. “I would never ever want to become a functionary,” he admits, “but it was an important experience and taught me a lot. I regard the Academy in high esteem because it represents so many diverse interests, which means that it can sometimes be rather unpredictable, but at the same time unique as an institution in the German film landscape.”

And while zero one film has built up a family of filmmakers with whom they work on a regular basis, the company is always keeping an eye open for up-and-coming filmmaking talents to work with – such as the Polish directorial duo Elwira Niewiera and Piotr Rosołowski’s documentary THE PRINCE AND THE DYBBUK about the Polish-Jewish filmmaker Moshe Waks, which received the Venice Classics Award for Best Documentary on Cinema (zero one film developed the film and also co-produced Niewiera and Rosołowski’s award-winning 2014 documentary DOMINO EFFECT), Anne Zohra Berrached whose graduation film from the Filmakademie Baden-Württemberg, 24 WEEKS, premiered the Venice Classics Award for Best Documentary on Cinema (zero one film developed the film and also co-produced Niewiera and Rosołowski’s award-winning 2014 documentary DOMINO EFFECT), Anne Zohra Berrached whose graduation film from the Filmakademie Baden-Württemberg, 24 WEEKS, premiered in Competition at the 2016 Berlinale, or the Polish documentary filmmaker Marta Minrowicz with her fiction debut ZUD screening in the Generation sidebar the same year.

Martin Blaney
Liv Lisa Fries (it rhymes with ‘please’) has a long day of BABYLON BERLIN interviews and posing for photos ahead of her, but this is the first one and she is as bright-eyed, bushy-tailed and eager to trot as any actress poised on the edge of her international breakthrough could be. She also looks stunning, her hair in a 1920s style as befits the event and, apologies to Audrey Hepburn, is giving those three seemingly innocuous words, ‘little black dress’, more meaning than you can imagine.

To get the formalities out the way: Liv Lisa Fries was born in Berlin in 1990 and took up acting in 2005, her first starring role being in Torsten C. Fischer’s SCHIMANSKI: DEATH IN THE SETTLEMENT for television, alongside Götz George. She quickly gathered acclaim, most notably for SHE DESERVED IT, in which she plays a schoolgirl who bullies her classmate to death. Talk about gritty, but it also won her the Günter Strack Television Prize in 2011 and was awarded the Golden Camera Award in 2012.

Her first major role on the big screen was in the 2010 award-winning youth drama STRONGER THAN BLOOD. Others include a title role in Germany’s top cop TV-series, in TATORT: ZIRKUSKIND, a young rape survivor in THE DAM, and a young patient suffering from cystic fibrosis in ZURICH, for which she was awarded the Bavarian Film Prize 2013, the Max Ophüls Prize (one of the most important awards for young German-language cinema) and the German Director’s Prize. For THE DAM and ZURICH she took home the German Film Critics Award.

Most recently she was seen in an episode of the ARD TV feature film trilogy about the NSU neo-Nazi murders NSU: GERMAN HISTORY X, an award-winning series that has been sold all over the world, and premiered on Netflix throughout North America, the UK, Ireland, Australia and New Zealand in July 2016. Americans will also see her again next year in the Starz sci-fi thriller series, COUNTERPART.

So yes, this Variety 10 Europeans To Watch 2017-listed actress can act! But let’s get to the lady herself, the who and what is Liv Lisa Fries, what motivates and makes her tick?

“I’m interested in the sense of self,” she says, smiling. “Of finding the center of being able to listen, that core authenticity and honesty, listening to yourself and what you want so you can feel good. That means you then have the grounding and competence to be open to other people and things. I admit, it’s a hard question to answer and I’m still trying to find out!”
But, as evidenced by her choice of roles to date, “I find it exciting and that’s why I love the profession: I want to find out what people want to say. Life’s a kind of journey and on the way we look at what happens, how people live, how we want to live, we’re always looking for answers – I’m just not always sure if I want them! But I am interested in what drives people, gives them joy or fear; the tension between thought and feeling. It’s not so much what I want to say but the search for it!”

It all starts with a script, of course, and the one for BABYLON BERLIN, a rip-roaring, multi-part, event-TV crime and drama series set in 1920s Berlin, could have proven more than daunting, but the first thing Liv Lisa Fries does is ignore the size and “look for the movements, where the character goes, where does she come from? It’s an emotional analysis of the character, her underlying emotions and impulse. There was a starting phase with BABYLON BERLIN where I concentrated on the character’s fear and neurosis, and what was beneath, why she was sad. I believe in human complexity.” And her character, Charlotte Ritter, the female lead, playing opposite Volker Bruch, “is most definitely complex.”

She doesn’t have a standard approach, taking each character as she comes, so “sometimes a diary works, sometimes not because the figure is closed. I read the script, basically it should all be in a good script, then I understand on a certain level. I try to understand them emotionally,” she explains. “I look at what she says and ask what is actually meant: she says A but means B. Why is she like that? But maybe the character herself doesn’t know, so how does she deal with it and how do I as an actress deal with it too?”

Method actress? Yeah, sort of, maybe, it all depends on the role, she laughs. “I played a terminally ill woman in ZURICH, so I accompanied a woman suffering from cystic fibrosis as part of the preparation, but method means you are always in character but I’m not that radical.”

Trust, as you would imagine, is key to Liv Lisa Fries’ work. He first main role, the brutal, killer schoolgirl Laura in the award-winning and much-lauded SHE DESERVED IT, who is then visited in prison by the victim’s mother, “was the first time I had the feeling I was trusted greatly and that enabled me to repay it. So when you work with great colleagues, when they are also there for you as well as themselves, when their acting influences yours, that is also life because, as people, we interact with each other.”

It isn’t all Sturm und Drang, by the way, she played quieter characters in THE DAM and ZURICH and, a lover of singing and dancing herself, played a music student in Sabrina Sarabi’s upcoming PRÉLUDE, alongside fellow FACE TO FACE WITH GERMAN FILMS colleague Louis Hofmann – all of them “films in which life is observed. Life as I perceive it.”

What’s it like for the person who gets to say “Action!” and “Cut!” to her? “Ohh,” she says, gaining even more fizzle, “I like talking! A lot! About everything! Every detail! This way or that, why do I do or not do that? I need to know the director knows what they want! Not always, but at least they have a game-plan! And that’s how it was on BABYLON BERLIN.

Sometimes, when I have the trust, they can just tell me and I can also do things that I don’t understand!” An actress who can take direction, then: “I’m interested in an outside input. That can be a crazy feeling, doing something you don’t know you can or understand, that you would not normally do, but you are also in a safe space when you have a smart guide who understands it. Who understands how I am and work.”

Liv Lisa Fries’ life, when not in front of the lens, features “dancing, I love contemporary dancing!” For her, free time is about “being free, letting go, seeing friends, travelling, cycling, swimming, reading, chatting, also having quiet time, being in the countryside, for example.”

Her mentors and inspirers (it is a long list and in no particular order) include Romy Schneider, BLUE VALENTINE (starring Michelle Williams and Ryan Gosling), Xavier Dolan, and Andrea Arnold. Then come films with “radical and existential performances”, such as Fatih Akin’s HEAD-ON, Luc Besson’s LEON: THE PROFESSIONAL, Peter Bogdanovich’s PAPER MOON. And then the actors’ names themselves: “Birol Unel, Sibel Kekilli, Josef Bierbichler, Hanna Schygulla, Michelle Williams, Ryan Gosling, Natalie Portman, Jean Reno, Gary Oldman, Romy Schneider, Klaus Kinski and Ryan and Tatum O’Neal, whom I find very inspiring. Wong Kar-Wai’s films fascinate me visually and with their music,” she continues, “and last but not least, American independent films by directors like Paul Thomas Anderson, Quentin Tarantino or Jim Jarmusch are excellent.”

Back to the big boy on the block, BABYLON BERLIN, the X Filme Creative Pool, ARD Degeto, Sky and Beta Film production, where she worked with three of Germany’s very apex writer-directors, Tom Tykwer, Henk Handloegten and Achim von Borries.

“BABYLON BERLIN was an immense experience,” she says. “We spent four months prepping, then seven months filming. I’ve never had such preparation before! We had rehearsals of every kind! There was lots of dancing and I had to learn the Charleston, and that was very tiring but also great to learn!”

What was it like having three directors on the one character? “Well,” she explains, “although Tom, Achim and Henk are very different, they are all going in the same direction.” Here she gets demonstrative, turning her whole body, arms, and hands. “It’s like you are driving. Do they take the left lane, the right one or go straight ahead? They all had different priorities with the character. It’s like when three people describe one and the same person, but you can end up with three different people! It was like having three different spotlights on the same person.”

“It was very challenging,” she goes on, “and some scenes were very hard, where I really had to do things I would have preferred not to because I was scared. But then we worked it through and it was great! I had worked before with Henk, so I knew him already. Tom works the way I’d always imagined it to be, whereas Achim gave me lots and lots of space. On one scene, where I had to cry, which still wasn’t working after a couple of takes trying, he just broke the tension by being kind and trusting me.”

With her CV essentially drama, Liv Lisa Fries admits “it is my world view, but it is not a pessimistic one and I don’t look to set it up deliberately. I would love to do a comedy, but also keep the observational aspects. I get offers I can’t anticipate, so if I get action or comedy and like the character, then yes! I’ll do it. BABYLON BERLIN just happened to me. And I would love to work with American directors and actors because of the way they influence me. I’ve seen so many and want to learn their methods and ways of working.”

And she bravely wrestles with a very reluctant pen to autograph the glossy press folder before dashing off to the second appointment. A big day, a big project and a very talented, lovely young lady with big things to come.

Simon Kingsley
ALL ABOUT OSCAR®!

IN THE FADE by Fatih Akin will represent Germany as the official submission for the 90th Oscar® for Best Foreign Language Film. The decision was made at the end of August by an independent jury appointed by German Films. The nine-person jury substantiated its decision as follows: “IN THE FADE is at the same time a drama, a court movie and a thriller. Fatih Akin relates law and justice, revenge and pain – with complexity, un sparingly, and with a stirring narrative. The film gives a political issue a human face and unfolds with a ripple effect from which the audience cannot escape, from the first to the very last minute.”

But before the 90th Oscars® take place next year, Germany already took home two more Student Oscars® this year! GALAMSEY by Johannes Preuss (Filmakademie Baden-Württemberg) won Gold in the Documentary category (International Film Schools) and WATU WOTE – ALL OF US by Katja Benrath (Hamburg Media School) received the award in Gold in the Narrative category (International Film Schools).
GERMAN DOCUMENTARIES – AROUND THE WORLD

German Documentaries is an initiative of the German Documentary Association and German Films to support German documentary filmmakers in the international marketing of their films. The support includes the organization of delegations to important international festivals and networking events, and has already benefitted hundreds of documentary filmmakers. But despite such support, Germany’s documentary film industry doesn’t have it easy in maintaining its position internationally. A survey by the European Documentary Network in 2016 indicates that other EU countries offer more extensive and lasting support for the international marketing of their documentary filmmakers. And, of course, this has its consequences: in comparison with some of the surveyed countries, German documentary filmmakers are underrepresented in this highly competitive field. In constructive conversation with German Films, policy makers and film funders, the German Documentary Association continuously strives to improve the conditions and situation for the German documentary industry. More information about the German Documentaries initiative is available at www.german-documentaries.de.

FFF BAYERN @ TIFF 2017

Together with a delegation of Bavarian filmmakers, FilmFernsehFonds Bayern traveled to the Toronto International Film Festival this year. The goal of the trip was the exchange of ideas and experiences between the Canadian and Bavarian film industries in order to intensify future international co-productions. The program for the group included visits to different companies, a networking breakfast, the reception of the International Financing Forum and a reception at the local Goethe-Institut, as well as the presentation of Bavarian funding possibilities at the Ontario Trade and Investment Center (OMDC), pitching sessions, and a visit to the post-production studio Deluxe. All this gave the participants the opportunity to make new international contacts, gain new insights, and convey the diversity and efficiency of Bavaria as a film location.

MFG SUPPORT FOR ROBERT SCHWENTKE’S THE CAPTAIN

THE CAPTAIN, which celebrated its world premiere in Toronto and screened in competition in San Sebastian, where DoP Florian Ballhaus won the Jury Prize for Best Cinematography, is Robert Schwentke’s first German film in 15 years! Based on a true story, Schwentke wrote the screenplay and directed the film under the utmost of difficult wintery conditions in Breslau and Görlitz. Frieder Schlachter (Filmgalerie 451) produced the film with support from MFG Filmförderung Baden-Württemberg. In the early 1990s, Schlachter established the legendary video library Filmgalerie 451 in Stuttgart and got to know Schwentke long before he began his Hollywood career. The visual effects for the film were created by the multi Emmy Award-winning Jörn Großhans and his team at Mackevision. Sales agent Alfama Films is currently in negotiation for sales to several territories.
GERMAN OSCAR® CANDIDATE CELEBRATED IN TORONTO

IN THE FADE by Fatih Akin is the German candidate for the Oscar® in the category Best Foreign Language Film, and it was funded in part by the Film- und Medienstiftung NRW. With MUSTANG and TONI ERDMANN, this is the third year in a row that films supported by the Filmstiftung have been submitted for the Best Foreign Language Oscar®.

Fatih Akin’s film celebrated its world premiere in Cannes, where Diane Kruger won the Best Actress award for her role in the film. Since then, the production has been invited to numerous international festivals, including Toronto, where it started its Oscar® campaign with a highly-attended screening. And the chances for a nomination seem pretty good. With IN THE FADE, Fatih Akin has made a film that is just as much a relevant controversial political thriller as it is the analysis of terror and right-wing radicalism, a conflict which is understood not only in Europe, but all over the world.

IN THE FADE was produced by bombero international, in co-production with Warner Bros. Germany, Macassar Productions, Pathé and corazón international. In addition to the Filmstiftung NRW, the film was also supported by the Filmförderung Hamburg Schleswig-Holstein. International sales are being handled by Cologne-based The Match Factory, which has already sold the film to 56 countries.

GÖRLIWOOD® TO COMPETE FOR THE EUROPEAN FILM LOCATION AWARD

The city of Gorlitz and its sets for Wes Anderson’s Oscar®-winning production THE GRAND BUDAPEST HOTEL is Germany’s candidate for the new European Film Location Award powered by Filming Europe – the European Film Commissions Network (EUFNCN). Eleven locations throughout Europe that hosted renowned and beloved films and TV series in the last 10 years have made it onto the shortlist. With its unique architecture, the easternmost city in Germany has been attracting numerous international film crews like Stephen Daldry’s THE READER, MONUMENTS MEN by George Clooney, and most recently Robert Schwentke’s THE CAPTAIN. All European citizens will have the chance to pick the winner by selecting and voting for the best European film location until October 25th at www.cineeuropa.org. The Award ceremony will take place in Brussels on November 7th in the European Parliament.

FESTIVAL DE CINE ALEMÁN IN BUENOS AIRES STRONGER THAN EVER

Originally planned as the “little sister” of the festival in Madrid, the event in Buenos Aires has long since established itself as the most successful of its kind in South America. The 17th edition took place mid-September in the Argentine capital and can proudly report 13 sold-out screenings and some 7,100 admissions from both festival venues, the Village Recoleta and the Caballito. The festival opened with Simon Verhoeven’s WELCOME TO GERMANY and presented a showcase of new German films, interactive screenings, classics and short films. This year’s Audience Award went to Lars Kraume’s THE VERDICT, which once again proved to be one of the highlights of the festival and provided for intensive discussions with the audience. Impressed by the audience reactions to Christian Schwochow’s PAULA, Mirada Distribution picked up the rights for Argentina. And once again this year, the VOD platform QubitTV presented a special selection of German films during the festival to accompany the growing demand for German home entertainment content in Argentina.
VISIONS DU RÉEL

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FACE T WITH GER
more new German productions are presented on the following 20 pages. Please visit our website www.german-films.de for more information on German features, documentaries and shorts.
BERLIN FALLING

Frank Balzer has retired from the German Green Berets and wants to start a new, quiet life as a civilian. He finally gets to see his daughter Lily again, and is on his way to the Berlin main train station to pick her up for their first weekend together after a long time. At a rest stop, he reluctantly gives a ride to hitchhiker Andreas. On the way, he discovers a bomb in Andreas' backpack. Who is this hitchhiker really? A life-or-death battle of wits begins between the two men, showing us that fanatics come in all stripes and that a parent has to do what they’ve got to do when their child is in danger.

Ken Dukun (NORTHMEN, COMING IN) and GAME OF THRONES star Tom Wlaschiha in an action-packed, edge-of-your seat thriller, in which the two characters match wits and charisma, hurtling down the Autobahn at breakneck speed toward a knock-out finale.

KEN DUKEN is a German actor, director and producer. In 2003, he co-founded the production company Grand Hôtel Pictures to produce the short film FROM ANOTHER POINT OF VIEW and several outstanding music videos for various artists. His goal has always been to create and direct his own feature film which he fulfills for the first time with BERLIN FALLING.

GENRE Thriller YEAR OF PRODUCTION 2017 DIRECTOR Ken Dukun SCREENPLAY Christoph Mille CINEMATOGRAPHY Ngo The Chau CAST Tom Wlaschiha, Ken Dukun, Marisa Leonie Bach, Greta Nedelmann, Tim Wilde, Kida Khodr Ramadan, Amelie Plaas-Link, Matthias Wackrow PRODUCER Norbert Kneissl CO-PRODUCER Ken Dukun PRODUCTION COMPANY Grand Hôtel Pictures, in co-production with Sky Deutschland RUNTIME 91 min LANGUAGE German FESTIVALS Shanghai 2017, Munich 2017

SALES Global Screen info@globalscreen.de www.globalscreen.de

© Grand Hôtel Pictures
Albert grew up on an isolated mountain farm in the middle of nowhere in the Alps. Although he’s already in his 30s, his omnipresent mother Marianne still pulls the strings in his life. Not intentionally and only because of his mother’s pressure, Albert went to live in the nearby valley to make his living in a marble quarry. Marianne wants to protect him from the poor and lonesome life on the mountain and is even willing to denounce their bonds to the tradition of the farm which has existed over centuries. Like an abandoned animal that keeps coming back to its territory, the introverted farmer’s son keeps sneaking back to the mountain as often as possible. When his father dies accidentally, Marianne fears that Albert will take over the role of his father and return to the farm. Instead, she decides to hide the death from Albert and the outside world – and buries his corpse on the mountain.

Ronny Trocker was born in Bolzano/Italy and studied at the Universidad del Cine in Argentina and Le Fresnoy in France. His films include: GLI IMMAGINI (short, 2013), ESTATE (short, 2016), and THE EREMITES (2016).

FIKKEFUCHS

BEDBUGS

Rocky is a 50-year-old loner whose days as a ladies man only exist in his memories. Then Thorben appears and Rocky faces a new challenge. The young man claims to be Rocky’s son and is asking his father for help. Thorben wants to learn how to get women, and so the completely overwhelmed and useless father and the ignorant son make their way to get laid… and fail.

JAN HENRIK STAHLBERG is an actor, writer and director. He has acted in over 50 theatrical and TV movies. His films as a director include: BYE BYE BERLUSCONI! (2005), SHORT CUT TO HOLLYWOOD (2009), and BEDBUGS (2017).


SALES POISON saralisa@poison-berlin.com www.poison-berlin.com
In the last desperate moments of World War II, a young German soldier fighting for survival finds a Nazi captain’s uniform. Impersonating an officer, the man quickly takes on the monstrous identity of the perpetrators he is trying to escape from.


SALES Alfama Films alfamafilms@orange.fr www.alfamafilms.com
HOT DOG

A fast-paced buddy comedy with Germany’s most successful stars Til Schweiger and Matthias Schweighöfer – the dream team of German cinema.

The two GSG10 officers Luke and Theo couldn’t be any more different, but have to join forces to save Mascha, the daughter of the Moldavian ambassador: chaos is predestined.

Schweighöfer takes on the role of the eager beaver Theo, who has an uncanny photographic memory, and Schweiger plays the smart and tough policeman Luke. In the course of their investigation, Luke and Theo realize that the demand for ransom is just the tip of the iceberg and that the kidnapping has far greater reaching implications than initially suspected...

During their mission, the two opposite characters become an unbeatable dream team and are supported by their hacker colleague Nicki, who even manages to lure the romantically inexperienced Theo out of his reserve...

TORSTEN KÜNSTLER has been working primarily with the multi-hyphenates Matthias Schweighöfer and Til Schweiger for years, also co-directing and associate producing many of their own films with them.

GENRE Action, Comedy  YEAR OF PRODUCTION  2017  DIRECTOR  Torsten Künstler  SCREENPLAY Lo Malinke, Tripper Clancy  CINEMATOGRAPHY Markus Nestroy  CAST Til Schweiger, Matthias Schweighöfer, Tim Wilde, Heino Ferch, Anne Schäfer, Lisa Tomaszewsky, Samuel Finzi  PRODUCERS Dan Maag, Matthias Schweighöfer, Marco Beckmann  PRODUCTION COMPANIES PANTALEON Films, Warner Bros. Film Productions Germany, Erfial Film & Fernsehproduktion  RUNTIME  90 min  LANGUAGE  German

SALES Picture Tree International yuan@picturetree-international.com www.picturetree-international.com
DER LANGE SOMMER DER THEORIE

THE LONG SUMMER OF THEORY

“What is to be done?”, three women with artistic and creative professions in temporary living conditions are wondering. They are sharing a flat in an old building close to Berlin Central Station. The area is one of the city’s last remaining gaps between buildings. They decide to end their flat share as soon as the first trenches will be dug.

With mixed feelings they are heading towards the time when their spontaneous life comes to an end, which means they have to make one or more (life) decisions. The current flat is a symbol of their own life scripts so far: unformed and all bets are off but it already starts to be uncomfortable. They spend the remaining days in their flat with friends, celebrations, discussions and the strong feeling for the dawning of a new era.

THE LONG SUMMER OF THEORY is a collection of staged episodes for a movie the three women are shooting. In a discursive and entertaining way, the demand for political action is framed and put into practice. Real authors appear in the movie and reflect the life of the three women on the basis of theoretical, sociological and philosophical texts. At the end of the film the move-out and the departure into political awareness is due: “What is to be done?” becomes “Let’s do it!”

IRENE VON ALBERTI was born in Stuttgart. She studied Media Technology in Stuttgart and at the Munich University of Television & Film. She works as producer and director. Her films as a director include: PAUL BOWLES – HALBMOND (1995), CALL AT CORAZÓN (1995), BERLIN STORIES (2005), MAROC EN VOGUE (2006), TANGERINE (2008), HASSAN’S FILM (2014), and THE LONG SUMMER OF THEORY (2017).

GENRE Political Comedy
YEAR OF PRODUCTION 2017
DIRECTOR Irene von Alberti
SCREENPLAY Irene von Alberti
CINEMATOGRAPHY Jenny Lou Ziegel
CAST Julia Zange, Katja Weiland, Martina Schone-Radunski, Philipp Felsch, Boris Groys, Carl Hegemann, Jutta Allmendinger, Lilly Lent, Andrea Truman, Rahel Jaeggi
PRODUCER Frieder Schlaich
PRODUCTION COMPANY Filmgalerie 451

SALES
Filmgalerie 451 Filmproduktion
info@filmgalerie451.de
www.filmgalerie451.de
When Liv opens her eyes she finds herself lost in a strange room. Next to her, lying unconscious and severely wounded, her fellow scientist partner Lex. At an attempt to leave the room, her next door neighbor Veith blocks the door. Terrorists just attacked the city via bio-warfare, letting loose a deadly virus. He could save both of them just in time. Veith is well prepared. He has built his apartment into a security-zone. Liv has her doubts about his story as she keeps hearing noises on the outside... How can everyone be dead? The scientists’ attempt to escape is futile. With a serious accusation, Veith drives a wedge between Liv and Lex: a data leak from their Biotech-company is supposed to be at the root of the deadly virus! Liv starts to question her own sanity as time progresses. Could Veith be right?

BOGDANA VERA LORENZ grew up in Berlin. She studied Humanities, followed by training as a photographer and work as a TV-journalist. From 2006–2010 she studied Directing at the ifs international filmschool in Cologne. She served as a trainee for Lars von Trier on the set of ANTICHRIST and participated in Danny Boyles’ EFA Masterclass. Her graduation film HOME GAME won the German Film Critics Award. Her films include the shorts VOLA! (2008), THE INTERROGATION (2008), and ‘89 AND YOURS AND MINE (2009). In 2011 she joined forces with Max Permantier to write as a team. LOCKDOWN is their feature debut.

GENRE Thriller
YEAR OF PRODUCTION 2017
DIRECTOR Bogdana Vera Lorenz
SCREEN-PLAY Max Permantier, Bogdana Vera Lorenz
CINEMATOGRAPHY Benjamin F. Wieg
CAST Alice Dwyer, Götz Schulte, Maximilian Meyer-Breitschneider
PRODUCERS Florian Reimann, Max Permantier
PRODUCTION COMPANY FR Entertainment
RUNTIME 85 min
LANGUAGE German

SALES
ARRI Media International
worldsales@arri.de
www.arrimedia.de/international
TEENOSAURUS REX

S
he was sweet, she was cute. But just before her 14th birthday, Daddy’s little princess mutates into a pe-
tulant pubescent nightmare. Journal-
ist Hannes Wenger decides to take a
time-out from work to guide his daughter
Carla through this difficult phase in her life
and, above all, to keep her from alcohol,
boys and other temptations. This is easier
said than done, however, and when his wife
Sara goes back to work, Hannes proves him-
self entirely inept at raising a teenager.
Whether it’s Carla’s birthday party, her mo-
bile phone contract or her first time, Hannes
makes one awkward blunder after another.
The fact that other teens have embarrassing
fathers provides only faint consolation; 
Hannes’ best friend is a war reporter named
Holger who prefers to be shot at in war zones
rather than stay at home and be driven crazy
by his own teenage nightmare.

LEANDER HAÜSTMANN was born in Quedlin-
burg in 1959. After attending the Ernst Busch
Academy of Dramatic Art in Berlin, he acted
in the theater for several years before be-
coming a director. He was the artistic director
of Bochum’s Schauspielhaus from 1995-2000,
during which time he appeared in Detlev
Buck’s film JAILBIRDS. His big breakthrough
as a film director came with SUN ALLEY
(2000), followed by BERLIN BLUES (2003),
NVA (2005), INTRIGUE AND LOVE (TV, 2005),
WHY MEN DON’T LISTEN AND WOMEN
CAN’T READ MAPS (2007). ROBERT ZIMMER-
MANN IS TANGLED UP IN LOVE (2008),
HOTEL LUX (2011), SHARK ALARM AT MUG-
GELSEE (2013), and TEENOSAURUS REX
(2017).

GENRE Comedy, Coming-of-Age Story
YEAR OF PRODUCTION 2017
DIRECTOR Leander Haüßmann
SCREENPLAY Leander Haüßmann, Jan Weiler
CINEMATOGRAPHY Alexander Fischerkoeszen
CAST Jan Josef Liefers, Heike Makatsch, Harriet Herbig-
Matten, Detlev Buck, Monika Gruber, Justus
von Dohnányi, Luise Kinseher, Waldemar
Kobus
PRODUCER Gunter Rohrbach
CO-
PRODUCER Stefan Gartner
EXECUTIVE PRO-
DUCERS Martin Moszkowicz, Oliver Berben
PRODUCTION EXECUTIVE Christine Rothe
PRODUCTION COMPANY Constantin Film
Produktion
RUNTIME 94 min
LANGUAGE
German

SALES
Picture Tree International
yuan@picturetree-international.com
www.picturetree-international.com

The film is based on Jan Weiler’s best-selling
German novel Das Pubertier and is published
in English as Teenosaurus Rex.
1976, the height of summer. A heat wave. Everybody is sweating. The wasps are even more aggressive than usual. In the midst of it all, a German family who are spending the dog days in their communal garden – just as they always do. Yet the passing of their overbearing matriarch Sophie reveals fine cracks in the family’s relationships while subtly changing how they interact. While the adults argue about the sale of the property, the children are free to roam the garden and the neighborhood. Suddenly the news of the disappearance of a little girl disrupts the placid summer idyll...

**SOMMERHÄUSER**

**THE GARDEN**

**SONJA MARIA KRÖNER** was born in Munich in 1979. At the Ludwig Maximilian University of Munich, she majored in Philosophy and Literature and studied Screenwriting and Directing at the University of Television and Film Munich (HFF). She received a media art scholarship from the Kirch Foundation and the HFF Munich for her video installation SIX DOORS, a peep show about six women in six phases of life shown in the Annual Art Show at Haus der Kunst in 2010. After making her graduation film ZUCCHINIBLÜTEN, she worked on the installations THE BLACK HOLE and FLIPBOOK NEWS (a walk-in flip book), followed by her feature film THE GARDEN, which premiered at the Munich International Film Festival 2017.

**GENRE** Drama  **YEAR OF PRODUCTION** 2017  **DIRECTOR** Sonja Maria Kröner  **SCREENPLAY** Sonja Maria Kröner  **CINEMATOGRAPHY** Julia Duschner  **CAST** Thomas Loibl, Laura Tonke, Ursula Werner, Günter Maria Halmer, Christine Schorn, Inge Maux, Mavie Hörbiger, Emilia Pieske  **PRODUCERS** Philipp Worm, Tobias Walker  **PRODUCTION COMPANY** Walker+Worm Film, in co-production with WDR, BR  **RUNTIME** 97 min  **LANGUAGE** German  **FESTIVALS** Munich 2017, Toronto 2017, Sao Paulo 2017  **AWARDS** Best Production & Best Direction Munich 2017

**SALES**  
Beta Cinema  
beta@betacinema.com  
www.betacinema.com
In SCHUMANN’S BAR TALKS, the legendary Charles Schumann goes on a perambulation through some of the most interesting bars in the world, including the Dead Rabbit in New York, the Hemingway Bar in Paris, El Floridita in Havana and the High Five bar in Tokyo. He explores the secrets of bar culture, meets bar proprietors, the hearts and souls of bars and their chroniclers. During these conversations we begin to realize that each bar is its own small universe which is brought to life every single day in a different way. The clientele changes, with the time of day and day of the week, but the permanent staff make the place, SCHUMANN’S BAR TALKS is not only a voyage of discovery to the most beautiful bars in the world, but also to the people who bring them to life.

SCHUMANN’S BARGESPRÄCHE


SALES Outlook Filmsales welcome@outlookfilms.com www.outlookfilms.com www.schumannsbartalks.com

T

t here are streets, paths, highways, alleys, dirt tracks and promenades... And there are courses of lives, thirlstands, crossroads and dead ends...

STREETSCAPES is a series of four films by Heinz Emigholz: Chapter I: 2+2=22 [THE ALPHABET], Chapter II: BICKELS [SOCIALISM], Chapter III: STREETSCAPES [DIALOGUE], and Chapter IV: DIESTE [URUGUAY].

HEINZ EMIGHOLZ began filmmaking in 1968 and has worked since 1973 as a filmmaker, artist, writer and producer in Germany and the USA. In 1974 he started his encyclopaedic drawing series THE BASIS OF MAKE-UP. He looks back on numerous exhibitions, retrospectives, lectures and publications. A full list of his prolific body of work is available at www.pym.de.


SALES Filmgalerie 451 Filmproduktion info@filmgalerie451.de www.filmgalerie451.de
At the age of nine, German twins Bill and Tom Kaulitz decide to become famous. Aged 12, they form a band together with Gustav Schäfer and Georg Listing that would go on to conquer the world as Tokio Hotel. They are admired, ridiculed, hated and adored... And a gigantic success: they go platinum in 60 countries, concerts are sold out and Bill becomes a style icon. Rich and famous in their early 20s, the twins fly to Los Angeles by private jet, leaving behind thousands of devoted fans and a life behind protective walls. They want their freedom back... without knowing what the future holds. The film delves into the lives of the band, accompanying Bill and Tom through Californian deserts and visiting Gustav and Georg in their hometown, Magdeburg. They talk about the price of success, the inseparability of twins, about love, sexuality, home and music. The band comes together to produce their new album and to prepare for their world tour. With steely determination and a lifetime of experience already, the band follows their childhood dream: the pop fairy tale that is Tokio Hotel continues...

OLIVER SCHWABE is active as a filmmaker, cameraman, scriptwriter, and producer. A selection of his other films as a director include: EGOSHOOTER (2004), ZARTE PARASITEN (2009), and THE BROTHER (2016) in co-direction with Christian Becker.

GENRE Biopic, Culture, Music
YEAR OF PRODUCTION 2017
DIRECTOR Oliver Schwabe
CINEMATOGRAPHY Benjamin Wistorf
PRODUCER Birgit Schulz

TOKIO HOTEL - HINTER DIE WELT

TOKIO HOTEL - BEHIND THE WORLD

Bildersurm Filmproduktion
RUNTIME 90 min
LANGUAGE German
FESTIVALS Filmfestival Cologne 2017

SALES
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www.germanfilmsquarterly.de

Specially designed for desktop and mobile devices, to keep you informed on all the latest German films and filmmakers, and a whole lot more!
FIND FIX FINISH

IND FIX FINISH delves into the accounts of three military drone pilots as they tell the intimate story of the lives they observe on a day-to-day basis. The voyeuristic ocular perspective from a military drone can reduce people to pixels on a screen and a certain decontextualization is almost necessary to deal with the fact that people can be killed on a push of a button. “Have you ever stepped on an anthill and not given it a second thought?”

MILA ZHLUKTENKO was born in 1991 in Kiev. After studies in German Literature at the Humboldt University Berlin, she is a student at the University of Television and Film Munich.

SYLVAIN CRUIZIAT was born in 1995 in London and studies at the University of Television and Film Munich.


SALES FFF-Film veronika@fff-film.com www.fff-film.com

GALAMSEY – FÜR EINE HANDVOLL GOLD

A documentary about the illegal gold business in West Africa. What does it mean for the residents of a small town in Ghana to live on top of a huge gold deposit?

As a young development worker, the director experienced a gold rush in a small town in Ghana. Some years later he returns to find out what the gold really means for the residents of this town. On his journey he meets old friends, arrives at places of destruction and learns about a dangerous magnetism between people and gold. In the small town a bloody conflict broke out between local police and gold miners. Who are profiteers and who are victims in this hunt for glittering stones?

JOHANNES PREUSS was born in 1983 in Berlin. After studying Political Science, History and Romance Studies, he participated in a trainee program of the German Development Service working at a community radio in Ghana. Since 2011, he has been active as an author and producer of films for development projects in Ghana, Nigeria and Mexico. He is currently studying Directing Television Journalism at the Filmakademie Baden-Württemberg.


SALES Filmakademie Baden-Württemberg sales@filmakademie.de www.filmakademie.de

© Nikolai Huber

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LAB/P – POETRY IN MOTION 2

The second edition of a collaboration between up-and-coming filmmakers and authors takes you on an emotional rollercoaster – from the nightmares of childhood to an never-ending tennis match, from a road trip to yourself to an apartment filled with memories, a journey which takes you in the end even to “paradise” and the origins of mankind. Be prepared never to see or to hear what you expect...

The eight films provide an exciting insight into contemporary experimental film and poetry and invite the viewer to explore new artistic positions. The avant-garde shorts were developed within the framework of an OSTPOL program under the mentorship of Cathy de Haan, Aline Helmcke, Franka Sachse and Vera Schmidt.

The filmmakers and authors are:

NICK TEPLOV & KATIA SOPHIA DITZLER for A|C|G|T;
ANDREA RÜTHEL & SUSANNA BERIVAN for ALIKE;
JUSTINE BAUER & ANDRÉ PATTEN for THE BOTANIST;
JULIANE FRANKE & ANNE OLTSCHER for EVERGREEN;
ANNEGRET EHRHARDT & LINDA ACHBERGER for GO STOP GONE;
JONATHAN-DAVID WEDLER & MAGDALENA KOTZUREK for HINGE;
SANDRA BARTH & ANNA SCHÖNING for PARADISE WITH PAVILION;
CHARLOTTE EIFLER & HIEU HOANG for WOMEN FEEDING MACHINES.

GENRE Animation, Experimental, Cycle of Shorts, Poetry
YEAR OF PRODUCTION 2017
PRODUCERS Cathy de Haan, Vera Schmidt
PRODUCTION COMPANY OSTPOL, in co-production with Bauhaus University Weimar, Bauhaus Film Institute
RUNTIME 60 min
LANGUAGE German, English
FESTIVALS Dresden 2017, backup Weimar 2017, DOK Leipzig 2017
SALES OSTPOL
info@ostpol-leipzig.de
www.ostpol-leipzig.de

DAS SATANISCHE DICKICHET - DREI
THE SATANIC THICKET – THREE

The first vacation day on the campsite. Mimi is looking for contact with peers, Karl wants to swim with the crocodile, papa is hungry and mom has forgotten the sandwiches at home. Suddenly the caretaker’s little bunny Fernando has disappeared. Order is only restored when the middle-aged tourists appear. One thing is for sure: there is chaos everywhere.


GENRE Drama
YEAR OF PRODUCTION 2017
DIRECTOR Willy Hans
SCREENPLAY Willy Hans
CINEMATOGRAPHY Paul Spengemann
CAST Lars Rudolph, Ruth Marie Kroger, Charlotte Holst, Janko Kahle, Levin Liam
PRODUCER Willy Hans
RUNTIME 22 min
LANGUAGE German
FESTIVALS Locarno 2017, Reykjavik 2017, Hof 2017
SALES
Spengemann Eichberg Goldkamp Hans
willy.hans@gmail.com
www.spengemannliechberggoldkamphans.de

© OSTPOL

© Willy Hans
WATU WOTE
ALL OF US

For almost a decade, Kenya has been targeted by terrorist attacks of the Al-Shabaab. An atmosphere of anxiety and mistrust between Muslims and Christians is growing. Until in December 2015, Muslim bus passengers showed that solidarity can prevail.

KATJA BENRATH was born in 1979. After training in Costume Design, she studied Acting and Vocals at the Vienna Conservatory and performed in numerous films, theater plays and musicals. She then studied Directing at the Hamburg Media School. WATU WOTE – ALL OF US is her graduation film.

GENRE Drama
YEAR OF PRODUCTION 2017
DIRECTOR Katja Benrath
SCREENPLAY Julia Drache
CINEMATOGRAPHY Felix Striegel
CAST Adelyne Wairimu, Abdiwali Farrah, Barkhad Abdurahman, Charles Karumi, Faysal Ahmed
PRODUCER Tobias Rosen
PRODUCTION COMPANY Hamburg Media School
RUNTIME 22 min
LANGUAGE Swahili
SALES Hamburg Media School
a.schmuck@hamburgmediaschool.com
www.hamburgmediaschool.com

WO SIE IST
WHAT IF

It’s the year 2184 and big data is omnipresent. A sophisticated system has been developed to analyze people. Perfect partner recommendations have become the norm. But Achille wants to find a partner by himself. However, in a society where matchmaking has been systematic for generations, it seems impossible to convince a woman on his own. People would rather rely on big data than their own potentially faulty intuition. But Achille’s human desires seem absurd in this efficiency-oriented world. When he goes in search of that spontaneous, authentic connection, he finds challenges at every turn. By a chance happening, a young lady, Eleni, ends up in his workshop. The closer he tries to get to her, the more afraid she becomes of him. The situation escalates and Achille’s mother attempts to bring him to reason. He finally gives up and sets Eleni free, but apparently he has changed something inside of her...

LINDA GASSER was born in 1989. A critically-acclaimed director and production designer, she has directed and written numerous short films, documentaries and corporate films all over the world. She is currently working on the feature film GRABRAUBER.

GENRE Drama, Love Story, Science Fiction
YEAR OF PRODUCTION 2017
DIRECTOR Linda Gasser
SCREENPLAY Linda Gasser
CINEMATOGRAPHY Paul Becht
CAST Karl Kiesel, Julia Monte, Iris Berben
PRODUCERS Linda Gasser, Paul Becht
CO-PRODUCERS Jan Czmok, Mike Fuhrmann
PRODUCTION COMPANY Luli Productions, in co-production with Spektrumfilm
RUNTIME 16 min
LANGUAGE German
SALES
Luli Productions
li@luliproductions.com
www.wosieist.de
BENJAMIN BLÜMCHEN

Benjamin, Germany’s favorite animated elephant, and friends, come up against Zora Zack, the zoo’s new director, who is charged with modernizing the establishment. But there is something about her that is just not right. Is it her dislike of animals? Is it that she is allergic to them? And why are her changes actually for the worse? Benjamin realizes there is much more to her game than even he first thought when Alfred Ape grabs Zack’s camera and finds the proof: she is planning to downszie the zoo in favor of new, luxury apartments with a lakeside view! Zack will stop at nothing, including having Benjamin kidnapped and shipped overseas. But she has not reckoned on Benjamin’s friends, who are now determined to stop her.

GENRE Children & Youth, Family Entertainment
CATEGORY Feature DIRECTOR Tim Trachte
SCREENPLAY Bettina Börgerding
CAST Manuel Santos Gelke, Tim Oliver Schultz, Friedrich von Thun, Liane Forestieri, Dieter Hallervorden, Heike Makatsch, Max von Thun, Uwe Ochsenknecht, Alexander Schubert, Petra Nadolny, Johannes Suhm
PRODUCERS Christian Becker, Martin Richter
CO-PRODUCERS Kalle Fritz, Isabel Hund
PRODUCTION COMPANY Westside Filmproduktion, in co-production with STUDIOCANAL, Rat Pack Filmproduktion, Kiddinx Filmproduktion
LANGUAGE German
SALES STUDIOCANAL
anne.cherel@studiocanal.com
www.studiocanal.com

CARAVAN

Rising stars Fionn Whitehead [DUNKIRK] and Stéphane Bak [ELLE] play two teenagers from very different worlds in Sebastian Schipper’s English-language debut which has been shooting at locations in Morocco, Spain and France since the end of August. CARAVAN follows William [Bak], a young man from the Congo, as he attempts to break through Europe’s borders in search of his brother. By chance, he teams up with Gyllen [Whitehead], a wild and sharp-witted British runaway, who has fled his family’s Moroccan holiday in his step-dad’s RV. Germany’s Moritz Bleibtreu and UK actor Ben Chaplin complete the cast for Schipper’s follow-up to VICTORIA, his multiple award-winning, one-shot tour de force.

GENRE Drama, Road Movie, Tragicomedy
CATEGORY Feature DIRECTOR Sebastian Schipper
SCREENPLAY Sebastian Schipper, Oliver Ziegenbalg
CAST Fionn Whitehead, Stéphane Bak, Moritz Bleibtreu, Ben Chaplin
PRODUCERS David Keitsch, Sebastian Schipper
PRODUCTION COMPANY Missing Link Films, in co-production with Kazak Productions, WDR, ARTE, ARD Degeto, Komplizen Film, STUDIOCANAL, RadicalMedia
LANGUAGE English
SALES HanWay Films
info@hanwayfilms.com
www.hanwayfilms.com

CLIMATE WARRIORS

An environmental documentary inspiring change – personally, nationally and globally – to end climate change! CLIMATE WARRIORS presents people from diverse backgrounds who are strongly aware that we need a fast change to protect the environment and preserve our human rights. United by the spirit of responsibility and hope, they are resisting lobbyists and inhuman social realities, offering solutions for an energy transition with cutting edge technologies, and inspiring activism. The film offers an inside view of a modern revolution and puts the focus on people who have taken the responsibility for their own energy supply and put the protection of their natural livelihood into their own hands.

GENRE Environment/Ecology
CATEGORY Documentary
DIRECTORS Carl-A. Fechner, Nicolai Niemann
PRODUCER Carl-A. Fechner
PRODUCTION COMPANY fechner MEDIA
LANGUAGE English, German
CONTACT fechner MEDIA
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DEUTSCHLAND86

This autumn saw the shooting of DEUTSCHLAND86, the sequel to the internationally acclaimed International Emmy Award-winning espionage series DEUTSCHLAND83, at locations as far flung as South Africa and Berlin. Many of the cast from the first series will be reprising their roles, including Jonas Nay as East German agent Martin Rauch and Maria Schrader as his aunt Leonora at the Stasi’s Foreign Intelligence division. Long banished to Africa for his sins in 1983, Martin Rauch is sent back into the field to experiment with global capitalism. Dark deals and a dangerous mission lead him throughout Africa and Europe and finally back to East Berlin where he must make an impossible decision.


SALES FremantleMedia International www.fremantlemedia.com

ELLA & NELL

Two women, friends in the middle of their lives. But the business of everyday has kept them at a distance. Now they want to reconnect with something that once was, but is no longer. One of the women has made herself comfortable in a neoliberal life and lifestyle, the other has become lost pursuing an academic career without a future. Decisions have been made.

While on a walking holiday together in the Czech mountains it is not only the near-impassable terrain that keeps pulling them off their joint route, but also jealousy, fear and shame.

ELLA & NELL is a gentle, nostalgically funny story about friendship and inexorable decay.

GENRE Road Movie CATEGORY Feature DIRECTOR Aline Chukwuedo SCREENPLAY Aline Chukwuedo, Sabina Groner CAST Stefanie Petrowitz, Kirsten Schlüter, Christian Schafer PRODUCER Ibrahim-Utku Erdogan PRODUCTION COMPANY Deutsche Film- und Fernsehakademie Berlin (DFFB), in co-production with HILDEBRANDT Film LANGUAGE German

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FRITZI – EINE WENDEWUNDERGESCHICHTE

The final months in East Germany before the fall of the Berlin Wall on 9 November 1989 provide the backdrop for co-directors Ralf Kukula and Matthias Bruhn’s animated feature FRITZI. 12-year-old Fritz wanted to spend her summer holidays with Sophie, but her best friend has gone to Hungary on a camping trip with her mother and has left her dog Sputnik in Fritz’s care. When Sophie doesn’t return to class after the holidays, Fritz is preoccupied with trying to reunite Sputnik with Sophie. As the weeks pass, Fritz experiences the dramatic changes to her country at first hand, but believes that a miracle will have to happen if she is ever to see Sophie again...

GENRE Animation, Children & Youth, Coming-of-Age Story, Drama, Family Entertainment, History CATEGORY Feature DIRECTORS Ralf Kukula, Matthias Bruhn SCREENPLAY Beate Volcker PRODUCERS Richard Lutterbeck, Ralf Kukula CO-PRODUCERS Patrick Quinet, Pierre Urbain, Martin Vandas PRODUCTION COMPANIES Balance Film, Trickstudio Lutterbeck, in co-production with Artemis Productions, Doghouse Films, Maur Film LANGUAGE English

SALES Global Screen info@globalscreen.de www.globalscreen.de
FÜNF FREUNDE – IM TAL DER DINOSAURIER

Something has to be going wonderfully right when a children’s and family entertainment franchise hits its fifth outing and still shows no sign of stopping! This time, as another year brings another long summer holiday, it also brings more adventures for George, Julian, Dick, Anne and Timmy the dog, when they meet Marty Bach, a young man who appears at first to be behaving rather oddly. It turns out his deceased father had discovered a supposedly intact dinosaur skeleton but the bad guys have stolen the code that reveals the coordinates to the legendary “Valley of Dinosaurs”. If the kids, Marty, and, of course, Timmy, can’t rescue the code and get to the valley first, the priceless bones will be lost forever.

A HOME IN HOLLYWOOD

Hidden at the end of Mulholland Drive, just north of LA, lies the Motion Picture & Television Fund. Created by Hollywood’s earliest entertainment luminaries such as Charlie Chaplin, Mary Pickford, Douglas Fairbanks, and D.W. Griffith, who realized the need to help those in the entertainment industry who fell upon hard times, the MPTF is now home to a unique retirement community: men and women who were once the backbone of showbiz. But age ain’t stopping ’em! Still going strong in their own studio, they produce short films and other creative endeavors. This film follows one such project, from the first brainstorming session all the way to the premiere, revealing enduring dreams and hopes beyond the time-light – and lessons in life and love.

ICH ICH ICH

A surreal comedy about finding your true self, ICH ICH ICH has Marie, early-30s, overwhelmed by her boyfriend Julian’s marriage proposal. Her attempts to clear her mind result in a near takeover by her “thought people”: which is to say that we see her thoughts as real people who all know what’s best for her. They start by questioning her relationship and soon her whole life is under the microscope: they all want her to make certain decisions, but what does she actually want? Whilst Julian grapples with his own “thought-people,” Marie decides on an experiment: What if the solution isn’t to obey your own thoughts but accept them and make them visible to others? To Julian? But how much honesty can a relationship take?
DAS JOSHUA-PROFIL

Oscar®-winning director Jochen Alexander Freydank wrapped shooting on DAS JOSHUA-PROFIL in mid-September. The psychological thriller is based on the eponymous bestseller by the internationally acclaimed novelist Sebastian Fitzek. The gripping tale of a law-abiding writer who is wrongfully identified as the future perpetrator of a crime touches on timely and complex issues such as data mining and predictive policing. The resulting race against time weaves through a sweltering Berlin summer as the writer attempts to clear his name and save his daughter from the real criminals— but, in doing so, he realizes the immensity of his adversaries and how difficult it will be to regain the life he once had...

KAHLSLAG

Hailing from Rostock on Germany’s Baltic Sea coast, writer-director Max Gleschinski and his DoP Jean-Pierre Meyer-Gehrke are embarking this autumn on the production of their debut feature film, the tragic-absurd thriller KAHLSLAG, which is set against the backdrop of the atmospheric rural landscape of north-west Mecklenburg.

Different paths in life and the fact both of them fell in love with the same woman had torn Martin and Eric’s friendship apart. They have now come together again for one last Sunday fishing trip at the local lake. While Martin is hoping that they can finally put their differences to rest, Eric’s thoughts are focused on taking bloody revenge...

KU’DAMM 59

Director Sven Bohse has returned to the Berlin of the late 1950s for KU’DAMM 59, the sequel of the successful ZDF three-partner KU’DAMM 56, about the proprietor of the dance school “Galant”, Caterina Schollack, and her three daughters, Monika, Eva and Helga. Annette Hess’ script focuses once again on the image of women and follows Monika and her sisters as they search for their own new identity, with such issues as emancipation, family structures and the desire for female self-determination at the center of the action. The story of the Schollack family is exemplary for many women at a time when a woman’s life was often determined by her place next to her husband and defined by clear social expectations.
LILIANE SUSEWINDEDANY Stewner’s internationally successful children’s book series Liliane Susewind is finally coming to the big screen and is being directed by Joachim Masannek (THE WILD SOCCER BUNCH). 11-year-old Liliane “Lilli” Susewind can talk to animals! This is a secret that nobody should know except for her parents. Her special talent has caused enough trouble in the past and is forcing the family to move again. Lilli vows to keep her secret to herself when they arrive at their new home – until she learns that a mean animal thief has kidnapped the baby elephant Ronni from the local zoo. Together with her new classmate Jess, Lilli sets off on an adventure to save Ronni and the other animals!

SPIELMACHERIVO, former professional footballer and jailbird with nothing to lose, is a betting natural. His feel for the sport and background draw the interest of Dejan, who takes him into his family, sucking him quickly into football’s underbelly, a world of global fraud and manipulation where individuals are merely small cogs in an international network whose digital tentacles stretch all the way to China and beyond. But when Ivo meets young Lukas, a talented lad in whom he sees his former self, and starts training him for a top team trial while, at the same time, supposedly grooming and manipulating him on Dejan’s behalf, he also falls in love with the boy’s mother. Now Ivo finds himself caught between two fronts and two families, and has to decide...

STORY OF BERLINAfter making a series of highly visual and often unconventional shorts such as the award-winning NOW FOLLOWS and RHINO FULL THROTTLE, Erik Schmitt has now embarked on his feature debut, STORY OF BERLIN (working title), which employs many in-camera tricks and plays with various filming techniques.

Schmitt’s “regular” leading lady Marleen Lohse plays the Berlin tourist guide Kleo who had once been searching for a magical clock with her late father. When the adventurer Paul appears with a treasure map that may indicate the clock’s whereabouts, the two set off on a common quest – with Kleo using her special gift of contact with the city’s soul and many of its past celebrities...
UNWIEDERBRINGLICH ENTFLIEHT DIE ZEIT – EINE CHRONIK

UNWIEDERBRINGLICH ENTFLIEHT DIE ZEIT – EINE CHRONIK is a feature-length documentary about letting go. Shot in a style that is reflective as well as humorous, Carmen Treichl follows her grandparents as their lives come to a close. In the constant conflict between grandchild and filmmaker, she is forced to leave her comfort zone. In her so doing, the camera offers a path with which she and all those concerned, along with the viewer, can deal with death. The familiar routines crumble slowly and are replaced by an acceptance that time, irreplaceable and beyond all value, is indeed escaping. A portrait of the present.

GENRE Chronicle CATEGORY Documentary
DIRECTOR Carmen Treichl CINEMATOGRAPHY Carmen Treichl PRODUCERS Carmen Treichl, France Orsenne, in co-production with Deutsche Film- und Fernsehakademie Berlin (DFFB) LANGUAGE German

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WENDY 2

Following the box-office success of the first film about teenager Wendy Thorsteeg’s life with horses (WENDY – THE MOVIE), the cast has now been reunited under the direction of Hanno Olderdissen for a sequel with new adventures. Wendy has been living happily with her parents at Rosenborg for the past year, but her granny’s horse ranch is close to bankruptcy. When Wendy learns that the owner of the neighboring stable is organizing a youth tournament, it seems that winning the top prize might solve all their problems. The traumatized show horse Penny has the potential to win if she wasn’t afraid of jumping...and then Wendy also has to make sure that she isn’t neglecting her invalid horse Dixie...

GENRE Children & Youth, Family Entertainment CATEGORY Feature DIRECTOR Hanno Olderdissen SCREENPLAY Caroline Hecht CAST Julie Hermann, Jasmin Gerat, Maren Kroyman, Benjamin Sadler, Nadeshda Brennicke PRODUCERS Eva Holtmann, Jan Kromschroder PRODUCTION COMPANY Bantry Bay Productions, in co-production with Deutsche Columbia Pictures Filmproduktion LANGUAGE German

SALES
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WUFF – FOLGE DEM HUND

Horses had been in the spotlight of Detlev Buck’s highly successful BIBI & TINA series of films, but the director has now turned his attention to man’s best friend, showing how the lives of our four-legged friends’ masters and mistresses are invariably turned topsy-turvy while they learn more about themselves and find true love thanks to their new doggy companions...

The comedy’s cute mutts appear opposite a resplendent human cast including Kostja Ullmann (MY BLIND DATE WITH LIFE), Frederick Lau (VICTORIA), Emily Cox (THE LAST KINGDOM) and Johanna Wokalek (POPE JOAN).

GENRE Comedy CATEGORY Feature DIRECTOR Detlev Buck SCREENPLAY Detlev Buck, Andrea Willson CAST Kostja Ullmann, Frederick Lau, Emily Cox, Marie Burchard, Johanna Wokalek, Urs Jucker, Maite Kelly, Judy Winter PRODUCERS Christoph Daniel, Marc Schmidheiny, Detlev Buck, Sonja Schmitt PRODUCTION COMPANY DCM Pictures, in co-production with Bucket, SevenPictures Film LANGUAGE German

CONTACT
DCM Pictures
www.dcmworld.com
GERMAN FILMS
SERVICE + MARKETING

is the national information and advisory center for the promotion of German films worldwide. It was established in 1954 under the name Export-Union of German Cinema as the umbrella association for the Association of German Feature Film Producers, the Association of New German Feature Film Producers and the Association of German Film Exporters, and operates today in the legal form of a limited company. In 2004, the company was reorganized and now operates under the name: German Films Service + Marketing GmbH.

SHAREHOLDERS are the German Producers Association, 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 Medienanstalt NRW, Medienboard Berlin-Brandenburg, and the German Short Film Association.

German Films’ budget of presently €4.72 million comes from film export levies, the office of the Federal Government Commissioner for Culture and the Media, and the FFA. The eight main regional film funds [FilmFernsehFonds Bayern, Filmförderung Hamburg Schleswig-Holstein, Film- und Medienanstalt NRW, HessenFilm, Medienboard Berlin-Brandenburg, MFG Baden-Württemberg, Mitteldeutsche Medienförderung, and Nordmedia] make a financial contribution – currently amounting to €362,000 – 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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Martin Scheuring Project Coordinator & Short Film
Sabrina Schrödl Assistant to the Managing Director
Bernhard Simek Regional Coordinator: Eastern Europe, Documentary Film

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 in Cannes
- Publication of informational literature about current German films and the German film industry, as well as international market analyses and special festival brochures
- A website (www.german-films.de) 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
- Organization with UniFrance of the annual German-French film meeting
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Looking forward to seeing you

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