THE FALL ISSUE

DIRECTORS Carolina Hellsgård & Özgür Yildirim
PRODUCERS Arek Gielnik, Sonia Otto & Dietmar Ratsch of INDI FILM
ACTOR Fahri Yardim
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No, not the lady herself, although she could be handy in a fight, but rather Carolina Hellsgård’s one liner to her latest film, the apocalyptic zombie horror and female relationship drama that is ENDZEIT – EVER AFTER, which has just taken the Toronto International Film Festival 2018 by storm. It garnered any number of plaudits, such as The Hollywood Reporter’s Stephen Dalton calling it “An enjoyably grim fairy tale that injects fresh life into the undead genre... a smart and stylish treat, with two engaging leads and plenty of fresh ideas” and is now, according to sales agency Picture Tree International, selling like hot cakes.

Carolina Hellsgård hails from Sweden and moved to Germany in 2001 to study Experimental Media Design at the Berlin University of Arts, where she worked with Hartmut Bitomsky, Thomas Arslan and others, “and making several shorts, sometimes with people from the DFFB.” On graduating in 2008 she won a grant and a year at CalArts to study film Directing and Screenwriting. Returning to Berlin she made her first feature, WANJA, “about a female bank robber who leaves prison to go straight. It showed at the 2015 Berlinale and went on to other festivals, getting a release in 2016.” It was nominated for the Berlinale Best First Feature Award 2015, won the Best Feature Film Debut at the Biberacher Filmfestspiele and also the Best Screenplay at Valetta IFF in 2015.

Prior to Berlin, Hellsgård gained an MA in Film Theory and History at Stockholm University, that giving her an exchange to the Berlin University of Arts “where I stayed. The theoretical background to a film is very important for me, I’m formal in my approach. I look for a cinematic form which ties into the state of being that the characters are presently in: the person in the film influences the cinematic image since it reflects the characters’ inner state.” Right. So how does that work with zombies? Incredibly well, as we now know.

“LYRICISM PUNCTUATED BY VIOLENCE”
A plague has swept the world. Weimar and Jena, the only surviving cities, have very different approaches to the epidemic. In Weimar, Vivi (Gro Swantje Kohlhof), vulnerable and numb as a result of apocalypse-triggered tragedies, reluctantly volunteers at the city’s perimeter. It is at the ramshackle outer fences, requiring constant defence from attacks by infectious cannibal revenants, that she meets Eva (Maja Lehrer), whose icy stoicism makes a striking contrast to Vivi’s delicate fragility. Following an attack at their post, they board an automated supply train bound for Jena, whose more humane approach to the victims of the epidemic offers some hope for the future. When the train unexpectedly breaks down, Vivi and Eva are left to fend for themselves in a countryside teeming with dangers and marvels they never dreamed of.

“When I read Olivia Vieweg’s screenplay, I was fascinated by the topic of guilt,” Hellsgård explains. “As a person, you often feel guilty about certain things. It’s about all the bad stuff we did and all the good things we did not do. A horror movie is a great tool to confront the characters with their own lives, and question their own morals, as well as challenge their inner demons. How does one exist as a human being in this world? How do I treat other people? And when I face chaos and difficulties, how do I react?”

At the time of this interview Hellsgård was unsure if she was even allowed to mention TIFF taking the film for the Discovery sidebar, “We were not even finished, it was still in the rough cut”, and the official announcement yet to be made. But she was certainly un上市 in praising her key and female team: DoP Leah Striker “a fantastic and very experienced camerawoman. I had been an admirer of the set designer Jenny Rösler’s work for a long time. The costume designer Teresa Grosser has her own style and provided a very strong costume concept, which I loved.” The composer Franziska Henke and producers Inge Lore König and Claudia Schröter are also female, and, of course, the two leads, Gro Swantje Kohlhof and Maja Lehrer. But a read of the end crawl shows the production was actually 50-50 male and female, Hellsgård believing that to be the best ratio.

She certainly knows her way around genre as well, perhaps growing up with all those Swedish trolls! “I grew up with Nordic fairy tales with trolls in the forest and moral questions about right and wrong,” Hellsgård expands on the theme. “Zombies are like trolls. They embody existential anxieties. Here they also embody how we treat the environment and how we relate to nature.” Bringing all the elements together, and her love of anti-heroes, of people who are outsiders in society, marginalized, how they live and deal with problems, daily struggles, their dreams and emotions, and a post-apocalyptic zombie film, “arthouse horror” as she calls it, is the perfect vehicle. She cites 28 DAYS and THE GIRL WITH ALL THE GIFTS (“One of the best endings ever”) as two of her favorites, along with RAW and GET OUT.

Hellsgård, who used to be a film critic before there was an Internet and took herself off to Cannes, is now working on her third feature film, SUNBURNED, in which 12-year-old Claire is holidaying with her family in Spain. While being neglected by her mother and sister, she meets a Senegalese immigrant called Amram on the beach. As a part of a childish game she makes him a promise she can’t break.

“It’s my own script,” Hellsgård continues, “based on my childhood memories, the eternal power struggle between my sister and I, and how we alternated between being friends and in conflict with each other. I remember how the holidays allowed us to take on new personas, and how our teenage-selves evolved as we encountered new people,” she continues. “It was an intoxicating feeling, closely related to the promise of leaving our childhood behind. Our road to adulthood often took place against the backdrop of poverty and political unrest in the countries we visited. But like most tourists we indulged in the food, people and culture, instead of reflecting upon the circumstances. SUNBURNED is about all this; tourism, immigration and ultimately the dream about Europe. The film centers around the story of two young people and their shared longing for a better existence.”

Every film she makes, Hellsgård explains, “is a reaction to the one before.” So where WANJA is “strict and minimalistic,” ENDZEIT is “maximalistic”. “SUNBURNED, will have a different pace.” And for the one after that, “I want it to be a thriller. I absolutely love a good plot. It gives me lots of freedom to make it more atmospheric. I plan to make a very plot driven and hard boiled thriller, a Berlin Noir. I like it where you can’t trust the main character. Evil or good is too easy.”

Apart from her love of film, Hellsgård has a special place in her heart for Berlin as well: “I feel privileged to be here,” she enthuses. “There are lots of very talented people around and Berlin is a great city! I graduated ten years ago and have been working extremely hard, collaborating with new people, it’s a very dynamic place to be. You need a certain amount of luck as a director, you need good people and I found them here.”

Ticking off names that inspire her, Hellsgård mentions Lynne Ramsay, Claire Denis, Valeska Grisebach, Andrea Arnold, as well as her admiration of actors such as Michael Fassbender, Léa Seydoux and Joaquin Phoenix. And for the obligatory “What do you do when you are not doing this?” question, she says she reads, “A lot! A lot!” and after a thought, “I also play badminton!”

This just in: ENDZEIT – EVER AFTER has just been sold to yet another territory. Market premiers are scheduled for Rome’s MIA market, AFM has now been confirmed and there are numerous festival enquiries rolling in. Not at all bad for a second feature.

As Yuan Rothbauer, co-managing director of Picture Tree International says: “Carolina Hellsgård is without a doubt one of the most interesting and versatile young filmmakers working in German cinema today.”

Simon Kingsley
I have always had a passion for writing and when I started making my first films, I saw this as being the ideal combination,” says 39-year-old Özgür Yildirim who has made four features since his debut with the drama CHIKO in 2008. Hamburg-born Yildirim had published a collection of horror short stories under the title of Grey Nights at the tender of age of 14, but subsequently borrowed a Hi-8 camera from a friend and started experimenting in making short films. It didn’t take long before he had caught the film bug and then concentrated his writing talents on developing screenplays for the cinema.

One of his Hi-8 films – DON JUAN DE TÜRKO – won the Audience Award at Hamburg’s International Short Film Festival in 2000, and he also won other prizes for shorts made during his studies at the Hamburg Media School (2002-2004), including LIEBE AUF TÜRKISCH and ALIM MARKET, the latter being nominated for the Short Tiger Award at the Filmfest München in 2005.

Produced by fellow Hamburg-based director Fatih Akin’s production outfit corazón international, Yildirim’s feature directorial debut CHIKO focused on two young men of Turkish background from the suburban ghettos of Hamburg – played by Denis Moschitto as Chiko and Volkan Özcan as his best friend Tibet – who believe that money, power and respect are all important until their friendship is put to the test when Chiko becomes embroiled in working for the local drug lord Brownie (Moritz Bleibtreu). The film – which premiered at the Berlinale’s Panorama in 2008 – received German Film Awards for Best Screenplay and Best Editing as well as nominations for Best Film and Best Leading Actor and established Yildirim with one fell swoop as one of the most exciting new filmmaking talents to appear on the German film scene.

Three years later, he followed his debut with the hip-hop comedy BLUTZBRUDAZ, produced by corazón with Constantin Film and starring real-life rap artists Sido and B Tight as two talented rappers who have a habit of attracting trouble. He then started a collaboration with local Hamburg production house Wüste Medien from 2012 on directing
episodes of the North German strand of the TATORT detective series.

In 2014, Yildirim then directed BOY 7, a German adaptation of Mirjam Mous’ novel starring David Kross, Emilia Schüle and Ben Münchow, which was made at the same time as a Dutch version by Lourens Blok, with the German film subsequently awarded the Newcomer Producer Award to producer Dorothee Beinemeier at the 2016 Bavarian Film Awards and receiving Jupiter Award nominations for Best Film and Best Actor.

Meanwhile, Yildirim’s fourth feature, ONLY GOD CAN JUDGE ME, saw him reunited with Moritz Bleibtreu almost 10 years after CHIKO for another drama set in the world of petty gangsters, but this time with a change of setting from Hamburg to the mean streets of Frankfurt. Bleibtreu, who also co-produced the hard-hitting film through his own production company Paloma Entertainment, plays a small-time gangster Ricky who has served time in prison for a botched heist by his brother Rafael and partner in crime Latif. Shortly after his release, he is made an offer by Latif that seems too good to be true and ultimately too good to refuse. But none of them have reckoned with the crooked cop Diana who needs the loot to save her child’s life. Produced by Constantin Film subsidiary Rat Pack Filmproduktion, ONLY GOD CAN JUDGE ME was presented with the 2017 Hesse Film and Cinema Prize for Best Feature Film and was released in German cinemas at the beginning of this year.

CHIKO and ONLY GOD CAN JUDGE ME have led some critics to label Yildirim as ‘Germany’s gangster filmmaker’. “I can understand to a certain extent why people think this way when you look at my past films, even BLUTZBRUDAZ, and now the second season of 4 BLOCKS which I have shot with Oliver Hirschbiegel,” he says. “I admit that I do have a soft spot for this milieu, but, as a director, I like telling stories wherever they might be set. I have never planned to make films about gangsters my particular trademark. But there aren’t so many people making gangster films in Germany, so that’s why they come on this label.”

At the same time, Yildirim, who has drawn inspiration from watching films by the likes of Martin Scorsese, Brian de Palma, Danny Boyle, Quentin Tarantino and Denis Ville-neuve, has made his contribution to the development of a genre cinema in Germany over the past decade. “The Americans, French and Scandinavians are a lot further than the Germans as far as genre films are concerned,” he explains. “There’s more risk taking and more writers and directors interested in working in this field. There have been improvements in Germany in recent years, but it is still much harder to convince people to back a genre film than, say, a comedy or a drama. I have always been interested in genre;” Yildirim continues. “It began with the horror stories that I wrote, and genre allows one to express certain things in a much more abstract and profound way than if one has to adhere to the need for authenticity.”

“Authenticity is also something he aims to achieve when working with his actors. “It’s always important for me that I can believe what’s happening to them at a particular moment and that I’ll believe the emotions they are expressing. Every word must be spot on and that’s a big challenge,” he explains. “I’m someone who goes through the lines with the actors on set and discusses the scenes and characters so that I can give them a clear idea about each character and their actions. I give them a framework for them to move within.”

Meanwhile, a new exciting chapter in Yildirim’s career began this year when he was hired to direct four episodes in the second season of the high-end series 4 BLOCKS, which is produced by Munich-based production house Wiedemann & Berg for pay TV channel TNT Serie.

“IT was an exciting new experience,” he observes. “You have the chance to tell a longer story and have more time for each of the characters. A particular challenge is that there is less shooting time on set: on ONLY GOD CAN JUDGE ME we had 31 shooting days, but there were only 37 days for four episodes of 4 BLOCKS, so it meant that I had practically shot two feature films in almost the same time.”

The gangster drama set in Berlin’s Neukölln district – which began airing on TNT in October – also marked the continuation of a collaboration with the Swiss-born DoP Matthias Bolliger whom Yildirim has known since his student days in Hamburg. “I rate him highly because he is always prepared to re-invent himself from one project to the next,” the director says about his cinematographer. “We always come together to talk about the projects at a very early stage before the actual shoot to decide on the kind of visual style we want to follow. He is someone I can trust unconditionally, and the same goes for my editor Sebastian Thumler who has worked on my feature films as well as the TATORT episodes.”

As for the future, Yildirim is loathe to make any high-faluting statements about future projects for the cinema, although one currently in development could see him making a foray into quite a new area. Certainly, with his ability to move seemingly effortlessly between cinema and TV projects, Yildirim looks set to remain a name to watch in the future.

Martin Blaney
NDI FILM’s co-founders Arek Gielnik and Dietmar Ratsch first met and started working together over 20 years ago when Gielnik was studying Audiovisual Media at the Stuttgart Media University (HBM) and Ratsch following the course of Documentary Direction at the Filmakademie Baden-Württemberg in Ludwigsburg.

“Parallel to our studies, we worked on some short films and realized that we were interested in following similar subject matter for films and so decided to make our graduation film together,” Gielnik recalls. The result was the feature documentary ICED LEMONADE FOR HONG LI (2000), a portrait of two different generations in today’s Vietnam, with Ratsch directing and Gielnik producing, which was subsequently invited to the Berlinale’s Forum section in 2001.

In July of that year, the two decided to set up their joint production company INDI FILM in Ludwigsburg. This was followed by a branch office in Berlin in 2003 where Ratsch is now based along with producer Sonia Otto, who studied Cultural Studies at the Humboldt University in Berlin and Audiovisual Communication at the Universidad de Sevilla. The company’s main office is now located in Stuttgart since 2011.

The first production under the INDI FILM label was the SWR commission COUNTRY LOVE (2003) where Ratsch served as director, author and DoP, and many of the production outfit’s subsequent productions – such as AFGHANS DON’T FLIRT (2004), JUDGE LIFELONG (2006), and NEUKÖLLN UNLIMITED (2010) – have seen him behind the camera or in the director’s chair.

“We see ourselves as having created a special niche for ourselves in the German documentary landscape,” Ratsch explains. “Our documentaries have an observational style and are structured dramaturgically in such a way that they meet the demands for a feature-length film.”

Looking back over the last 16 years of producing documentaries, Gielnik suggests that there are certain common threads running through the films they have worked on. “If you take films like AFGHANS DON’T FLIRT, LAND IN SIGHT, NEUKÖLLN UNLIMITED or BASTION OF SIN, they all focus on how different cultures are able to live together whether it be in Germany or in other countries, how we can live together with different perspectives on life,” he says. “That has always moved us and continues to do so.”
“And we have also been interested in making political films in the widest sense of the word,” Sonia Otto adds, pointing to David Bernet’s DEMOCRACY about the political fight for a new data protection law in the EU or currently Evelyn Schels’ BODY OF TRUTH accompanying the internationally famous artists Marina Abramovic, Sigalit Landau, Katharina Sieverding and Shirin Neshat on an emotional journey through their biographies addressing such complex topics as power, violence, and sexuality in a very human and sensual way.

“Many of our films have been regularly shown by the Goethe-Institute, Bundeszentrale für Politische Bildung and other educational institutes,” Ratsch notes. “It has always been important for us that our films have a political message and highlight social injustices, but do this in an accessible way.

“David Bernet’s DEMOCRACY is a case in point,” Gielnik suggests. “We worked on this film for six years and its initial logline was very dry since the film’s subject was about the proposed legislation for data protection. That didn’t make it easy to finance. But our approach was to reach the audience through emotions by way of its style and the two protagonists. The result was a very emotional film about the work of the EU politicians and lobbyists.” DEMOCRACY was nominated for the 2016 German Film Award and won the 2017 German Documentary Award.

“And we attach great importance to the films being character-driven and for the subject matter to be told via the protagonists,” Ratsch adds.

From its very beginnings, INDI FILM has had a particular focus on documentaries and this has always been important for us that our films have a political message and highlight social injustices, but do this in an accessible way.

“The decision to also make films for children and young people has something to do with our own personal developments,” Gielnik explains. “We were both in our early thirties when we set up the company and have since had families.”

After producing its first feature, HABIB RHAPSODY by Michael Baumann, INDI FILM’s second feature, NELLY’S ADVENTURE centers on a little girl who plans a bank raid. The project received development support from the Special Children’s Film initiative, which was set up to promote more original screenplays for young audiences, and has been pitched at various industry events throughout Europe, including CineKid Pro in Amsterdam last autumn where it won the Burny Bos Award. “We had some very positive feedback from foreign producers,” Gielnik recalls. “The story isn’t seen as being typically German and has more of an international appeal because we are looking at universal truths, at good and bad from a child’s perspective.”

The company is now preparing its second project for young audiences – LUCY GOES GANGSTA – to be directed by Till Endemann who has co-written the screenplay with Andreas Gordes about a little girl who plans a bank raid. The project received development support from the Special Children’s Film initiative, which was set up to promote more original screenplays for young audiences, and has been pitched at various industry events throughout Europe, including CineKid Pro in Amsterdam last autumn where it won the Burny Bos Award. “We had some very positive feedback from foreign producers,” Gielnik recalls. “The story isn’t seen as being typically German and has more of an international appeal because we are looking at universal truths, at good and bad from a child’s perspective.”

In fact, co-production has become an increasingly important element of INDI FILM’s work with the company either serving as a minority co-producer on third party projects or attracting partners for its own productions. “We started the classic way, working on our own German-based productions, but then the success of a film like NEUKÖLLN UNLIMITED with its Crystal Bear at the Berlinale got us known outside of Germany,” Otto says.

Since then, INDI FILM has looked beyond Germany’s borders to scout for interesting projects and like-minded partners such as France’s SEPPIA (DEMOCRACY, THE CATHEDRAL), Poland’s Centrala Film (MONK OF THE SEA), Austria’s Mischief Films (GIRLS DON’T FLY), and Switzerland’s Mons Veneris Films (#FEMALE PLEASURE) or DokLab (BODY OF TRUTH).

“The pitch of #FEMALE PLEASURE by the director Barbara Miller and the Swiss producer immediately attracted us, we liked their vision,” says Gielnik about the portrait of five courageous, smart and self-determined women breaking the silence imposed by their archaic-patriarch societies and religious communities. Miller’s film premiered in the Semaine de la Critique in Locarno in August this year where it received the Premio Zonta Club Locarno 2018 for a film with special social commitment, and will have its German premiere at this year’s DOK Leipzig.

After the success of DEMOCRACY, INDI FILM is pleased to be working again with David Bernet on the development of his new documentary project SOLIDARITY, a film about the multifaceted present and the secret of solidarity.

While the company is embarking on new collaborations with other members of its “film family” such as Michael Baumann, Dominik Wessely, and Jens Becker, INDI FILM also has two projects in development with Polish partner Centrala whose MONK OF THE SEA had premiered in Locarno two years ago.

Kuba Czekaj’s genre mix LIPSTICK ON THE GLASS is described as “a story of sweet desire, promises that seduce like a tender kiss, and of bloody, inescapable revenge”, while Munich-based Tomasz Emil Rudzik’s tragi-comedy BLACK MADONNA centers on a staunch atheist and misanthrope who has grown weary of life until he meets a seemingly life-affirming Polish medical student.

“These projects mark a new chapter in our company’s development with larger art-house crossover projects. We now want to move out of that low-budget bracket of under 2 million euros to higher budgets with greater commercial potential in the future,” Gielnik concludes.

Martin Blaney
MODESTY & CONFIDENCE

A PORTRAIT OF ACTOR FAHRI YARDIM
G F Q 4 - 2 0 1 8

his colleague Moritz Bleibtreu played a key role in Yardim's decision to act after his Akin or Til Schweiger were doing in German school graduation more than 20 years ago cinema at the end of the 90s were almost seemed as if the things people like Fatih "I

"When I saw him as Abdul in KNOCKIN' ON HEAVEN'S DOOR at that time, I realized that a little black-haired guy could also make his way on the big screen," he remembers. "It seemed as if the things people like Fatih Akin or Til Schweiger were doing in German cinema at the end of the 90s were almost inviting me to get involved as well."

Two decades later Yardim, born to Turkish parents in Hamburg in 1980, has long since found his personal place in German cinema. The journey from his first screen appearance in Anno Saul's KEBAB CONNECTION to his latest film for the cinema, CUT OFF (in which, by the way, Bleibtreu is also part of the team) was actually remarkably straightforward; for years he played one supporting role after another before drawing increased attention with the festival and audience success ALMANYA – WELCOME TO GERMANY by the sisters Yasemin and Nesrin Samdereli (receiving prizes not only at the German Film Awards but also in Chicago, Odessa and Antalya) in 2011.

Since he was seen alongside Til Schweiger two years later as a detective in the latter's well-viewed - in every respect - TATORT episodes, there is scarcely a day that passes when he isn't recognized on the street. "I've gotten used to that now," Yardim says in our interview, laughing. "But I am really glad that I wasn't blessed with such a rocket launch into my career as Elyas M'Barek, for example. I think that could have spoiled me, as I would have been overwhelmed by the noise of my own ego. The more difficult but healthy route was actually a smoother one for me."

The key to success for the 38-year-old actor - besides talent and his charming, sympathetic character - has always been hard work. "Earlier on, I was also driven by a certain panic," he says to explain the fact that until recently, he could be seen four or five times a year on average on the big screen or television. "I never could bear the noise of my own ego. The more difficult but healthy route was actually a smoother one for me."

However, Yardim does not want this project to be seen as him eyeing up Hollywood, although he has great respect for the career of Sylvia Hoeks, for example, with whom he acted last year in WHATEVER HAPPENS, and he also recalls with immense pleasure the chance he had to work with Ben Kingsley on the bestseller adaptation of THE PHYSICIAN: "I was literally shaking when I came face to face with him. But that encounter forced me to grow beyond myself. I wanted to hold my own. I think being slightly over-challenged does you good."

More than ever now, the father of a young daughter living in Berlin wishes to direct the energy won from hard work and new challenges towards projects of his own. The meta comedy series JERKS developed together with Christian Ulmen - thanks to which he has "grasped more than ever that [he] won't settle for any more weak compromises" - will soon be entering a third season. In addition, since 2017 he has been running the production company Bon Voyage Films with Amir Hamz and Christian Springer, hoping to embark upon projects that combine high standards with entertainment. A task that again reveals Yardim's modesty and simultaneous confidence when he confirms as we say good-bye: "I would recommend producing to every actor. It dampens your egos! EXPERIENCING what a long journey a film has covered even before you get involved, and how much further it sails after you have long gone from board - that taught me humility."

Patrick Heidmann
At the end of August, an independent jury appointed by German Films selected NEVER LOOK AWAY by Florian Henckel von Donnersmarck to represent Germany as the official submission for the 91st Oscar® in the category Best Foreign Language Film. A total of 11 films were submitted for the selection process.

The nine-person jury, headed by jury representative Moritz Hemminger (Association of German Film Exporters), substantiated its decision as follows: “With great epic breadth, NEVER LOOK AWAY tells a moving story of an artist’s fate in post-war Germany, in a time where it was difficult to find one’s own artistic language. Supported by a terrific ensemble of actors, the film has great poetic moments and poses an essential question which is still relevant today: Finding one’s own stance.”

For director Florian Henckel von Donnersmarck, this is second time in the running for the Oscar® for Best Foreign Language Film: in 2006, his film THE LIVES OF OTHERS was selected as the German submission and won the Oscar® for Best Foreign Language Film in 2007.

Inspired by true events, NEVER LOOK AWAY tells the story of the art student Kurt Barnert (Tom Schilling) who falls in love with his fellow student Ellie Seeband (Paula Beer). But Ellie’s father, the celebrated medical professor Carl Seeband (Sebastian Koch), sees everything he hates and despises in this potential future son-in-law. He does everything he possibly can to destroy the relationship. But what no one knows is that their fates are already intertwined through a horrible crime Seeband committed many years ago. NEVER LOOK AWAY is an emotional rollercoaster ride through three decades of German history, told through the eyes of a young artist in whose family the paths of both victims and perpetrators tragically cross.

Sales agent and co-producer Beta Cinema has already sold Florian Henckel von Donnersmarck’s film in over 60 territories, including Spain, Italy, France, UK, Latin America, and the USA. Sony Pictures Classics will release the film in US cinemas.
Three German Shorts Nominated for the European Short Film Award

The European Film Awards are traditionally presented in December, and the European Short Film 2018 will also be awarded. Films qualify for nomination by winning an award at one of 15 European film festivals. Three German short films and co-productions are already on the nomination list this year. CONTAINER by Sebastian Lang was awarded at the Cork Film Festival 2017, BURKINA BRANDENBURG KOMPLEX by Ulu Braun is the Short Film Nominee of the Berlinale 2018, and I SIGNED THE PETITION by Mahdi Fleifel – a co-production by Germany, UK and Switzerland – found its way onto the nomination list by winning at the Sarajevo Film Festival in August. The winners of the International Short Film Festival in Drama (Greece) and the Encounters Short Film and Animation Festival Bristol (UK) have not yet been nominated.

Four German Shorts Among Finalists for Student Oscars®

In August, the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences published the list of finalists for this year’s Student Academy Awards® and this year there were four films from Germany among them: in the category Animation AUGENBLICKE – A BLINK OF AN EYE by Kiana Naghshineh (Filmakademie Baden-Württemberg), in the Documentary category TRACING ADDAI by Esther Niemeier (Film University Babelsberg KONRAD WOLFI) and F32.2 by Annelie Boros (University of Television and Film Munich), and in the Narrative category WAS BLEIBT by Eileen Byrne (University of Television and Film Munich) were among the finalists.

EWIP: New Platform for Producers, Financers, Sales Agents & Distributors

The first edition of the European Work in Progress Cologne (EWIP) presented a special premiere at the beginning of October during the 28th Film Festival Cologne: on the initiative of the Consortium of Independent Distributors (AG Verleih), German and international producers came together to present their “works in progress” to distributors, other co-producers, buyers, financiers, festival representatives and market experts. The project was supported by the Film- und Medienstiftung NRW. More than 100 film projects from 49 countries were submitted. The jury – consisting of Jonas Dornbach, Olimpia Pont Cháfer, Aistė Račaitytė and Pernille Munk Skydsgaard – selected 25 high-quality European feature film projects with the potential to attract an international cinema audience. In addition to pitchings, moderated panels also took place during the event and prizes were handed out at an awards ceremony.

Face to Face with German Talent in London

For the first time, German Films partnered with the Regent Street Cinema in London to present FACE TO FACE WITH GERMAN TALENT: THE GERMAN FILM WEEKEND to local London audiences from 21-23 September 2018. The program was curated by The Daily Telegraph’s film critic Tim Robey and presented five films from and featuring directors and actors from the FACE TO FACE WITH GERMAN FILMS campaigns. The weekend event opened with Emily Atef introducing the UK premiere of her film 3 DAYS IN QUIBERON, followed by screenings of 24 WEEKS with leading actress Julia Jentsch in attendance, WE ARE YOUNG. WE ARE STRONG. presented by director Burhan Qurbani, as well as the London premiere of THE CAPTAIN (featuring Alexander Fehling), and closed off with OH BOY starring Tom Schilling. The attending talent was welcomed by enthusiastic audiences and was able to engage in lively discussions with them during the Q&As following the films. The event was met with very positive feedback from both filmgoers and press alike.
SUSTAINABILITY SAVES MONEY: FFA PRESENTS ENVIRONMENTAL HANDBOOK FOR CINEMA OPERATORS

Resource management, environmental and climate protection are increasingly important topics in the film industry – especially as the digitalization in film theaters is leading to a drastic rise in energy costs. The German Federal Film Board (FFA) has therefore decided to compile an extensive compendium on the subject of sustainability: the Green Cinema Handbook.

A more efficient use of electricity, heating and cooling as well as winning energy through renewable sources provide an enormous saving potential, benefitting cinema theaters and environmental protection in equal measures. The objectives of the Green Cinema Handbook include, among others, encouraging an exchange of experiences and lessons learned amongst cinema operators in the areas of energy efficiency, eco-power, concessions and waste management. Tried and tested solutions and concepts for sustainable cinema management will be presented in the form of best practice cases.

The vast range of possibilities reaches from minor proposals with very little cost to elaborate investments that can be supported through various funding initiatives. The 172-paged reference guide was presented at this year’s cinematic art market, the Filmkunstmesse, in September in Leipzig. The Green Cinema Handbook is available online at www.ffa.de and www.grüneskino.de.

HONORARY INSPIRATION AWARD FOR CARL BERGENGRUEN

Within the framework of the German Actor’s Award ceremony in September, Prof. Carl Bergengruen, managing director of the MFG Baden-Württemberg, was honored for his initiative in upholding social standards in film production with the Honorary Inspiration Award.

In 2018, MFG became the first film funding institution in Germany to integrate social standards criteria into their funding guidelines for production support. When applying for funding from MFG, producers must declare that they will uphold industry-level and social standards. Should this not be the case, the producers must offer explanation for why this is not possible. Film projects which cannot guarantee that the production of the project will not subject the employees, cast and crew to precarious conditions may be declined by the funding committee for this reason.

18TH FESTIVAL OF GERMAN FILMS IN BUENOS AIRES

The Festival of German Films in Buenos Aires attracted 6,000 spectators this year to the Village Cines Recoleta and Caballito cinemas. The audience’s passion for German cinema is not only demonstrated in figures, but also in the enthusiastic reception given to the filmmakers when they come to Buenos Aires. The director Hans Weingartner opened this year’s 18th edition (which took place from 13-19 September) with his new film 303, which world premiered as the opening film of the Berlinale’s GENERATION sidebar. And all three screenings of the film during the festival were sold out!

In total, 15 German feature films and documentaries as well as the German Films program of short films NEXT GENERATION SHORT TIGER were shown over the course of the festival week. Local audiences had the opportunity to see the whole range of German filmmaking: from genre cinema to arthouse, from international festival successes of such festivals as Berlin, Locarno, Toronto and Shanghai to documentaries and family entertainment. In cooperation with the Goethe-Institut in Buenos Aires, the program was complemented by the silent film classic JOURNEY INTO THE NIGHT by Friedrich Wilhelm Murnau with musical accompaniment by Marcelo Katz playing one of his own compositions. The festival’s audience award went to WEIT by Gwendolin Weisser and Patrick Allgaier.

As in previous years, the Argentinian VOD provider QubitTV also accompanied the festival with an online presence, giving Argentinian film buffs the chance to also see even more German films on the “small screen”.

OPENING THE DOORS TO GERMAN CINEMA
26 new German productions are presented on the following 16 pages. Please visit our website www.german-films.de for more information on German features, documentaries and shorts.
After long years of estrangement, brothers Christian (43) and Georg (45) finally cross paths at their father’s funeral. A fist fight at the cemetery and a booze-fueled wake later, they drunkenly decide to realize their boyhood dream of driving across Germany on their mopeds. And so begins a journey full of exciting highs and comically-dramatic lows. A journey that allows the two brothers to reconnect and leads them to a turning point in their lives.

A heart-warming comedy about two estranged brothers and their moped journey across Germany, from the Black Forest to the Baltic Sea - never faster than 25 km/h, but always full of sex, drugs & ping pong.

MARKUS GOLLER was born in 1969 in Munich. He began his career as a freelance editor. In addition to directing numerous commercials for well-known companies such as McDonald’s, Kellogg’s and Coca-Cola, he has also directed the feature films MASK UNDER MASK (2001), FRIENDSHIP! (2009), HOT LINE (2011), FRAU ELLA (2013), MY BROTHER SIMPLE (2016), and 25 KM/H (2018).

GENRE Comedy, Road Movie
YEAR OF PRODUCTION 2018
DIRECTOR Markus Goller
SCREENPLAY Oliver Ziegenbalg
CINEMATOGRAPHY Frank Griebe
CAST Lars Eidinger, Bjarne Mädel, Sandra Hüller, Martin Brambach, Jella Haase, Alexandra Maria Lara, Wotan Wilke Möhring, Jördis Triebel
PRODUCERS Markus Goller, Oliver Ziegenbalg
CO-PRODUCERS Jan Gallasch, Tobias Herrmann
PRODUCTION COMPANY Sunny Side Up, in co-production with Pictures in a Frame, Deutsche Columbia Pictures Filmproduktion, MYTHOS FILM, 26. Babelsberg Film, Traumfabrik Babelsberg
RUNTIME 109 min
LANGUAGE German

SALES Beta Cinema
beta@betacinema.com
www.betacinema.com
Toni loves his espresso machine. Paul adores his smart phone. Toni can’t do anything without his hair-growth pills. Paul can’t function without Amazon, Siri and his sacred sneakers. More importantly, Paul and Toni can’t make it through one day without each other. They just don’t know it. Instead, the two men engage in a constant battle to see who’s the biggest and the best. One day, however, everything changes and they find themselves sitting at home without any possessions, naked and freezing, just waiting for midnight to come. It’s Day 1 of a 100-day wager Toni and Paul have made with one another. They’ve given up everything they own and will only get one item back per day. The two men immediately find themselves facing questions they’ve never thought about before. How much do we really need? How should we really live our lives? Have we all become mindless robot consumers? Do we own our possessions or do they own us? What are we without our possessions? Is there such a thing as free will? And how many times can you wear underwear before they qualify as hazardous waste? Suddenly, everyday life becomes immensely complicated, but also incredibly simple. Of course, Toni and Paul would notice this too, that is, if they weren’t still blinded by their desire to win the wager. Indeed, Toni and Paul are capable of many things: they can starve, laugh, suffer, love and cheat. But there’s one thing they can’t do, and that’s lose. Or can they?

FLORIAN DAVID FITZ studied drama at the Boston Conservatory. His acting credits include internationally acclaimed films such as MEASURING THE WORLD (2013) and audience favorites such as VINCENT WANTS TO SEA (2009). JESUS LOVES ME (2012) marked his debut as a director, followed by THE MOST BEAUTIFUL DAY (2016), which sold more than 1.6 million tickets in Germany. 100 THINGS is his latest project as writer-director and actor alongside fellow German star Matthias Schweighöfer.

GENRE Comedy
YEAR OF PRODUCTION 2018
DIRECTOR Florian David Fitz
SCREENPLAY Florian David Fitz
CINEMATOGRAPHY Bernhard Jasper
CAST Matthias Schweighöfer, Florian David Fitz, Katharina Thalbach, Hannelore Elsner, Miriam Stein
PRODUCERS Dan Maag, Daniel Sonnabend, Matthias Schweighöfer, Marco Beckmann
CO-PRODUCERS Klaus Dohle, Florian David Fitz
PRODUCTION COMPANY PANTALEON Films, in co-production with Warner Bros. Film Productions Germany, Erfttal Film & Fernsehproduktion
RUN TIME 115 min
LANGUAGE German
SALES Picture Tree International
yuan@picturetree-international.com
www.picturetree-international.com
Performing an autopsy, coroner Paul Herzfeld finds a note in the skull of a corpse with a phone number on it. The clue leads him into a life-and-death game – the life and death of his daughter! Following a trail of corpses, he has to ask cartoonist Linda for help. He finds the next lead not in his home town of Berlin but on the island of Helgoland, which is cut off from the outside world. Finally giving in to Herzfeld’s pleading, Linda performs her very first autopsy in the deserted basement of the island’s little clinic, together with caretaker and handyman Ender Müller. The autopsy isn’t the only nerve-wracking part: The killer and kidnapper seems to be here on the lonely island as well, keeping Herzfeld stuck on the mainland. Herzfeld has his intern drive him toward Helgoland. Clue by clue, they unravel the riddle they’re caught up in – an evil and vengeful plan. Will they be able to save Herzfeld’s daughter in time...?

CHRISTIAN ALVART was born in 1974. He never attended film school, yet – self-taught – he still managed to make the leap to becoming a director. After teaching himself the craft in various assistant positions, he founded his production company Syrreal Entertainment in 1997 in Berlin. In 1999, he made his feature film debut with CURIOUSITY & THE CAT, which was nominated for the Max Ophüls Prize. After his second feature film ANTIBODIES (2005), he moved to Hollywood, where he was able to prove his passion for genre films on a grand scale. For Paramount, he directed horror-thriller FALL 39 (2007), followed by the sci-fi thriller PANDORUM (2008). Back in Germany, Alvart worked as a director for the TATORT series and was hired as the director for the Hamburg episodes of the series featuring Til Schweiger. His thriller BANKLADY was released theatrically in 2013. In 2015, he directed the buddy-comedy HALF BROTHERS followed by the TATORT feature film TSCHILLER – OFF DUTY in 2016. Currently, he serves as showrunner for the dark new Netflix series DOGS OF BERLIN. He has acquired the worldwide rights for CAPTAIN FUTURE and is working on a live-action version of the series.

GENRE Thriller
YEAR OF PRODUCTION 2018
DIRECTOR Christian Alvar
SCREENPLAY Christian Alvar
CINEMATOGRAPHY Jakub Bejnarowicz
CAST Moritz Bleibtreu, Jasna Fritz, Bauer, Lars Eidinger, Fahri Yardim, Enno Hesse, Christian Kuchenbuch, Urs Jucker, Barbara Prakopenka
PRODUCERS Regina Ziegler, Sigi Kamml, Barbara Thielen, Christian Alvar, Hartmut Köhler
PRODUCTION COMPANIES Ziegler Film, Syrreal Entertainment, in co-production with Warner Bros. Film Productions Germany
RUNTIME 131 min
LANGUAGE German
SALES Global Screen
info@globalscreen.de
www.globalscreen.de
Two years after zombies have overrun the earth, the German towns of Weimar and Jena are possibly the last hold-outs of human civilization.

ENDZEIT – EVER AFTER follows two very different young women, Vivi (22) and Eva (26), who must involuntarily join forces. While fighting against the undead, they develop a strong friendship and are forced to confront the demons of their past. Vivi is desperately trying to find out what happened to her little sister, whereas Eva dreams about starting anew, far away from both her role as the expert zombie-killer and from Weimar, which they have left behind. Their adventurous journey takes place in a lush and beautiful post-apocalyptic landscape; now that the humans are gone, nature is taking over. But nature knows no boundaries and soon the two young women must deal with a new and fantastic reality and the biggest test of their friendship...

CAROLINA HELLSGÅRD is a writer-director, born in Sweden and based in Berlin. After studying Experimental Media Design in Berlin and Film at Cal Arts in L.A., she made her feature debut with WANJA which premiered at the Berlinale 2015 and was nominated for the Berlinale Best First Feature Award. In 2017, she was a Villa Aurora Fellow in Los Angeles. ENDZEIT – EVER AFTER is her second feature film as a director and the first zombie film with an all-female team.

GENRE Horror, Zombie, Post-Apocalyptic
YEAR OF PRODUCTION 2018
DIRECTOR Carolina Hellsgård
SCREENPLAY Olivia Vieweg, based on her graphic novel Endzeit published by Carlsen
CINEMATOGRAPHY Leah Striker
CAST Gro Swantje Kohlhof, Maja Lehrer, Trine Dyrholm, Barbara Philipp, Axel Werner, Amy Schuk, Muriel Wimmer
PRODUCER Claudia Schröter
EXECUTIVE PRODUCER Ingelore König
PRODUCTION COMPANY Grown Up Films
RUNTIME 90 min
LANGUAGE German
FESTIVALS Toronto 2018
SALES Picture Tree International
yuan@picturetree-international.com
www.picturetree-international.com
GOETHES FAUST

**GENRE** Drama

**YEAR OF PRODUCTION** 2018

**DIRECTOR** Karsten Pruehl

**SCREENPLAY** Karsten Pruehl

**CINEMATOGRAPHY** Daniel Goede

**CAST** Bernardo Arias Porras, Runa Pernoda Schaefer, Helena Siegmund-Schultze, David Halina, Gabi Herz, Kalle Perlmutter, Heidrun Bartholomäus, Simone Geißler

**PRODUCER** Maik Schuntermann

**PRODUCTION COMPANY** Picturis Produktion

**RUNTIME** 105 min

**LANGUAGE** German

**SALES** Picturis Produktion

post@picturis.de

www.picturis.de

GOETHES FAUST is set in a modern metropolis made of concrete and glass. The people have turned their backs to nature. Here, the hacker Faust is on a quest for higher meaning and transcendence. He loves to expand his consciousness with LSD. But his latest trip becomes horrific. A woman appears and claims to be Mephisto herself. She convinces Faust that she’d change his life and he enters a pact with her to be his maidservant. Soon after, Faust encounters an innocent girl, Gretchen. In order to win her trust, he uses Mephisto’s powers. He thinks he loves her, but after he has taken her virginity, he loses interest and strives for even greater pleasures. Mephisto leads him to a festival of lust and drugs, where Faust sheds himself. Meanwhile Gretchen’s life falls apart...
At eighteen, classmates Nils, Thomas and Andreas felt immortal. But the invitation to a class reunion thirty years after their graduation reminds them how quickly time flies – and serves as a welcome excuse to let it rip again: party, booze and girls, that's the plan. But the boys carry first ailments of old age and broken hearts with them. Not to forget rebellious Lili, daughter of Thomas’ new girlfriend, who never wastes an opportunity to mock the three of them and remind them they’ve seen better times. With lots of helium gas, dozens of delicious Pornstar Martinis and a highly-anticipated final speech at the reunion, held under the influence of ecstasy, the friends wreak absolute havoc on the party. On their way back home they finally realize what really counts: family, friendship and love!

TIL SCHWEIGER was born in 1963 in Freiburg. An acting, directing, writing and producing multi-talent, he is one of Germany’s most popular actors and most successful filmmakers today. Schweiger’s films as an actor include some of the most successful German and international films of recent years: INGLOURIOUS BASTERDS, PHANTOM PAIN, MAYBE, MAYBE NOT, KNOCKIN’ ON HEAVEN’S DOOR, LARA CROFT TOMB RAIDER: THE CRADLE OF LIFE, and (R)AUMSCHIFF SURPRISE – PERIODE 1. His films as a director are BAREFOOT, 1½ RITTER, KOKOWAHH, GUARDIAN ANGEL, and HONEY IN THE HEAD. CLASS REUNION is his latest film as a director, writer, producer as well as lead actor.

GENRE Comedy
YEAR OF PRODUCTION 2018
DIRECTOR Til Schweiger
SCREENPLAY Til Schweiger, Lo Malinke
CINEMATOGRAPHY Adrian Cranage
CAST Til Schweiger, Samuel Finzi, Milan Peschel, Lilli Schweiger
PRODUCERS Til Schweiger, Christian Specht
CO-PRODUCERS Tomas Radoor, Stefan Gärtnert, René Ezra
PRODUCTION COMPANY Barefoot Films, in co-production with Warner Bros. Film Productions Germany, Nordisk Film Production, SevenPictures Film
RUNTIME 120 min
LANGUAGE German

SALES
Barefoot Films
office@barefootfilms.de
www.barefootfilms.de
Manou grows up believing he is a seagull like his parents. He strives to swim, fish and fly like them but seems not very gifted. At the summer race he discovers why. To his great shock he finds out that he was adopted as an offspring of the much-hated swifts. His family still stands by him, claiming he is a bird like them. Especially his seagull brother Luc admires him wildly. One night Manou fails to guard the eggs and surrenders one to the rats. The seagulls are outraged and Manou is expelled from home. Utterly disappointed, he retreats and stumbles across Parcival, a funny guinea fowl who cannot fly but turns out to be a deep-rooted pal. Manou checks out the swifts’ ways with his new buddies Yusuf and Poncho when he bumps into Kalifa, a stunning lady swift. Suddenly he is struck by an entangling flirt on top of all of his other troubles. The stakes are high as the rats hijack the swift eggs and a big storm threatens the seagulls. Manou is committed to save them both – courageous like a seagull and inventive like a swift.

CHRISTIAN HAAS and ANDREA BLOCK are both graduates of the Filmakademie Baden-Württemberg. Also active as producers and VFX supervisors, they have contributed to the animation and VFX of such blockbusters as INDEPENDENCE DAY and GRAND BUDAPEST HOTEL, among others. MANOU – THE SWIFT marks their directorial debut.

GENRE Animation, Adventure, Children & Youth, Family Entertainment
YEAR OF PRODUCTION 2018
DIRECTORS Christian Haas, Andrea Block
SCREENPLAY Axel Melzener, Andrea Block
VOICES Kate Winslet, Willem Dafoe
PRODUCERS Andrea Block, Christian Haas
PRODUCTION COMPANY LUXX Film
RUN TIME 88 min
LANGUAGE English

SALES
Sola Media
johannes@sola-media.com
www.sola-media.com
Bernd Trautmann, born in 1923 in Bremen, is captured by the British in WWII. During a football match between the prisoners, the goalkeeper is noticed by Jack Friar, manager of an amateur club. Forced upon the team, Trautmann soon surprises on and off the field. Prejudice subsides, friendships start to develop and Trautmann loses his heart not only to football but to his manager’s beautiful daughter Margaret. However, Trautmann could not have foreseen the wave of outrage resulting from his engagement at Man City FC. Thousands take to the streets against the signing of the “Nazi.” Feeling alienated and alone, Trautmann’s and Margaret’s loyalty to each other is being seriously put to the test.

But they receive support from an unexpected direction: Rabbi Alexander Altmann, who fled the Nazis, publishes an open letter against the anti-German slogans. Trautmann’s path to acceptance begins and peaks at the 1956 FA Cup Final when he secures victory for Man City by playing on despite a broken neck. Yet fate twists the knife and Trautmann’s son is killed in a car accident. Heartbroken, Trautmann wants to give up. But a whole nation has learned to accept him, and so he starts to prepare for his comeback. For all those who learned to forgive, for those who had lost someone and most of all for his son, who admired him the most, he must step back onto the pitch.

After three years at boarding school, Hanna is returning home to her little village to help out in her father’s butcher’s shop during her break. Soon she learns that she is not welcome in the village. Everyone remembers the horrific news story about her mother’s death which was followed by the discovery of three dead men in the marsh. While superstition rules the village, everyone believes her mother was a witch and had lured these men into the marsh directly to their death. While struggling to make friends, she meets the extroverted city girl Eva. Thinking she has finally found a friend, scary accidents start happening around her … while Hanna’s confidence and, with that, her “power” starts to grow…

ESTHER BIALAS was born in Wiesbaden in 1982 and studied Audiovisual Media and Directing in Berlin and Hamburg. Her films include: the shorts A LATE FAME (2009), GONE FISHING (NICHTS VON BEDEUTUNG, 2009), CAT’S DANCE (DIE KATZE TANZT, 2011), STRAWBERRY FIELDS (LANDERDBEEREN, 2012), TUMBLING BIRDS (STÜRZENDE TAUBEN, 2013), two episodes of the TV series COME ON – THERAPY FOR THE UNDECIDED (KOMM SCHON!, 2015), and her feature debut HANNA’S HOMECOMING (WO KEIN SCHATTEN FÄLLT, 2018).

GENRE Mystery, Thriller
YEAR OF PRODUCTION 2018
DIRECTOR Esther Bialas
SCREENPLAY Lena Krumkamp
CINEMATOGRAPHY Christiane Buchmann
CAST Valerie Stoll, Milena Tscharntke, Godehard Giese, Sascha Alexander Geršak, Sebastian Hülk, Rick Okon
PRODUCERS Mathieu Miville, Nathan Nill, Andrea Schütte
PRODUCTION COMPANY Das Kind mit der goldenen Jacke Filmproduktion
RUTIME 99 min
LANGUAGE German
FESTIVAL Hof 2018, Nordic Film Days Lübeck 2018, Filmfest Biberach 2018, exground Wiesbaden 2018
SALES ARRIMedia International
worldsales@arri.de
www.arrimedia.de/international
How can an artist discover abstraction by the beginning of the 20th century and nobody notices? A woman, misjudged and concealed, rocks the art world with her mind-blowing oeuvre. Hilma af Klint was a pioneer at a time where only male colleagues were inventing abstraction. The first solo-exhibition of her work caused an outcry in the art world. Hilma af Klint painted her first abstract painting in 1906, four years before Vassily Kandinsky. But why was she ignored? Why are her paintings not available on the market? Focusing on af Klint’s ignored part as a pioneer of modern art, this first film on her is about her life, the role of women in art history and the discovery of an art scandal. This is a cinematic approach to an artist whose quest for meaning in life and a boundless thinking led to an outstanding oeuvre. Her paintings crossed borders to last until today.

BEYOND THE VISIBLE - HILMA AF KLINT

HALINA DYRSCHKA was born in Berlin and is active as a producer and director. She studied Acting, Classical Singing and Film Production and founded the production company Ambrosia Film. BEYOND THE VISIBLE marks her directorial debut.

“Why are you here? Are you mentally sick? Do you want to kill people?” the Ukrainian commander asks Artiom in the recruiting interview.

Artiom is eighteen, lives in the countryside of the Ukraine, and is enthusiastic about weapons. He plays war with his friends in abandoned places. He considers himself an expert and lives in a bubble that romanticizes war. Artiom believes that he is ready to be an elite soldier. But his announcement to prove himself in the volunteer army against the Pro-Russian separatists has less effect than he hopes: his friends and family see him as a dreamer.

BOY OF WAR

Active in the fields of photography, cinematography and directing, CYPRIEN CLEMENT-DELMAS and IGOR KOSENKO met while studying at the ESCAC in Barcelona. They have worked on numerous projects together, including THE LAST TAPE (short doc, 2017) and BOY OF WAR [doc, 2018].
Max "Adlersson" Herzberg (20) reviews all sorts of things, talks about himself, bawls in town, cracks borderline jokes and crosses every boundary he sees – Max is a YouTube creator and makes a decent living off of it.

Most of Max’s friends have their own social media channels too, some are even quite successful. They are dubious role models, but without a doubt celebrities of their generation.

Is Max a violence-glorifying influencer with far-right tendencies or just a normal adolescent, simply trying to find himself? He might be both, possibly without being overly aware of it. LORD OF THE TOYS portrays him and his gang during one summer and studies the milieu, in which their lifestyle is thriving: the West in general and East Germany in particular.

PABLO BEN YAKOV was born in 1986 in Saarbrücken. He started his career in film as a child actor and has worked as a graphic designer, editing and production assistant, and freelance editor. He is currently studying Directing/Documentaries at the Filmakademie Baden-Württemberg.

CLAUDIA LEHMANN is a visual artist and active in the fields of performance art, video installations, experimental music, composing, and film and video directing. THE SYMPHONY OF UNCERTAINTY is her third feature film.
RULES OF PLAY

A group of tired playground visitors meet at night for a last contest. RULES OF PLAY is all about the phenomenon of playing. The playing field is the center of the ritual activities: Role play, gambling, competition and intoxication. Play is free. Play is not “ordinary” or “real” life. Play creates order. Play demands order, absolute and supreme. Today the border between work and play gets smaller and smaller. What happens if nobody questions the rules anymore?

MERLIN FLÜGEL was born in 1987 in Naila and studied at the Offenbach University of Art and Design (HfG). His films include the short animations HOW TO DISAPPEAR (2011), ECHO (2012), the video installation PERIPHERIE (2012), and RULES OF PLAY (2018).

TRACING ADDAI

A true story about a war and the tragic impact it has on the lives of three people.

In his early 20s, Addai leaves his entire life behind and moves to Syria to help victims of the civil war. At first he is assigned kitchen duty together with Ilias. Addai writes to his mother: “Don’t worry about me, I’m fine.” Two years later Addai’s mother receives a letter from prison. Ilias has been sentenced for terrorism by a German court. He wants to meet her and writes: “One thing you have to believe me, we went there with good intentions.”

ESTHER NIEMEIER is a director and producer working in both the UK and Germany. Her films as a director include: WALZ (short doc, 2007), STERNE [music video, 2016], SIMULANT (short, 2016), and TRACING ADDAI (animated doc, 2018), which is her graduation film from the Film University Babelsberg KONRAD WOLF and was among the finalists for the 2018 Student Academy Awards®.
**ALSA HITLER DAS ROSA KANINCHEN STAHL**

This summer saw the Oscar®-winning writer-director Caroline Link embarking on her latest feature, WHEN HITLER STOLE PINK RABBIT, based on British writer Judith Kerr’s semi-autobiographical story about a young Jewish girl and her family escaping the Nazis in 1933 by travelling to Switzerland and Paris before finally arriving and settling in England in 1936.

Newcomers Riva Krymalowski and Marinus Hohmann appear alongside Carla Juri and Oliver Masucci in the adaptation of the award-winning novel which is often used in German and British schools as a way of introducing pupils to a dark chapter in German history and life as a refugee.

**BEZNESS**

Baran, a Turkish gigolo, dreams of life in Europe. German pilot Marion has had a mastectomy. They meet in Marmaris and soon marry. What starts as a purely pragmatic arrangement changes as they get to know one another: Marion cuts ties with her previous life, Baran learns German and does well in his new job as a baggage handler. But then Marion discovers she is pregnant. Baran is kept in the dark while she is unsure whether to return to work or keep the child. She fears Baran is slowly turning criminal when he is fired after luggage is stolen. He denies it but she pushes him till he is left with only one thing, his pride. Without saying goodbye, Baran returns home and becomes a baggage handler at a Turkish airport. Then, one day, he sees her suitcase.

**CLUB DER ROTEN BÄNDER – WIE ALLES BEGANN**

After working as a writer and director for television – including 10 episodes of VOX’s award-winning audience favorite RED BRACELETS (CLUB DER ROTEN BÄNDER) based on the Catalan drama series POLSERES VERMELLES – Felix Binder has now made his directorial debut for the cinema which is inspired by the hit format.

The screenplay by Arne Nolting and Jan Martin Scharf takes the fans of RED BRACELETS back to a time before the series’ lead characters – teenagers Leo, Jonas, Emma, Alex, Toni and Hugo – had arrived in the hospital’s pediatric ward and formed a club simply to survive and charts the first signs of a strong friendship against all odds.
**DEM HORIZONT SO NAH**

STUDIOCANAL’s German production arm, STUDIOCANAL Film, is partnering with PANTALEON Films for the very first time to produce Tim Trachte’s adaptation of Jessica Koch’s bestselling debut novel.

The story of trust, courage, pain and despair, and the strength to let go is based on Koch’s real-life experiences, with the central roles of the two young lovers being taken by the 19-year-old Swiss actress Luna Wedler – who was selected as one of the European Shooting Stars at the 2018 Berlinale – as the fun-loving Jessica and Jannik Schümann (CENTER OF MY WORLD) as the dashing, confident Danny who is harboring a dark secret beneath his seemingly perfect façade...

**DIE DREI !!!**

Sports-mad Franzi, bookworm Kim and fashionista Marie are best friends – and junior detectives. During the school holidays they are taking part in a theater project. But during a rehearsal there are suddenly strange noises, lights flicker, costumes are cut and a threatening message appears on the make-up mirror. Is a strange phantom haunting the place, thirsting for revenge? But some of the other participants are also behaving strangely. Who could have a motive for damaging the theater? It’s a new case for Franzi, Kim and Marie! With more than 4 million books and tapes sold since 2006, DIE DREI !!! has become a huge hit with girls aged 7-13 years and is now having its feature film debut, scheduled for release in July 2019.

**GESCHWISTERN (WT)**

After directing TV event series such as DEUTSCHLAND 83 and PATRICK MELROSE, Edward Berger has now returned to the cinema for the first time since his award-winning second feature JACK to be reunited with his co-author and lead actress Nele Mueller-Stöfen for the drama SIBLINGS (working title) which also stars Lars Eidinger (MACK THE KNIFE) and Hans Low (IN MY ROOM).

Siblings Stefan, Julia and Tobias have all reached a point in their lives where they must change something as a matter of urgency. Moving between chaos, mistakes and uncertainty, each one of them is searching for a way that might also lead to personal happiness.
MEIN LOTTA-LEBEN

Based on the worldwide bestselling children’s books of the same title, MEIN LOTTA-LEBEN is the snotty and funny story of 11-year-old Lotta’s chaotic, crazy life. Her mother is into Ayurvedic cooking and works in a meditation studio. Dad is mostly grumpy and her stupid brothers annoy her all day. Luckily, she has a best friend, Cheyenne. But when class snob Berenike throws a big party and invites everyone except Lotta and Cheyenne, it’s war! The two girls come up with plan after plan, but not even the idea of bringing the famous singer Marlon with them works out. It comes to an argument and the two friends fall out. But Lotta would not be Lotta if she didn’t succeed in saving the friendship with Cheyenne and, so doing, learning what true friendship means.

GENRE Children & Youth, Family Entertainment, Literature
CATEGORY Feature
DIRECTOR Neele Leana Vollmair
SCREENPLAY Bettina Börgerding
CAST Carolin Kebekus, Laura Tonke, Oliver Mommsen, Lukas Rieger, Meggy Marie Hussong, Yola Streese
PRODUCERS Dagmar Blume-Niehage, Philipp Budweg, Robert Marciniak
PRODUCTION COMPANIES Daystar Film, Lieblingsfilm, in co-production with Senator Film Produktion
LANGUAGE German
SALES Wild Bunch Germany
maldenhoven@wildbunch.eu
www.wildbunch-germany.de

NARZISS UND GOldMUND

Hermann Hesse’s 1930 novel, the international bestseller Narcissus and Goldmund, has been adapted by the Oscar®-winning director Stefan Ruzowitzky (together with co-author Robert Gold) for the big screen with principal photography at locations in Austria and the Czech Republic running from mid-August to mid-October 2018. The conflict between flesh and spirit and between emotional and contemplative man focuses on the title characters played by Sabin Tambrea as Narcissus, who is quietly content with his religion and monastic life, and Jannis Niewöhnner as his friend Goldmund, who is in fervent search of more worldly salvation.

GENRE Drama
CATEGORY Feature
DIRECTOR Stefan Ruzowitzky
SCREENPLAY Stefan Ruzowitzky, Robert Gold
CAST Jannis Niewöhnner, Sabin Tambrea, André M. Hennicke, Sunnyi Melles, Henriette Confurius, Elisa Schlett, Emilia Schüle, Jessica Schwarz, Matthias Habich, Georg Friedrich, Uwe Ochsenknecht, Kida Khodr Ramadan
PRODUCERS Helge Sasse, Christoph Müller, Tommy Priding, Peter Wirthensohn
PRODUCTION COMPANIES Tempest Film, MYTHOS FILM, Lotus-Film, in co-production with Deutsche Columbia Pictures Filmproduktion
LANGUAGE German
SALES Beta Cinema
beta@betacinema.com
www.betacinema.com

RATE YOUR DATE

With the comedy RATE YOUR DATE, director David Dietl and producer Thomas Friedl have turned their attention to the trials and tribulations of dating and the impossibility of love in times of unlimited digital possibilities.

Dating junkie Teresa and her best friend Patricia no longer want to have their hearts broken or be constantly faced by unexpected surprises, but then they hit on a brilliant idea for a dating app after Teresa meets the neurotic computer nerd Anton one evening. The app starts dividing all the users into such categories as #Crazybitch, #Sextremist and #Heartbreaker, but they soon realize that maybe love cannot be that easily pigeonholed and logarithms won’t prevent a broken heart.

GENRE Comedy
CATEGORY Feature
DIRECTOR David Dietl
SCREENPLAY Katharina Eyssen, David Dietl
CAST Alicia von Rittberg, David Dietl, Marc Benjamin, Edin Hasanovic, Nilam Farooq, Anke Engelke, Trang Le Hong, Frederik Götz, Alexander Khun, Leopold Hornung
PRODUCER Thomas Peter Friedl
PRODUCTION COMPANY The Amazing Film Company, in co-production with SevenPictures Film
LANGUAGE German
CONTACT The Amazing Film Company
thomas.friedl@amazing-film.de
www.amazing-film.de
ROCCA – VERÄNDERT DIE WELT

Shooting wrapped at the end of August on ROCCA – VERÄNDERT DIE WELT, the feature film debut by Katja Benrath whose graduation project WATU WOTE: ALL OF US won a Student Academy Award® last year and was then nominated for the Academy Award® as Best Live Action Short Film.

Hilly Martinek’s (HONIG IM KOPF) screenplay tells the story of the 11-year-old Rocca, a clever, creative and brave girl who lives all by herself in defiance of her teachers and the authorities. Rocca – played by Luna Maxeiner who previously appeared in episodes of the RED BRACELETS and SANKT MAIK TV series – has to fight to keep her independence and prove to everyone that a child also has the power to change the world...

TAGUNDNACHTGLEICHE

Alexander never believed in true love till he met Paula, a performer. He sees her on stage and is lost in her world of illusions, falling head over heels for her. But her sudden death tears him apart. When he meets her estranged sister Marlene at the cemetery, a misunderstanding sees him welcomed into the grieving family – as Paula’s boyfriend. It’s a mistake Alexander fails to clear up, he is too curious to learn more about the woman he never got to know. However, Marlene remains skeptical: The version of Paula Alexander is talking about is not consistent with the image she has. At the same time, she is attracted to this strange man who claims to have known her enigmatic sister so well. Through their shared grief, the two slowly grow closer.

Check out the new GFQ digital issue

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!
29.10.–4.11.2018
INTERNATIONAL LEIPZIG FESTIVAL
FOR DOCUMENTARY AND ANIMATED
FILM
GERMAN FILMS: A PROFILE

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 Medienstiftung NRW, Medienboard Berlin-Brandenburg, and the German Short Film Association.

German Films’ budget of presently €4.82 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 Medienstiftung NRW, HessenFilm, Medienboard Berlin-Brandenburg, MFG Baden-Württemberg, Mitteldeutsche Medienförderung, and Nordmedia) make a financial contribution towards the work of German Films.

German Films is a founding member of the European Film Promotion, a network of European film organizations with similar responsibilities to those of German Films. The organization, with its headquarters in Hamburg, aims to develop and realize joint projects for the presentation of European films on an international level.

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

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

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Andrea Schiefer Monitoring & Strategic Development, Administration
Sabrina Schrödl Assistant to the Managing Director
Barnhard 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
- 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 KIND 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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