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YELLA by Christian Petzold

PORTRAITS
Sven Taddicken, Anne Wild, Roxy Film, Association of German Film Exporters

SHOOTING STAR
Maximilian Brueckner

SPECIAL REPORT
Costume Design in German Cinema: A Second Skin
## A SECOND SKIN
*focus on COSTUME DESIGN IN GERMAN CINEMA*

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film exporters

foreign representatives · imprint
In Wim Wenders’ film portrait of Yohji Yamamoto, A Notebook on Clothes and Cities (Aufzeichnungen zu Kleidern und Städten, 1989), the Japanese designer reacts with embarrassment when he is referred to as a fashion designer. He sees himself as a tailor, and a tailor is what he wants to be. This attitude, which may sound like exaggerated coquetry or false modesty at first, actually expresses an ethos of craftsmanship originating from a past era of work and human existence.

It expresses a need to look beyond the random, arbitrary or cliché-ridden haze that now veils the once authentic interplay between an item of clothing’s function, beauty and expression, and thus to reveal the character or expressive power of the ‘second skin’ that encloses us all. This is the way that Ali Hubert, the first German costume designer to receive a mention in the pre-film credits as such (Carmen, 1918), described his task, and the same philosophy is echoed in many statements from costume designers currently working in Germany.

One example is Sabine Greunig, who was responsible for the costumes for Summer in Berlin (Sommer vorm Balkon, 2005): “As a costume designer, I am aware of codes and conventions as I work, but the clothes for the characters that I work with are an attempt to create a portrait rather than to reproduce merely an image – even though for a small, contemporary film like Summer in Berlin I ‘only’ put together a design concept from the range of the current season. The film is set in a milieu in which the characters’ incomes and living conditions don’t lend much leeway. But a part of their story is immediately conveyed by the costumes and the way the people wear...
them: for example when Nike, one of the two main protagonists, says
at one point during the film: ‘I looked good, like a candy cone on your
first day at school. But with a ladylike touch’ – the typical gruff Berlin
humor of that line had been made to measure for her long before.”

SHAPING THE CHARACTERS

It is no coincidence that the costume designer is referred to in
German as a ‘Bildner’ – a shaper – of costumes. The actress Rose-
marie Fendel uncovered the deeper significance of this modest word,
onece writing in homage to Charlotte Flemming for the catalogue
of a small exhibition of her designs and figurines: “Charlotte Flemming
... the best costume designer that I have ever had! She made it clear
to me why we in Germany refer to the profession as the costume ... SHAPER. Of course, Charlotte produces beautiful designs on paper
... but the costume is first created ... ‘shaped’ on the body of the
person who is going to wear it. (...) It is almost incredible, but her
work caused something else to emerge from the dress and me: the
boring – because she is so familiar to me – Rosemarie disappeared,
and the mirror image showed me the elegant, extravagant Alvarino, in
other words, the role that I was going to play. I embrace the great
artist Flemming: ‘Thank you Charlotte, I love you! The great success
that I had with Trotta was due not least to you!’ ”
Ingrid Zoré, who actually prefers historical projects – and most of all in black and white – “because in our profession that is where we can really let our hair down”, does not particularly like the term costume film: “Ultimately, it implies that there are films for which the costumes are important and others for which one could actually get by without them. But every costume gives a role the external shape into which social and temperamental conditions inevitably flow; in other words, a specific shape comes to suit people as a consequence of time, profession or money, but also mood, vanity, a craving for recognition, modesty, good luck or need.”

Nakedness can be hidden or put on show by clothing. Are we looking for protection, or do we wish our dress to make our personalities shine? It all depends on the way that something is worn: Do our clothes droop like rags or do they throb with the rhythm of our movements? Do they indicate a proud personality, or suit a character with only limited horizons?

A DREAM JOB

For a long time now, Zoré has been president of the professional association SFK (Association of Set Designers, Film Architects and Costume Designers), and those who speak to her meet a person who is very enthusiastic about her profession, still regarding it as a ‘dream job’ after 46 years. So who has she dressed in her time? One after another, and with the lack of strict order that becomes them: Martin Held, Liselotte Pulver, Senta Berger, Mario Adorf, Hanna Schygulla, Harald Juhnke, Gisela Uhlen and Günter Lamprecht. Also Isabelle Adjani, Brigitte Horney and – never to be forgotten – Romy Schneider in her final film: The Passerby (Die Spaziergängerin von Sanssouci, 1981).

In 1977 she was responsible for the costumes for Just a Gigolo, “a wonderful project, but unfortunately a tremendous flop in the cinemas,” says Zoré. She designed 35 costumes for the main actors alone – including Kim Novak, Maria Schell, Curd Jürgens and David Bowie – ten of which were for Sydney Rome. “The plot is set in Berlin from 1918 to 1928, and our field of operation was somewhere between the trenches and the glamour of the revues.”

But the dream job has a darker side and the shadows are growing longer. By saying this, Zoré is not referring to the necessary haggling with producers for the budget that has always taken place, but to an increasingly noticeable ruthlessness, particularly a currently emerging disregard for concepts and aesthetic processes among television editors and some completely unfounded interference in the decisions made by a creative team. “Over the last two years, on five separate occasions colleagues have experienced the way that editors have got in touch only a day before shooting started in order to demand changes to costumes, and those changes were either based on so-called trends or decided because a specific color was supposed to improve a character’s potential for identification. Sometimes such things are even just an expression of an arbitrary decision dictated by taste or power games, for example when an editor simply believes that his films should include no hats, although the project in question is a story within a Quaker milieu and the artistic agreement was to be as authentic as possible. Really, in this way we are just being given to understand that our competence and artistic research for a project are not properly appreciated.”

COMPROMISE AND DIPLOMACY

Apart from such disagreeable experiences, Ulla Gothe – who designed costumes for Luther (2003) – relates the process of work as follows: “You read the screenplay. In the process you make your first notes, sometimes drawings as well. These are the first steps to what we once formulated as the foundation of our profession in the

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focus on costume design in german cinema

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Association of German Filmmakers (www.die-filmschaffenden.de): “The costume designer is personally responsible for the invention, creation, production, realization and organization of the costumes for a film in cooperation with the director, camera people and actors, and together with colleagues from set design and the make-up department.”

The departments take a vote on the costumes that will influence the film characters and the plot. Ideally, items of clothing become part of the overall dramaturgy of a film; they set emphases or represent turning points, taking their place in the timbre of a film as soloists and as team players. Walter Schulze-Mittendorf (Die Feuerzangenbowle, 1943) once wrote of his profession: “The profession of the costume designer is a particularly difficult field of art, which calls for a great measure of tact, and a cleverly applied willingness to compromise.”

Herbert Ploberger (Die Buddenbrooks, 1959, among others), who also worked with Hildegard Knef on many films, endorses this statement further by adding discretion to the formula: “Actors expose themselves the most to the costume designer. Not only literally, but also figuratively speaking. As a result, we have one of the most trust-based positions on the whole film team.” And Christina Schnell, who was responsible for the costumes for films such as The Sandman (Der Sandmann, 1995), Regular Guys (Echte Kerle, 1996) or Todesspiel (1997), is convinced that alongside professional skill, one thing above all else is demanded of costume designers: diplomacy. “It is the costume designer’s task to coordinate the director’s concept, the ideas of the cameraman, and the wishes of the actors. The most important thing is to keep sight of your own idea for the costumes in the process. You have to realize this idea and yet at the same time come to an agreement with the others involved.” Her philosophy: “It is not so much a matter of your own imagination, but of upholding the work as a whole. You need to be able to hold back your own ideas.”

In this context, Barbara Baum remembers the costumes that she designed for Hanna Schygulla in Berlin Alexanderplatz (1980): “At first she was not pleased with her clothes; she found them too baggy, not emphasizing her figure at all. But one of Fassbinder’s preconditions was that the costumes were to fit loosely, as he wanted the material to shift and fall into folds; typical of the 1920s. Hannah Schygulla asked me whether I thought that this was attractive. Then I tried to explain to her patiently that it was not a question of attractiveness, but that the costumes were right as they were; suited to the era. At that time she had not yet read the screenplay, and so I explained every dress to her in terms of the scene she would play in it. She found that amusing and was satisfied.”

KEEPING IT ALL TOGETHER

German set designers and their teams would be at quite a loss if it were not for the existence of an institution – tucked away in a side street of Berlin’s bourgeois West end – whose name the initiated always speak with considerable respect and reverence: Theaterkunst. Theaterkunst is the largest and oldest German costume house, and is celebrating its hundredth anniversary in February 2007.

Whether dark crime stories or glittering comedies, extravagant filming of literary works or simple author movies, racy science-fiction fantasy or carefully made historical drama; all types of films are fitted out with the essential accessories here. Hung up in rows on innumerable clothes racks, here all sizes large and small wait for their appearances in the spotlights: liturgical robes from different centuries in peaceful cohabitation with profane costumes and casual party clothes of the late 20th century fun society; a pair of snakeskin shoes worn by Ben Becker in Sass (2001) not far away from coats for Bruno Ganz in Downfall (Der Untergang, 2004), and these, in their turn, in dangerous
proximity to the blue-grey uniform worn by Ulrich Muehe in The Lives of Others (Das Leben der Anderen, 2005). Here the glitter and splendor of German show business dwindles to a matter of collar and shoe sizes or waist measurements. A filing cabinet, the cards of which are currently being digitalized, catalogues all those who have brought a sparkle to the fans’ eyes over past years. What was Horst Buchholz’ waist measurement in 1960? 1970? 1980? 1990? What is Heino Ferch’s shoe size? What size of hat does Goetz George wear? The course of careers and physiognomies. Correlations, the details of which are kept under lock and key. Only the circumference of David...
Bowie’s knee seems harmless: 37 cm, measured at the end of 1976.

The company was founded in Berlin by Leo Impekoven and began work in 1907. Theaterkunst has moved several times within Berlin and changes of owners and political conditions were mirrored by the company’s various names over the years. Hermann J. Kaufmann, an entrepreneur of Jewish origin, was the second owner of the company, leading it to international fame during the 1920s, when there were even branches in Copenhagen, London and New York. When making *Ben Hur* (1925), Samuel Goldwyn insisted that Theaterkunst delivered its costumes to Hollywood; and of course there was also the UFA. Whether *Varieté* (1925) or *Metropolis* (1925), *The Blue Angel* (Der blauwe Engel, 1930) or *Three from the Filling Station* (Die drei von der Tankstelle, 1930), Theaterkunst was involved in almost all the films of the Weimar Republic.

**COMPREHENSIVE SERVICE FOR COSTUME DESIGN**

Today with branches in Cologne and Hamburg, some 750,000 costumes, 7.5 million accessories and 70 highly-qualified employees, the company is a lively archive of material revealing the changing phases in the social and economic history of 20th century Germany, but also those in mentality.

Correspondingly, Theaterkunst’s managing director Susanne Franke sees the company less as a store from which things are unearthed and then brought back later, and far more as a comprehensive service business for costume design: “For we also offer many peripheral services that are necessary when clothing is a key factor used in the media, from research to costume alterations. You will find a well-equipped specialist library here with a comprehensive archive of magazines and pictorial material. Our depots contain costumes of all styles and trends from all epochs. We have everything that might be considered as a costume for a film, from historical working clothes to the current designer pieces. After five years, fashion becomes costume. That is why it is important for us to be able to reflect the various epochs of fashion and time, without any gaps. In addition, in the costume workshops we make special pieces according to the costume designers’ ideas, and we make sure that these costumes convey an authentic impression. A film costume is in use, which means that it cannot be new and off-the-peg. Costumes must be alive – for example, they must display signs of wear without becoming unpleasant for the wearer. We are able to offer all that.”

While Theaterkunst is the largest costume pool in Germany, it is not the only one of significance in the field. Berlin is also home to the Adlershofer Requisiten und Kostümfundus, which emerged from the Kleider- und Ausstattungstadelier des Deutschen Fernsehfunks, an indispensable partner for productions dealing with the history of the former German Democratic Republic. Studio Babelsberg also has its own costume workshop, and the Film- und Theatersausstattung (FTA) provides broadcasters and production companies in Munich, Cologne, Hamburg, Leipzig and Berlin with services and resources. And last but certainly not least, Maria Lucas’ Cologne-based Soul Statements is considered a “veritable design and costume fairyland” (Sueddeutsche Zeitung).
DESIGNING THE NEXT GENERATION

Together, Maria Lucas and Susanne Franke have also made it their task to play a part in the foundation and teaching methods of the next generation of costume designers at the International Film School in Cologne (ifs), providing material for film projects that emerge from the ifs. The teaching units at the ifs include the conception and realization of costume design for film productions – from the history of costume and knowledge of textiles to research, pattern-making and calculations, and finally coaching for interaction with actors. The lecturers are internationally acknowledged representatives of the field (incl. James Acheson, Monika Jacobs, Barbara Baum) and teach a variety of working methods in a practice-oriented way. But the teaching concept also includes theoretical aspects such as film and television history or the history of costume; in addition, during a one-week excursion to London led by international costume designers, students also visit the Royal Dress Collection at Kensington Palace.

These excursions focus on a key historical aspect, aiming to arrive at a productive combination of theory and practice: in the past year of study, for example, a day seminar took place before the excursion to London on “The Language of Clothing in the Costume Dramas of Jane Campion”, in which the Victorian era was analyzed from a film theoretical and cultural historical perspective, focusing on the aspect of costumes and their significance in film productions. Subsequently, in London, the participants were able to take an intense look at the topic “English Fashion up to the Biedermeier Age” and to gain further practice-oriented inspiration and stimulus on the spot. Back in Cologne, under the direction of costume designer and lecturer in historical pattern-making, Volker Deutschmann, they were able to practice historical costume work and pattern development.

“First of all, it was important to take a close look at fashion trends and the ideal of beauty during the epoch,” Deutschmann explains. “We concerned ourselves with the question of what fabrics, colors and materials were modern at that time in order to reproduce the feminine silhouette of the era. Another important aspect was therefore the significance of corsets for the ‘modeling’ of the body; so we designed and produced every single piece of clothing, from undergarments to hats.” The participants acted as models for each other, thus becoming aware of the sensations triggered when wearing an historical costume. In this way they were able to identify with the task of actors or actresses and develop a feel for the difficult shift of perspectives that actors face in such situations.

METICULOUS COUNTING OF UNIFORM BUTTONS?

Barbara Baum tends to laugh out loud when she hears the story of how Peter Ustinov bowed down to the efforts of his costume designer Ulla Gothe at the end of filming for Luther. Ustinov said: “And last but not least, I want to congratulate the costume people and the set designers for creating a world which is absolutely fantastic to look at. At the same time, because of their accuracy, I understood why so many people died at the age of 40 – because of the cos...
tumes, you are really dressed in curtains, curtains from rich establishments and the curtains pull you in all the wrong places, you find yourself really neckless and not knowing how to move and that’s the penalty of being entirely accurate.”

Barbara Baum describes herself as addicted to historical fabrics, and she considers herself extremely lucky that all the films that she has ever worked for have actually been from this segment: from Effi Briest (1974) to Aimée & Jaguar (1999), and to Speer and Hitler: The Devil’s Architect (Speer und er, 2005): “Initially, the epoch in which the plot is set must be carefully researched. So first of all I go into the archives, museums and libraries. On the one hand, that is the most pleasant side of my work, but on the other hand, after that the hard work really starts.” But it is not her way to meticulously over-count the buttons on a uniform. With respect to historical accuracy, her opinion echoes that of Ustinov and Fassbinder, together with whom she made eight films. “We are making an historical film, but from our perspective,” Fassbinder said to her during the shooting of Lili Marleen. And that is why he did not pay much attention, for example, to the fact that the SS uniform of the tour supervisor would have been grey at that time. As far as he was concerned, black was a more suitable color for the character.

And so the trained fashion designer, who taught herself costume design, passed the test with flying colors when she worked together with Hollywood stars in The House of the Spirits (1993). According to their contracts, Meryl Streep, Jeremy Irons, Winona Ryder and Glenn Close were entitled to reject outright the costumes that she had designed. But not one of them considered asserting that right, not even vaguely.

On only one occasion, Baum says, did she fail somewhat. However, the trouble was not caused by a lavishly created gala wardrobe, but rather by a worn-out T-shirt with a picture of Pluto on the front. In Smilla’s Sense of Snow (1997), it was worn by the little boy whose death triggered the whole story. He walked at Smilla’s side through the museum and the zoo, all the shots of which were very successful.
— until the production company thought it would be best to seek permission from Disney, because of the Pluto character. “Impossible,” was the harsh reply and there was obviously no way of changing things. The grubby T-shirt threatened to ruin all the costing and timing plans, and it seemed that a re-shoot was unavoidable. But in the end, Pluto was not seen in the finished film — without further ado, he had fallen victim to the editing bench.

**AESTHETICS OF A SHADOWY FIGURE**

Last year, the most lavish adaptation of a novel ever made for the German cinema was premiered: Tom Tykwer’s and Bernd Eichinger’s version of *Perfume: The Story of a Murderer* (**Das Parfum**). One essential prerequisite for this project was the development of an original and suitable costume concept.

The man who bore the main responsibility for research on the project was the French costume designer Pierre-Yves Gayraud: “As an historical epoch, the 18th century lies concealed behind the more familiar 19th century, the age of industrialization, when electricity and big machines gradually began to dominate everyday life.” In addition, the filmmakers had to learn about the details of perfume production, which are still kept largely secret today – and also to transport themselves back into an age when there were no modern, high-performance laboratories for that purpose.

In the course of this process, the pre-industrial 18th century – and the plot is set in the 1730s to 60s – was transformed for Gayraud into a gloomy epoch similar to the dark Middle Ages. On the one hand, because there was a shortage of adequate sources of light, and on the other hand, because the story is ultimately based on a dark foundation. “Our film has clear aesthetics that are rather dark and concern a shadowy figure. We oriented our work on painters who worked with darkness a lot in the past and only used a few sources of light, like Caravaggio, Joseph Wright of Derby or Rembrandt, for example. At that time, people simply had a candle and no emergency electric lights. Outside of the light, the rest of their world was completely black,” as *Perfume’s* director Tom Tykwer points out.

“We took great pains to avoid making *Perfume* into a sterile film; we didn’t want an ambitious tailor to copy clothes to perfection, into which the actors slipped only five minutes before shooting started,” Gayraud — a proven expert on this historical epoch — recapitulates. In the course of a year, he reconstructed the very different everyday clothing in Paris and the South of France during fifty years of French Rococo, but he did so not only — and this is decisive — for the people at court, but also for those from the lower classes, for the peasants and craftsmen: “I devoured every available source, questioned every contactable historian and finally produced a book with contemporary motifs and some sketches of models, as well as a kind of costume storyboard for all the sequences,” Gayraud recalls.
MAKING THE RIGHT IMPRESSION

Perfume demonstrates the heights to which German film can aspire, with respect to production volume as well. But of course the essence of what film costumes must, may and can do may also be discerned from an intimate film production featuring just three characters. Using the example of The Deathmaker (Der Totmacher, 1995) by Romuald Karmakar, the costume designer Peri de Braganca explains her approach: “When you have evaluated all the literary, historical and pictorial sources concerning the mass murderer Haarmann, you see a specific spectrum of fashion, traditions and customs before you. That is the external frame, but you have to paint the picture to fill this frame yourself. For example, take the stenographer, who is always present at the interrogations. He wears a suit that has the same color as the wall behind him. He literally disappears into the wall. Normally, I would avoid that, but here it is precisely the impression that I want to give. For me, the most important thing about a costume is that it is right. Right for a specific character. So that it helps the actor who has to play the character.” And that is exactly the task of the costume designer – helping the whole production to make the right impression.

Ralph Eue, author, film historian, and professor of Time-Based Media in Berlin

COSTUME HOUSES IN GERMANY

Adlershofer Requisiten- und Kostuemfundus
Ernst-Augustin-Strasse 7
12489 Berlin/Germany
phone +49-30-67 04 42 22
fax +49-30-67 04 42 23
e-mail: info@fundus-berlin.de
www.fundus-berlin.de

FTA Film- und Theater-Ausstattung GmbH
Benzstrasse 46-50
12277 Berlin/Germany
phone +49-30-76 29 31 - 0
fax +49-30-76 29 31 - 10
e-mail: mail@berlin-fta.de
www.fta-fundus.de

FTA Film- und Theater- Ausstattung GmbH
Steilshooper Strasse 293
22309 Hamburg/Germany
phone +49-40-63 90 42 - 0
fax +49-40-63 90 42 - 42
e-mail: mail@fta-hamburg.de

FTA Film- und Theater- Ausstattung GmbH
Industriestrasse 85-95
04229 Leipzig/Germany
phone +49-3 41-3 37 59 - 61
fax +49-3 41-3 37 59 62
e-mail: mail@fta-leipzig.de

Maria Lucas Soul Statements
Scheidtweilerstrasse 17
50933 Cologne/Germany
phone +49-2 21-54 02 81 - 0
fax +49-2 21-54 02 81 - 20
e-mail: info@marialucas.de
www.marialucas.de

Studio Babelsberg AG
Kostuemwerkstatt
August-Bebel-Strasse 26-53
14482 Potsdam/Germany
phone +49-3 31-7 21 32 50
fax +49-3 31-7 21 32 62
e-mail: kpiechotka@studiobabelsberg.com

Theaterkunst GmbH
Eisenzhahnstrasse 43-44
10709 Berlin/Germany
phone +49-30-86 47 27 - 0
fax +49-30-86 47 27 - 89
e-mail: info@theaterkunst.de
www.theaterkunst.de
Sven Taddicken, born in Hamburg in 1974, is one of Germany’s most idiosyncratic directing talents. His interest in special film material formed during his studies at the Ludwigsburg-based Filmakademie Baden-Württemberg, where he studied Directing and Scenic Film between 1996 and 2002. The student short films that he made there were awarded numerous prizes: El Cordobés, for example, was awarded the National Short Film Award at the Dresden Film Fest, Counting Sheep (Schaefchen zaehlen) was nominated the following year for the Student OSCAR, and his graduation film, Einfach so bleiben, was awarded the German Short Film Award in Gold. In 2001, Taddicken made a brilliant film debut with Getting My Brother Laid (Mein Bruder der Vampir): his thoroughly funny arthouse contribution to the theme of sexuality and handicap was showered with a total of 18 festival prizes and sold to Holland, Italy, Taiwan, and South Korea. While he was not yet a local public success in Germany, in 2006, with his second feature film Emma’s Bliss (Emmas Glueck) he succeeded in convincing the local spectators of the quality of his profound material. The story of a car dealer with cancer who finds eternal happiness with a pig breeder a few weeks before his death was not only sold in a number of countries, but also drew more than 350,000 moviegoers to the German cinemas and inspired almost loving critiques. In his next two projects, the director stays true to his individualism: for the ensemble project 1. Mai, he contributes a half-documentary episode about the infamous riots in Berlin. His next independent film, Klaus Stoertebeker und Goedeke Michels is a pirate-buddy tragicomedy about becoming an adult.

Contact:
la gente Agentur fuer Regie, Drehbuch und Kamera
Bei den Muehren 70 · 20457 Hamburg/Germany
phone +49-40-38 61 14 05 · fax +49-40-38 61 14 06
email: info@la-gente-agentur.de
www.la-gente-agentur.de

THERAPY WITH METAPHORS

A portrait of Sven Taddicken

What would you do if you only had a half a year left to live? How would you come clean with yourself? Would you do good things for others or thumb your nose at the rest of the world and stay alone? With these existential questions, Sven Taddicken confronts the viewers in his new film, Emma’s Bliss. With poetic metaphors and archaic story structures, he tells of dying and the lust for life, of love in the face of death, and the search for and finding of happiness in the darkest hour of existence. “When I plan a film, there are two levels for me, entertainment and the therapeutic effect,” says the director. “If my crazy love story about death compels people to open up to the theme, I have reached my goal. I would like to set references, incite, formulate yearnings.”
Critics call this form of narration “superelevation” (Ueberhoehung), but Taddicken prefers to call it abstraction or reduction to the concrete. “People are longing for a film that grabs them and shakes them,” explains the 32-year-old filmmaker regarding the philosophy behind his works. “Metaphors seem more appropriate to me for this than real events. To convey a central message, I can’t do that at all, I am too undecided for that. But to raise a question and to awaken themes with it that are sleeping within me – that is my intention.”

Taddicken does this in that he tells of people who are otherwise standing in the shadows, speaks about themes that others pretend don’t exist. In 2001, when he told the story about a mentally handicapped person and his sexual inclinations, the moralists screamed – and the trade press celebrated. “I especially want to push open doors,” admits Taddicken, and at the same time, makes it clear that his materials should not be played outside of the mainstream. “I have the wish and also the confidence that one can interest a wide public with eccentric or radical figures. I don’t see myself as a niche director or conscious arthouse director, but I am happy about each additional viewer. For me, it is about perfecting the way and, at some point, to come to the bigger films, which are possible within the framework of this formula.”

The numbers prove that Taddicken is on the right track: if his debut was completely ignored by the German moviegoers despite his 18 festival awards, with Emma’s Bliss, he succeeded in becoming a critic’s and public’s darling. The expectations for awards were exceeded, and soon the film will start with 60 prints in Spain, in addition to Austria, Switzerland, France, Denmark, and Brazil. “With the numbers, you can see in black and white that my first film was much more successful abroad than it was in Germany. Here at home, people only saw the student film debut. In foreign countries, people simply had more confidence in the film.”

The interest in Taddicken’s materials is for a good reason, as his films are the figurehead of a new generation of filmmakers who want to bring a fresh breath of air to Germany’s dusty film scene with another, more courageous and sovereign film language. “The German film, that was, until now – if you boil it down radically – either comedies or films that dealt with German history,” summarizes Taddicken. “This – and people who know the branch agree – will change radically in the future.”

With all these reputable goals, the question remains whether Taddicken will continue to write his screenplays himself. “In my heart, I am probably actually a type of writer-filmmaker, because my material always affects people. But I have learned that other authors simply write better than I do. I can really use external support, especially with dialogs and dramaturgy. Furthermore, I enjoy the luxury of standing on the set and having a screenplay in which I haven’t turned every sentence around 3000 times. That is very liberating, because it is a good feeling to discover material together with the actors. It is like role playing. We have material – and together we all look at what we can get out of it.”

So that he doesn’t bore himself or his viewers, his next film will be set in the late middle ages on the rainy North Sea. “Germany simply needs a bizarre pirate film,” laughs Taddicken. Filming will begin in Fall of 2007. But in the meantime, Sven will be in Los Angeles on a scholarship at the Villa Aurora from January - April 2007, polishing up the finishing touches.

Johannes Bonke, freelance film journalist for numerous magazines, newspapers, and web pages, both in Germany and abroad, spoke with Sven Taddicken
Anne Wild was born in Bielefeld in 1967. After her school graduation she first attended the Hochschule fuer Musik und Darstellende Kuenste (College of Music and Performing Arts) from 1988-1992, training to be an actress. Afterwards, she worked as a freelance journalist and for some time as a production assistant for commercial films and music videos for the director Marcus Nispel in New York. During the mid 90s, Wild was a copywriter at the agency Springer & Jacoby. At the same time, she began to make her first short films and to work as a scriptwriter. In 2001, her screenplay What To Do In Case of Fire? (Was tun, wenn’s brennt?) was successfully filmed by Georg Schnitzler. Parallel to this, Anne Wild attended the Filmboard Berlin-Brandenburg’s Masterschool for Screenplay. In 2003, Wild won the Max Ophuels Prize at the Ophuels Festival Saarbruecken for her feature film debut My First Miracle (Mein erstes Wunder). This was followed in 2005 by Hansel and Gretel (Haensel und Gretel) which screened in the Kinderfilmfest of the 2006 Berlinale. Her other films include: Ballet Was Canceled (Ballett ist ausgefallen, short, 2001) and Nachmittag in Siedlisko (short, 2002).

Agent:
Verlag der Autoren GmbH & Co KG
Bernadette Langers
Schleusenstrasse 15 · 60327 Frankfurt am Main
phone +49-69-23 85 74 30 · fax +49-69-24 27 76 44
email: filmtvradio@verlag-der-autoren.de
www.verlag-der-autoren.de

“One watches, the other permits himself to be watched.” Things start to get especially interesting when Anne Wild talks about her work with actors, for the director began her own career by training in that profession. During that time, certainly, it became clear to her that she wished to take a different path: “Even then, I was already staging and producing my colleagues,” as she recalls, but she has retained a high opinion of the profession. “Mutual trust” is the most important thing, she says. Today she selects her actors and actresses herself: “I saw Juliane Koehler in a production of Stella, and subsequently I approached her for the main role in My First Miracle.” It was also her idea to cast Sybille Canonica in the role of the witch in her filming of Grimm’s fairy-tale Hansel and Gretel. “I wanted a tall, dark woman and not a wizened old granny.”
The 39-year-old director has made her name thus far with two films. In 2001 she wrote the screenplay for *What To Do in Case of Fire?*, a film that combines a generation portrait of late seventies left-wingers with genre motifs, filmed by Georg Schnitzler with Til Schweiger, Nadja Uhl and Klaus Loewitsch in leading roles. Then came her own debut as a director, *My First Miracle*. For this bold story about the intense friendship between an 11-year-old girl and an adult, Wild won the acclaimed *Max Ophueus Prize* in 2003. “Of course, deep down it is a similar theme,” says Wild as she looks back at these two very different films. “In both cases it is all about growing up.” It took quite some time before Anne Wild grew up as a director. By contrast to many of her colleagues, she never went to a film academy. After acting school, she worked in a range of fields; as a journalist, copywriter and production assistant. Initially, it was almost as a side-line that she pursued her dream to make films herself. “At that time I was still searching for a suitable form in which to articulate my ideas,” according to Wild. “On the side, I wrote as a journalist and advertising texter in order to earn money, while at the same time I made a few short films, crazy Super-8 films.” Then the breakthrough came with *What To Do in Case of Fire?*. “That was my first big screenplay; meaning that I couldn’t film it myself at that stage. But after that, a lot happened automatically” and the doors were opened for a film of her own. At the Masterschool for Screenplay of what was then the Filmboard, now Medienboard Berlin-Brandenburg, Wild acquired additional skills of the trade. During that time she also made two short films. Henriette Confurius had already acted in *Ballet is Canceled* and *Nachmittag in Siedlisko*, for which Wild also wrote the screenplay, and she subsequently took on the main role in *My First Miracle* – as one of the director’s discoveries. “She was eight at the time, but she had such an intense aura; I immediately sensed that she had something very special.”

*My First Miracle* was also a minor cinematic miracle: full of poetry and dense atmosphere, but without slipping into the sentimental, Wild recounts an impossible love – and a break with taboos. Far from all narrative clichés of teenie puberty and child abuse, the film concerns the relationship between a child and an adult, and shows a brief interlude away from the security of bourgeois conditions and norms, a time of daydreaming and escaping from the world. As always, Anne Wild had the self-confidence to win over others for her material: “I was very sure that I could make it succeed.” With a playful levity, *My First Miracle* touches the actual theme of cinema: holding onto one’s dreams despite all the constraints of life. An outstanding film employing the simplest of means, it later ran with only 17 copies in German cinemas and enjoyed reasonable success: “The distributor did not take a loss – that is important to me.” It was followed in 2005 by *Hansel and Gretel*: “A film version of Grimm’s fairy-tale that stays completely true to the original.” Wild did not want to modernize it, for after all, it is about fear, the subconscious and archetypes – “that is the interesting thing about fairytales.” After being shown at the Berlinale 2006, the film is due to start in German cinemas some time in 2007.

Wild especially admires films by Sofia Coppola and Agnes Jaoui, whose *The Taste of Others* and *Look at Me* “I would have loved to make”, but also many works by Louis Malle. The director has one thing in common with Malle at least: the fact that up until now she has always selected very diverse material. That is probably the way things will stay in the future: at present Wild is working parallel on the development of three ideas. One project is again about young people, ”Like *What To Do in Case of Fire?*, I am writing that together with Stefan Daehnert.” One is a family story, and the third screenplay “is a love story, with a number of women and one man”. For Anne Wild, the development of her material and characters is always something very personal. “The heart of a story exists very early on, but it cannot be grasped intellectually at that stage. There is an idea that fascinates me, something that has some connection with me personally.” Nonetheless, in encounters with her audience, she particularly enjoys the surprising aspects: “Sometimes, something completely different moves people. And as an author, I notice that they understand something that I myself had not understood before.”

Wild finds the actual writing of screenplays difficult and time-consuming, and sometimes she misses an exchange with other writers. But, as she says: “It’s just that the things I do, I cannot do them any other way than how I do them.”

Ruediger Suchsland, German correspondent for Cannes’ Semaine de la Critique and film critic for the Frankfurter Rundschau and Filmdienst among others, spoke with Anne Wild.
When Marcus H. Rosenmueller’s feature debut stormed the German box office charts last year to sell over one million tickets, a familiar name appeared in the film’s credits – Roxy Film. Familiar in one respect as the name of the production company founded by Luggi Waldleitner, one of the legendary figures of German postwar cinema, but, at the same time, with an injection of new blood under the leadership of the producer trio of Andreas Richter, Annie Brunner and Ursula Woerner.

After Waldleitner’s death in 1998, the company had been sold by the producer’s widow to the KirchGroup and ceased operations for almost three years before the present shareholders took over the production outfit in 2001 and re-launched it under the old name of Roxy Film.

Roxy Film was founded in the 1950s by Luggi Waldleitner in Munich. After his death in 1998, the company ceased operations for almost three years. In 2001, the present shareholders Dr. Andreas Richter, Annie Brunner and Ursula Woerner re-launched the production outfit. The three producers work in all areas of film production, from development through to the realization of the projects. To date, Roxy Film has concentrated on television projects while, at the same time, developing story ideas for the cinema. The past six years has seen them realizing seven TV movies, including the highly regarded Das Gespenst von Canterville which earned the company a nomination for the German Television Award and a Bavarian Television Award for Best Direction for director Isabel Kleefeld. Roxy’s output for television began in 2001 with Der Morgen nach dem Tod (dir: Sibylle Tafel) and was followed by the comedy Auch Engel wollen nur das Eine (dir: Robert Pejo, 2002), Der Mustervater – Allein unter Kindern (dir: Dagmar Hirtz, 2003), Zivile Jungs (dir: Matthias Lehmann, 2005), Trau niemals Deinem Schwiegersohn (dir: Michael Kreihsl, 2006), and Tango Tango (dir: Thomas Kronthaler, 2006). A new screen adaptation of the Cervantes classic Don Quichote (2007) is in preparation as well as a sequel of the successful family comedy Der Mustervater.

Marcus H. Rosenmueller’s Grave Decisions (Wer früher stirbt ist länger tot) was the ”new” Roxy Film’s first feature film project and brought the producers the Bavarian Film Award’s coveted Producers’ Prize. The dark comedy about an 11-year-old boy who takes everything he sees and hears at face value was seen by over 1 million cinemagoers in Germany and voted the audience’s favorite at the Festival of German Films in London in November 2006. Rosenmueller received the German Film Promotion Award for Best Direction at the Munich Film Festival last July.

Contact: Roxy Film GmbH & Co. KG
Roemerstrasse 21 · 80801 Munich/Germany
phone +49-89-3888830 · fax +49-89-3888310
email: info@roxyfilm.de · www.roxyfilm.de
“We had an existing brand in the market when we founded Roxy Film again, but we made it clear from the outset that we were not wanting to be involved in just handling the licenses of the old Roxy library. We wanted to produce films,” Andreas Richter recalls.

For this re-launch, the new company was able to benefit from the three producers’ extensive background in the film and television industries.

Andreas Richter worked as an assistant to Jan Mojto at the KirchGroup from 1995 and was responsible there from 1997 – 2002 for German-language co-productions such as Der Tunnel, Sass, and Das Jesus Video. He also served as a managing director and shareholder of the Janus Group before coming to Roxy Film.

Meanwhile, Annie Brunner worked in several theaters as a stage designer and dramaturg after graduating in German and Theater Studies, setting up shop as a freelance production designer between 1994 and 1997. She then worked together with Richter at KirchMedia’s German production division between 1997 and 2001 before becoming a managing director of Roxy Film in 2001.

A graduate of German, Media Studies, and Psychology, Ursula Woerner worked in various functions at KirchMedia in the area of international co-productions from 1996 before being appointed Head of Development at the Munich-based independent production house Hofmann & Voges Entertainment in 2000. A year later, Woerner became a co-managing director of Roxy Film and, with her two partners, managing shareholder in 2003.

“We overlap totally in our work at Roxy Film,” Brunner explains. “Each of us is involved in every aspect, whether it is the development of the script, the casting or the actual production. The three of us make the decisions in every phase. At the same time, there is always one of us who is responsible overall for a project.”

In the first five years of the new Roxy Film’s existence, the trio’s output was concentrated on TV movie commissions for private and public TV channels, beginning with Sibylle Tafel’s Der Morgen nach dem Tod and followed by Robert Pejo’s comedy Auch Engel wollen nur das Eine, Dagmar Hirtz’s Der Mustervater – Allein unter Kindern, Isabel Kleefeld’s Das Gespenst von Canterville, Matthias Lehmann’s Zivile Jungs, Michael Kreihsl’s Trau niemals Deinem Schwiegersohn, and Thomas Kronthaler’s Tango Tango.

That is not to say that cinema projects were taking a back seat at Roxy. As Ursula Woerner points out, “the financing and development of screenplays for feature film projects takes more than a couple of years whereas television projects can be produced much quicker. We have always wanted to do both cinema and television and have never sought to restrict ourselves to one medium. Some story ideas are more at home in television, and others are better for the cinema, so we have been keen to keep this broad basis to our work.”

“We don’t have a firm line on genres,” Richter adds. “Our clear principle is that we want to tell stories we think are important and interesting – and stories which attract a wide audience.”

While producing the TV movies, Roxy had been developing three feature film projects, and feature debutant Marcus H. Rosenmueller’s Grave Decisions was the first to go into production, although Richter admits that it was not an easy project for the young outfit to choose for its foray into feature films.

“The development of the script was a particular challenge because the film doesn’t have a conventional plot and there are many side stories which gave the project an unusual structure,” Richter explains. “We were working with Marcus and Christian [Lerch] over several years on the screenplay, and then the casting was also a challenge to find the right child. We had the good fortune to have Nessie Nesslauer as casting director, but had to put the shooting back by three months because we hadn’t found the right boy. We all wanted to achieve an authenticity in the film which means that we hardly shot in a studio and were mostly on location. Even the studio of the radio station on the mountain is a real location. We were hoping that people would be able to really feel the story and that is perhaps a reason for its success.”

Hearing such a success with Grave Decisions will, as Brunner suggests, hopefully make it easier in the future for the company’s next projects because they now have a track record which financiers and distributors can work with.

“We were really surprised by the scale of the film’s success in Bavaria,” Woerner says, “as well as that it is also running so successfully outside of Bavaria, like in Berlin.”

Indeed, Rosenmueller’s film had been on the Berlinale’s wish-list of films it wanted to invite to screen at the festival last year, but the production was still in post-production and would not have been finished in time. In the event, the world premiere at the Munich Filmfest in July proved to be the “ideal forum” with Rosenmueller having a home advantage being able to present the film in his native Bavaria.

The decision to wait until Munich seemed all more fortuitous after the young filmmaker picked up the German Film Promotion Award for Best Direction which was awarded during the Filmfest and created quite a buzz around the film ahead of its cinema release by Movienet at the end of the summer. Moreover, the international buyers were able to see an English subtitled version at German Films’ “Munich Previews” on the eve of the Filmfest.

Passing beyond Bavaria’s borders is one thing, but the question as to whether the film would appeal to audiences outside of Germany was answered at the end of last year when Grave Decisions was voted the audience’s favorite at the Festival of German Films in London.

Moreover, in 2008, Roxy Film will work again with Marcus Rosenmueller and his screenwriter Christian Lerch on another feature film project.

One thing is for sure: Roxy Film doesn’t have any thoughts of a huge expansion in the future, but will prefer operating as a lean and efficient outfit. “We want to concentrate our energies very clearly on developing story ideas,” Richter stresses. “We aren’t interested in creating a huge producer system because we wouldn’t then be able to guarantee our particular way of working.”

Dr. Andreas Richter, Annie Brunner and Ursula Woerner spoke with Martin Blaney
Whether it is the theater, cinema or television, Germany’s choice for the Shooting Star 2007, Maximilian Brueckner seems to be simply everywhere at the moment. But this all might never have happened if his mother hadn’t given him the money for the bus fare to the auditions for drama school.

Born into a family of eight children in 1979, Maximilian Brueckner received his training as an actor at the renowned Otto Falckenberg Schule in the Bavarian capital. His first engagement was at the Volkstheater in Munich where he has been a permanent member of the ensemble since 2002/2003 under the direction of Christian Stueckl in such productions as Geierwally (2002), Die Raeuber (2003) and Der Raeuber Kneissl (2004). Maximilian could be seen from April 2005 in the role of Boandlkramer in the Volkstheater’s staging of Der Brandner Kaspar und das ewige Leben. He has also been Mammon in the Salzburg Festspiele production of Jedermann since 2004. His first role in a feature film – and also his first lead – was as the gay goalie in Sherry Hormann’s comedy Guys and Balls (Manner wie wir) in 2003. This was followed by Thomas Durchschlag’s Alone (Allein, 2004) and Marc Rothemund’s OSCAR-nominated Sophie Scholl – The Final Days (Sophie Scholl – Die letzten Tage, 2005). In 2005, Maximilian appeared in Marcus H. Rosenmueller’s Grave Decisions (Wer frueher stirbt ist laenger tot), which was seen by over 1 million cinemagoers in Germany last year, and followed this with a lead role in Bernd Lange’s Rabenbrueder and a part in Rosenmueller’s second feature Heavyweights (Schwere Jungs). He has also worked for television, being cast in a lead for Dieter Wedel’s two-parter Papa & Mama for pubcaster ZDF in 2004 and has become the latest addition to the detectives in the ARD network’s Tatort crime series as police inspector Franz Kappl from the Saarland. He appeared opposite Xaver Hutter as Mozart’s fictional best friend Karl in Bernd Fischerauer’s Mozart – Ich haette Muenchen Ehre gemacht. In 2005, Maximilian was presented with the tz – Rosenstrauss des Jahres award by Munich’s daily newspaper Tageszeitung, the AZ – Stern des Jahres by the Abendzeitung newspaper and the Muenchener Merkur’s Theater Prize for his portrayal of the Boandlkramer. He was nominated for the Adolf Grimm Award in 2005 for his performances in Papa & Mama and Tatort: Der Tod auf der Waiz and followed this a year later with another nomination in the category as TV New Discovery of the Year. In 2006, he was nominated as Best Male Shooting Star for the Austrian ROMY television awards and was awarded the Critics Prize of the German Critics Association in the Film category as well as the Bavarian Arts Promotion Award in the category for Performing Arts.

Contact:
die agenten · Beate Wolgast
Ackerstrasse 11b · 10115 Berlin/Germany
phone +49-30-28 88 43 30 · fax +49-30-28 88 43 31
e-mail: news@die-agenten.de · www.die-agenten.de

A SHOOTING STAR KEEPING TO HIS ROOTS

A portrait of Maximilian Brueckner

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Born into a family of eight children in 1979, Maximilian had not initially thought of a career as an actor. “After finishing school, I worked for an ambulance service as part of my year of community service and originally had the idea of studying medicine,” he recalls.

A portrait of Maximilian Brueckner

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Born into a family of eight children in 1979, Maximilian had not initially thought of a career as an actor. “After finishing school, I worked for an ambulance service as part of my year of community service and originally had the idea of studying medicine,” he recalls.
He had done some acting during his time at school but nothing serious. This all changed after his parents heard about the renowned Otto Falckenberg drama academy in Munich and his mother encouraged him to have a go at it and gave him the bus fare to get to the auditions.

Maximilian didn’t think he would have much of a chance because he couldn’t speak “High German”, but his recitation of an extract from Heinrich von Kleist’s *Woyzeck* must have evidently done the trick, for he was accepted to the academy for its four year program.

However, it wasn’t that long into his studies before he started working parallel on the professional stage with engagements at Munich’s Volksbühne in roles in such productions as *Geierwally, Die Räuber* and *Der Räuber Knieisl*. He became a permanent member of the theater’s ensemble from the 2002/2003 season, working regularly with director Christian Stückl.

At the same time, Maximilian received the offer of his first film part in Sherry Hormann’s *Guys and Balls* as the gay goalie Ecki, which was his entree into the world of cinema. “I was very happy with the experience and also learned that comedy is much harder to play,” he observes, pointing out that he had been “attracted by the subject matter which provokes and irritates.”

One thing is sure with Maximilian Brückner: he will not let himself be typecast into a particular kind of role. Indeed, his next film part after Hormann’s comedy was in Thomas Durchschlag’s sombre drama *Alone* opposite Lavinia Wilson. “I never want to go into one direction,” he explains. “I am always wanting to try out all kinds of things and have a different appearance in each film. I like disguising myself so that people cannot recognize me, by having a different hairstyle or wearing glasses, as in *Grave Decisions*.”

Moreover, he clearly needs this combination of working for both the theater and cinema: “I often freak out on the stage whereas I try to reduce my acting in films,” he says. “In the theater you have lots of rehearsing, there is movement and it is very physical. But in films you can at last play on a smaller scale. That’s a state of luxury for me to have both.”

This past year has seen Maximilian work on two films with fellow Bavarian Marcus H. Rosenmueller – on the box-office hit *Grave Decisions* and *Heavyweights*, which opened in German cinemas in January. He isn’t really surprised by the success of the *Grave Decisions* film, which he describes as “Emir Kusturica in Bavarian”: “The thing is that they didn’t straighten out the Bavarian dialect or try to adapt it. It is as it is, and I think that’s where the film’s strength lies,” he suggests.

His roots in his native Bavaria are evidently very important for the 28-year-old actor who still lives outside of Munich in the countryside within sight of the Bavarian Alps. “I need that distance from my work,” he explains. “I’m not the kind of person who would move to Berlin or Munich or anywhere else in Germany. I am not a city type. But it wouldn’t be a problem for me to go abroad. I have a brother living in South America, so I might go and stay with him for a while in the future.”

Maximilian is also not one of the “usual suspects” you are likely to see attending every film premiere and industry function, either. “I tend to avoid parties because that isn’t my world. I like my work as an actor and then I like being out in the countryside,” he says. “I do a lot of sport and enjoy the life on the land, being with my best friends from my schooldays and playing brass band music or doing some acting together.”

At the same time, though, he is very honored to have been selected as the German Shooting Star 2007 to follow in the footsteps of such colleagues as Daniel Bruehl, Franka Potente, Johanna Wokalek, Florian Lukas, Heike Makatsch and Moritz Bleibtreu.

Maximilian was in Rio de Janeiro with a touring production of the Volkstheater when his agent Beate Wolgast phoned him with the news. “I had heard of the Shooting Stars initiative before, even though I don’t have so much contact with the film industry,” he says. “I think it is a great distinction and a chance for me, because actors would not normally have this opportunity to meet so many colleagues from other European countries and hear about their experiences. I also believe it’s a great idea to support European cinema and show that there is an alternative to what is coming from the American market.”

Maximilian Brückner spoke with Martin Blaney
How times have changed: when the Association of German Film Exporters (VDFE Verband deutscher Filmexporteure e.V.) was founded in Munich in 1956 as the “Interessengemeinschaft der Filmexporteure e.V.” (Syndicate of Film Exporters), the majority of the 18 founding members were export divisions of the theatrical film distributors.
“Nowadays, they are independently operating companies,” observes Bavaria Film International’s Thorsten Schaumann, a board member of VDFE along with TELEPOOL’s Wolfram Skowronnek. “That shows how the business has evolved over the years and we now have a situation where these activities – theatrical distribution and film export – are managed separately.”

In 1984, the Syndicate assumed its present name of the VDFE as a registered society with its head office in Munich and currently has 18 members on its books. According to the VDFE’s statutes, every German film exporter can become a member as long as they are handling the world sales of at least three German films or television films. However, companies who are dedicated purely to distributing television programming are not accepted as members.

“The association was founded and based in Munich because most of the German export firms and distributors were working from there,” Skowronnek explains. “And this is still the case today.”

From the outset, the aim of the association was, as set out in the statutes, “the representation of the general interests of the German film exporters as well as the promotion of the interests of its members in all affairs concerning the film industry.”

“The idea has always been to bundle the interests of the exporters, thereby having a strong voice and optimizing our effectiveness vis-à-vis other players,” Schaumann says.

The VDFE is actively involved in all legislative and political measures in as far as they concern the interests of film exporters, such as the all-industry debate on amendments to the Federal Film Law (FFG) and reforms of copyright law. Moreover, the VDFE was represented at the meetings of the “Buendnis fuer den Film” (Alliance for Film) which were initiated by the first State Minister for Culture Michael Naumann.

In addition to being a member of the German film industry’s “umbrella” organization SPIO (Spitzenorganisation der Filmwirtschaft) and a shareholder in German Films, the Association is also represented in committees of the German Federal Film Board (FFA). Thus, board members have seats on the FFA’s administrative council (Verwaltungsrat), the guidelines committee (Richtlinien-Kommission), the committee for international collaboration and EU film issues (Internationale Zusammenarbeit und EU-Filmfragen), and the promotional measures committee (Werbe-Kommission).

“By sitting on these various committees we try to exert influence on film policy in the interest of the exporters of German films,” Skowronnek notes. “The goal is to see what one can do by way of legislation for German cinema abroad. Similarly, we can make proposals as a shareholder of possible measures to be followed at German Films.”

At the same time, Skowronnek sees the VDFE serving its members as “an informal platform for an exchange about markets and festivals, about similarities and differences in working procedures. Often, problems arise which can be solved through such a platform and drawing on the pooled experience of the members.”

Indeed, according to Schaumann, the Association is very lucky to have such internationally respected personalities as Lilli Tyc-Holm of Cine-International Filmvertrieb and Dieter Menz of Atlas International Film among its membership. “They are our most senior members and were involved in the development of the organization over the years; they were past board members and now provide a fountain of knowledge and experience for the rest of us.”

While the Association’s members can use the umbrella stand of German Films at the leading international festivals and markets, the VDFE traditionally has its own stand at the Berlinale’s European Film Market which can be used by members as a sales stand or as a general meeting place.

Moreover, the VDFE is host – together with the Association of Acting Agencies since 2005 – of a Bavarian Biergarten Brunch during the Munich Filmfest in June where members can meet together with colleagues from the distribution world in an informal atmosphere to catch up on the latest gossip and spend a couple of hours in pleasant company.

However, the VDFE is not just keeping to the status quo: board members Schaumann and Skowronnek and the Association’s chairman Lothar Wedel are constantly keeping themselves abreast of the new technological developments and market trends.

“The ways of using films have changed and the exploitation chain has been correspondingly extended,” Schaumann explains. “In former days, you just had cinema, but then television came, followed by video and DVD. And with digitalization we now have video-on-demand platforms. These are challenges one has to address: one has to see how to react to them and which legal formulations will be needed in order to adapt to these changes.”

Indeed, he sees the “increasing internationalization” with ever more markets and festivals as one of the challenges facing the VDFE and its members in the future. “We will need to decide where to set the priorities with these new events, and there is also scope for a greater exchange on an international level.” German exporters have a presence in the pan-European film exporters association EFEA, with Bavaria Media and Atlas International Film as members and Thorsten Schaumann and Dieter Menz sitting on the EFEA board.

“We have to be aware of this internationalization especially as German films are now having a higher international profile,” Schaumann argues. “Moreover, involvement on a European level is becoming increasingly important with the advent of digitalization. We are now faced with the question of how one can define the territories and assess the risks and chances in the exploitation of rights in the digital age.”

Martin Blaney spoke with Thorsten Schaumann, Wolfram Skowronnek and Lothar Wedel.
The 20th anniversary of the AFI Fest saw the Audience Award again going to a German short film. Michael Dreher himself was at the event in Hollywood to accept the award for his film *Fair Trade*. This is the fourth time in succession that the short film audience award has gone to a German production at the Los Angeles’ AFI Fest. In the past three years, the coveted prize went to Sikander Goldau (*Fragile*), Neele Leana Vollmar (*My Parents*) and Till Nowak (*Delivery*).

The German co-production *Grbavica* by Jasmila Zbanic won the Narrative Grand Jury Prize.

German Films invited around 300 people to the private residence of German Consul General, Dr. Claus Stocks, who played host to guests including Hannah Herzsprung (*Four Minutes*), Aelrun Goette (German competition entry *Under the Ice*) and Florian Henckel von Donnersmarck, whose film *The Lives of Others* (US distributors: Sony Pictures Classics) has been nominated for the OSCAR in the category Best Foreign Language Film. Sony Pictures will be releasing the multi-award winning *The Lives of Others* in American cinemas on 9 February 2007.

Four OSCAR nominations in the last five years proves once again that German films have a variety of stories to offer, which can both entertain and touch the viewer. The international honors awarded to German films, but mainly the number of viewers in local cinemas – with a market share of German films at 25% in 2006 – prove this most impressively.
GERMAN FILMS IN ARGENTINA

Packed cinemas, an enthusiastic audience, good press response, satisfied guests and a great closing event stamped this year’s Festival of German Films in Buenos Aires, marking the 6th time that German Films has organized the festival in Argentina’s capital. The meanwhile well-established event enjoyed great interest from local audiences and film professionals alike. Over 5,000 spectators visited the event, which took place in the cinema Village Recoleta from 28 September - 4 October 2006. Films like Summer in Berlin (opening film) by Andreas Dresen, Requiem by Hans-Christian Schmid, The Lives of Others by Florian Henckel von Donnersmarck, and Emma’s Bliss by Sven Taddicken were real audience magnets.

Also the silent film screening, which was organized for the first time within the framework of the festival, could book an extraordinary success. Eerie Tales by Richard Oswald was completely sold out and gave the festival a festive continuation.

Directors Andreas Dresen and Till Endemann (The Smile of the Monsterfish) and actress Sandra Hueller (Requiem) traveled to Argentina to present their films personally to the audience and press. And representatives from Germany’s film industry also traveled to Argentina to meet business partners during the course of the festival.

GERMAN CINEMA ON THE ROAD TO SUCCESS IN SCANDINAVIA

German Films staged the Festival of German Films in Scandinavia for the third time under the banner of German Films Go North! The festival took place from 2 – 5 November 2006 in Stockholm and from 27 – 30 November 2006 in Copenhagen. Films including The Lives of Others by Florian Henckel von Donnersmarck, Emma’s Bliss by Sven Taddicken, The Free Will by Matthias Glasner, and Requiem by Hans-Christian Schmid premiered in Stockholm and Copenhagen. This year’s edition of German Films Go North! was a great success and German Films looks forward to bringing German productions and filmmakers to Scandinavia again next year.

TWO NATIONS – A SINGLE SCREEN

The 3rd Indo-German Film Festival in Bangalore, organized by FFF Bayern, Goethe-Institute/Max Mueller Bhavan, and the Indian Film Festival organizing committee, started with a roller-coaster ride: Johannes Brunner’s Oktoberfest opened the Bavarian-South Indian film event that in the German program also screened Off Beat by Hendrik Hoelzemann, Robber Hotzenplotz by Gernot Roll, Napolia by Dennis Gansel, Sophie Scholl – The Final Days by Marc Rothemund, Winter Journey by Hans Steinichler, The Wild Soccer Bunch by Joachim Masanek, A Pass from the Back by Gil Mehmert, Wild Chicks by Vivian Naefe, My Magical Friend Sams by Ben Verbong, and Shadows of Time by Florian Gallenberger. Closing film and one of the highlights in the South Indian program was Girish Kasaravalli’s Hasina, which won two international awards for Best Picture and Best Script in Brussels. All in all, over 15,000 film fans attended the week-long festival. The children’s films were seen by more than 6,000 youngsters from public and private schools in the area. Again, the Indo-German Film Festival succeeded in connecting film experts from two culturally very specific regions.
KRABAT IN BOTTROP

Otfried Preussler’s book for young people Krabat has been translated into numerous languages and won the European Youth Book Award in 1973. Since the beginning of December, the film adaptation has, with the support of the Filmstiftung NRW, been in production in the Bottrop-Kirchhellen studios. After shooting in Sibiu/Romania, director Marco Kreuzpaintner and his team traveled to North Rhine-Westphalia at the end of November to shoot inside a mill which plays a decisive role in the book. In the script, Michael Gutmann tells the spooky story of the 14-year-old orphan Krabat, who trains with a magician in the Black Mill.

The feature film, which is set in the 17th century and is sure to elate Harry Potter fans, is being produced by Claussen+Woebke+Putz, Krabat Filmproduktion and Seven Pictures. The leading roles are being played by Daniel Bruehl, David Kross, Christian Redl, Robert Stadlober and Paula Kalenberg. The film team has compiled a diary under www.krabat.blog.de so that fans can closely follow the project’s development.

FULL CINEMAS AT KINO!2006 IN THE MOMA NEW YORK

As opening film of KINO!2006 at New York’s Museum of Modern Art, director Chris Kraus and producer Meike Kordes presented the award-winning drama Four Minutes (US distributors: Wolfe Video) – winner of Best Film in Shanghai and Reykjavik, and most recently four Bavarian Film Awards. Around 200 distributors and representatives from the film and media world attended the subsequent reception in the pool bar of the Design-Hotel QT.

DOCUMENTARY FILM EXCHANGE WITH CHINA

A delegation from the German Documentary Film Association (AG DOK) was financed by German Films to participate in the Documentary Film Festival of Guangzhou (formerly Canton) in Southern China, from 3 – 9 December 2006. This was the fourth festival of its kind, focusing on the themes Poverty and Women Today. Those who have followed the festival’s development from the beginning could observe an obvious increase in professionalism, going hand in hand with a cautious opening up to wider audiences. Besides the film program, there was also a co-production meeting, at which not only German and Chinese editors and productions companies, but also representatives of European television broadcasters considered proposals put forward by a majority of very young Chinese authors. On GERMAN DAY, seven German documentaries were shown and discussed with the audience. The film Neighbors – Vecinos by the German director Rouven Rech had been accepted for the competition and received an award as the Best Reportage. During a reception by the German Consulate General in Guangzhou, the German delegation underlined its wish to deepen the cultural exchange already decided between the film festival in Leipzig and the Chinese delegation that attended last year. On behalf of the AG DOK, Gerlinde Boehm signed an agreement for a planned exchange of films between the two countries and for the organization of German or respectively Chinese film days in coming years.

GERMAN-SWISS CO-PRODUCTION MEETING IN NYON

A meeting between German and Swiss producers at the start of the Nyon International Documentary Film Festival (20 – 26 April 2007) aims to sound out the possibilities of more intensive cooperation between documentary filmmakers in both countries. The meeting’s offi-
cial host will be the festival; on the German side, the AG DOK is preparing the meeting in collaboration with German Films. Alongside short reports about the framework conditions of documentary film production in the two countries, above all the meeting intends to present and analyze selected examples of previous cooperation in the field of documentary film production. In a subsequent round of pitching, new projects will be assessed for their suitability as co-productions. The group of around ten production companies from each country will be supplemented by well-known representatives from interested broadcasters' editorial offices and institutions providing film support in both countries – Peter Dinges, CEO of the German Federal Film Board (FFA), has already agreed to attend. A second meeting has also been proposed, possibly in connection with the International Leipzig Festival for Documentary and Animated Films. There is also an idea to extend the circle of participants to include Austrian producers. In the long term, it is hoped that mutual exchange will enable producers' to take better advantage of their shared language at the heart of Europe.

GERMAN DELEGATION AT WORLD CONGRESS OF HISTORY PRODUCERS 2006

In mid November 2006, 21 German television producers attended the World Congress of History Producers in London. The special themes this year were: The Image of Islam in Historical Documentaries, new developments in the computer-generated images that have become so important in our representation of historical events, new marketing platforms outside of television, and the growing role of personal stories in the mediation of history.

On the conference periphery, the German delegation met editors from the BBC, PBS and the newly founded Vision-TV from Canada. This participation at the congress – which was supported by German Films and organized by the AG DOK – was directed towards increased networking and the improvement of international competitiveness among German non-fiction producers. Plans for the coming year include participation at the Canadian documentary film festival and pitching-forum Hot Docs.

Film Costumes!
The Theaterkunst Company

Based on the example of the Berlin-based company Theaterkunst GmbH, the exhibition *Filmkostüme!* (28 March – 2 September 2007 at the Museum for Film and Television/Berlin) sets out on a search for traces of the past hundred years of costume design.

It will include articles of clothing and accessories, design sketches and film clips, which convey an impression of the work of costume designers and of the company Theaterkunst. The exhibition brings together thirty costume designers: from Ali Hubert, who designed Ernst Lubitsch’s film *Madame Dubarry* in 1919, to Gabriele Binder, who created the costumes for the film *Das Leben der Anderen* in 2006. A workshop will be recreated that shows the daily production routine of costume design, providing insights into the general work flow and procedures having to do with making film costumes. The exhibition will “bring back to life” the wardrobes of thirty German and international stars by combining costumes on display with actual film scenes.

Animation-City Hamburg:
Additional Employment Impulses

Two animation projects from Hamburg have received first funds from the Program for Innovation, Growth and Employment initiated by the Department for Economy and Finance (BWA) of the Free and Hanseatic City of Hamburg: *Emil und die Detektive* by Michael Schack, based on the children’s book by Erich Kaestner (TFC Trickompany...
Filmproduktion/Hamburg) and Wanze Muldoon by Christoph Puille (Pictorion Magma Animation/Hamburg). In providing additional annual funds of €750,000 for project development and production, the BWA aims to give new impulses to increase employment and to win over new animated film projects for Hamburg. “This commitment by the authorities makes us very happy,” says Eva Hubert, executive director of FilmFoerderung Hamburg. “It is our mutual task to continue supporting Hamburg’s creative minds financially and ideally.” FilmFoerderung Hamburg is taking on the job of conducting the program.

In January with Marcus H. Rosenmueller’s hit

The 2007 German Premieres started the new year of “Premieres” off

In December 2006, within the framework of the bi-monthly

German Premieres, German Films presented the German box office hit 7 Dwarves – The Wood is Not Enough at the Tribeca Cinemas in New York and at the Directors Guild of America in Los Angeles. Director Sven Unterwaldt, producer Douglas Welbat and world sales agent Wolfram Skowronnek (Telepool) attended the event in person and received an invitation to the Miami International Film Festival from Nicole Guillemet.

The 2007 German Premieres started the new year of “Premieres” off in January with Marcus H. Rosenmueller’s hit Grave Decisions.

New Funds for the German Film Industry

The German Federal Film Board (FFA) has taken over the implementation of the federal government’s German Federal Film Fund (Deutscher Filmfoerderfonds), applicable as of 1 January 2007. Each year for the next three years, the new model of support earmarks €60 million to consolidate film production in Germany. The fund provides for a reimbursement of 20 percent of German production costs. Films eligible for reimbursement are features with a minimum production budget of €1 million, documentaries (€200,000) and animation films (€3 million) intended for the cinema. One pre-condition to a refund of production costs is that at least 25 percent of the production budget is spent in Germany; the film is also required to pass a so-called ‘cultural suitability’ assessment. “The German Federal Film Fund pursues structural targets; it promotes the competitiveness of the German film industry and aims to support producers directly,” according to the Fund’s project director Christine Berg. The Fund is operated without committees and awards its subsidies – as automatic production support for German cinema films – to all producers who fulfill the support conditions and submit completed applications to the FFA. The guidelines and application form for the German Federal Film Fund can be accessed on the FFA website, under www.ffa.de.

Cinemas in Germany: Developments, Capacities & Investments 1997 – 2005

What features characterized those cinemas with an above average increase in viewing figures during recent years, and which cinemas experienced a reduction in viewing figures? How many showings per day is actually average for the field? And what technology can be found in Germany’s cinemas?

For the eighth time, the FFA is providing statistical information on German cinema screens and their success, now covering an observation period from 1997 to 2005. In addition to an evaluation of the cinemas’ size and position, their general operation and capacity utilization, projection systems and the investments made by cinema
managers were examined more closely this time. A questionnaire on
digital cinema was also distributed for the first time. According to this,
11 percent of screens plan to refit with D-Cinema technology in the
near future. The screens were analyzed according to federal state, city
size, cinema center size and auditorium size. Evaluation criteria, apart
from seating capacity and capacity utilization, included ticket prices
and additional services offered in the cinemas. The new study can be
accessed under www.ffa.de.

**SOIRÉE ALLEMANDE IN CLERMONT-FERRAND**

After its big success and much commendation by the various inter-
national professionals who attended the first screening last year, the
second edition of an extraordinary short film project had its premiere.
*The Soirée Allemande · Coup de Cœur - Le Court Métrage Allemand* is a
joint project of the [*German Short Film Association*](#), German
Films, the Festival du Court Métrage Clermont-Ferrand, the Goethe
Institute Lyon and the KurzFilmAgentur Hamburg.

After its premiere at the Festival du Court Métrage, the program is
touring the Goethe Institutes of French-speaking countries (e.g.
Morocco, Tunisia, France and Canada) and institutes of the Alliance
française. With the first edition last year, it was even possible to reach
interested people in Vietnam and the Palestinian territories.

From more than 200 festival entries in Clermont-Ferrand, ten German
films were chosen to be part of the program. Genres range from

Another premiere at the festival was the presentation of the German
Short Film Association’s short film catalogue *German Short Films 2007*,
which contains 100 of the best short film productions of 2006 as well
as an extensive service appendix. The association was also present
with a booth at the short film market in Clermont-Ferrand and orga-
nized the market screening *Matinée Allemande · Coup de Foudre – Le
Court Métrage Allemand* with another nine outstanding German short
films. The Clermont-Ferrand Short Film Festival has become the
world’s premier cinema event dedicated to short films. It is ranked the
second film festival in France after Cannes in terms of audience and
professional attendance. In 2006, more than 2,800 professional dele-
gates and almost 135,000 spectators attended the festival.

More information on German short films is available at: [www.ag-kurzfilm.de](http://www.ag-kurzfilm.de)

**MFG BADEN-WUERTTEMBERG FUNDS CO-PRODUCTIONS**

Since October 1995 the MFG Baden-Wuerttemberg has been
supporting the development of culturally significant film projects, as
well as the cinema scene in south-west Germany. The funder’s annual
budget of some €10 million goes into the areas of screenplay develop-
ment, pre-production planning, production, incentive funding, distri-
bution and sales, film theater support and numerous structural
measures. Particular concentration is given to the support of up-and-
coming filmmakers.

But the support of international co-productions is also high on the list
of priorities at MFG. Andrea Staka’s *Fraulein*, which was shot in
Switzerland, recently won the *Golden Leopard* during its world pre-
miere in the competition at Locarno 2006. And at the Sarajevo Film
Festival 2006, the Swiss-German co-production won *Best Film* and
*Best Actress* for Mirjana Karanović. Sergey Dvortsevoy’s *Tulpan*, realiz-
ed by the German producer Pandora Film in collaboration with Russia
and Switzerland, is the next suspenseful MFG supported project.

**MUNICH RENDEZ-VOUS A GREAT SUCCESS**

For the 4th time, German and French filmmakers, producers, broad-
casters and financiers met in Munich in November 2006 in order to
intensify the collaboration between the two countries’ film industries.
With more than 370 participants attending the various panels and dis-
ussion groups, it was the most successful ‘Rendez-voz’ meeting so
far. And for the first time, 17 actors and actresses from both countries
got the opportunity to present themselves to the professionals, an
event which was warmly welcomed. This year’s Rendez-vous will take
place in November in Paris.
One bitter, black night, the three robbers stop a carriage that has only one passenger: the little orphan Tiffany who is on her way to live with her wicked aunt. But she is delighted to meet the robbers instead. Since there is no treasure to steal, the robbers bundle the little girl into a warm cape and carry her away to their hideout …

“We have succeeded in creating a real film for children without any kind of scenes that would frighten the children,” explains producer Stephan Schesch. “And it is also a film which will be great fun for the adults. There is a smart narrative and it is laconic with a humor that isn’t at all flat or simple. Moreover, the film has its own very particular visual style which is inspired by Tomi Ungerer and is really unmistakable.”

Indeed, the film’s makers received the master’s blessing for the project after he saw the storyboards last summer. “Tomi looked at them and was moved to tears because he liked them so much,” Schesch recalls. “Of course, the film is another development from his book, but he can feel that his spirit is there.”

Unlike other German animation feature films, the bulk of the work on Die drei Raeuber is being undertaken in Germany: “the voices, characters, storyboards, overall layout and the production backgrounds have been done in Germany and it’s really only the animation where we are going to the Philippines,” Schesch continues. “We will then come back to Germany for the compositing.”

A special characteristic of this production is that Animation X has built up its own studio infrastructure for the project. “We didn’t go to the existing studios, but hired the people ourselves so that we could have control on both the quality and the costs,” Schesch explains, pointing out that they had rented premises in Hamburg and Berlin for the international team of animators under director Hayo Freitag (Capt’n Bluebear). In addition, Animation X is working with two studios in Baden-Wuerttemberg – Studio 88 for backgrounds and Studio Film Bilder for layouts – as well as with Animagix, who purposely set up shop in Stuttgart to handle the compositing on the film.

While this first Animation X project could be financed solely out of Germany, Schesch nevertheless concluded a pre-sale during production for France with Wild Bunch’s video arm Wild Side Video and the theatrical distributor Gebeka Films who has a successful track record in handling animation with such titles as Kirikou et la Sorciere, La Freccia Azzurra, and The Little Polar Bear. Moreover, this year’s Berlinale should see the X Filme-subsidiary X Sales targeting certain territories where Ungerer’s book has cult status such as Japan, Italy and Spain before handing the sales chores over to an international sales agent.

Published in 1961 and translated over the years into more than 18 languages, Ungerer’s book continues to enchant children and adults alike with its story of the three fierce robbers who walk the roads in the dark of the night, hidden under large black capes and tall black hats. The first one carries a blunderbuss, the second a pepper-blower, and the third a huge red axe with which they terrify everyone and plunder wherever they go.
It was one of those happy coincidences,” says Italian-born, Berlin-based filmmaker Luigi Falorni that producer Andreas Bareiss had a copy of former child soldier Senait Mehari’s international best-seller Heart of Fire on his desk when they met two years ago to discuss possibilities of working together.

“I had been interested for some time in Eritrea and had been there in 2004 with the Italian aid organization Anladi. I was immediately enchanted by the land and people and came back with the idea of making a film about the country, but put that to the side because of the border conflicts with Ethiopia,” Falorni recalls.

The OSCAR nomination for his graduation film The Story of the Weeping Camel, which he co-directed with Byambasuren Davaa, generated a lot of interest, primarily from Germany and Italy: “And yet it was a strange situation,” he notes. “On the one hand, the theatrical success of Weeping Camel sort of scared away the people I had worked with before on documentaries. And, on the other hand, I was still new to the feature film world. The film was a very peculiar project which straddled the divide between documentary and feature and took me away from where I had been, but not yet to where I would be going.”

On reading Mehari’s autobiography – which was published in the UK last summer – Falorni was in no doubt that this would form the basis for his first fiction feature film. “I could visualize what Senait was describing, and the question was which angle to take because the book offers many possibilities,” he explains. “I saw it therefore as a source of stories, impressions and episodes that I could draw upon.”

Working with Gabriele Kister on the screenplay, Falorni says that he is taken by “the idea of telling this film’s story from a child’s perspective and showing how the view of a child can sometimes shatter the cynicism of the adult world with just one word or sentence. The key to the story is to present the revelatory moment when the child sees that ‘the enemies are just like us’ and decides not to kill. Refusing to kill was certainly the biggest danger among the guerillas, so it fascinated me that a child like that could come to such an awareness.”

Friedensschlag – Das Jahr der Entscheidung

Type of Project Documentary Cinema Genre Coming-of-Age Story, Drama, Society Production Company BOOMTOWN MEDIA/Berlin, in cooperation with BR/Munich With backing from Medienboard Berlin-Brandenburg, FilmFernsehFonds Bayern, Filmförderunganstalt (FFA) Producers Andrea Thilo, Uwe Dierks, Thomas Grube Director Gerardo Milzstein Screenplay Gerardo Milzstein, Oliver Sachs Directors of Photography Gerardo Milzstein, Christian Baudissin (BR) Format HD Video, blow-up to 35 mm, color, 1:1.85, Dolby Digital Shooting Language German Shooting in Taufkirchen, Munich, November 2006 – August 2007 German Distributor Piffl Medien/Berlin

World Sales BOOMTOWN MEDIA International GmbH & Co KG Norbert Maass Fugger Strasse 33 · 10777 Berlin/Germany phone +49-30-81 45 29 50 · fax +49-30-81 45 29 55 email: info@boomtownmedia.de www.boomtownmedia.de

Friedensschlag – Das Jahr der Entscheidung is a documentary about a handful of young men, ready to explode into violence at the slightest provocation, real or imagined, who learn to channel their destructive force into a creative energy. It is about how they turn from violence to non-violence, from self-hatred to self-awareness, and learn to take responsibility for their own lives. Following the lives and paths of several individuals, the film shows
whether these damaged youths can reconcile themselves with their own individual histories. Because then, and only then, do they have any hope of a future.

Writer-director Gerardo Milsztein documents the work of the Work and Box-Company over the course of a year, an organization funded in 2002 that helps violent young men deal with their aggression via methods that might seem unorthodox – including boxing matches and self-imposed time outs in a broom cupboard – but work! The almost 80% who found a job or training place after completing the course is testimony enough.

“In a time when the old social security systems are in upheaval,” says Milsztein, “young people are increasingly losing orientation, and destructive thinking and behavior is on the increase. I want to take an active role in conveying a positive process of change, one that reflects a current development in Europe.”

Milsztein, who studied direction in Buenos Aires and has been involved in over fifty feature-length documentaries, is also an experienced cameraman, and is interested in themes such as “humanity, growth and development that are connected with goodness, social competence and responsibility.”

Producers Andrea Thilo, Uwe Dierks and Thomas Grube founded BOOMTOWN MEDIA in 1999 to make high-quality TV and cinema documentaries. Their most famous and successful production is undoubtedly Rhythm Is It!. The film, featuring Sir Simon Rattle, the Berliner Philharmoniker and 250 local school children, has, to date, pulled in more than 650,000 admissions in Germany alone, and was sold to, among others, the Netherlands, Japan, Poland, Spain, Australia, the UK, and Denmark.

Not just a commercial success, Rhythm Is It! also won the 2004 Bavarian Film Award for Best Documentary, as well as two German Film Awards 2005 (Best Documentary, Best Editing) and the 2005 Critics’ Award.

This is a production company that knows, loves and understands documentaries. Friedensschlag – Das Jahr der Entscheidung is set to be another feather in their cap and prove yet again that real life can provide all the drama, tension and excitement to more than satisfy any audience.

Nora is fourteen and lives with her parents, Uwe and Anette, in a quiet Berlin suburb. While Uwe wrestles with his business partner, Walter, to save his livelihood, Anette returns to her studies and begins an affair with fellow student Daniel. The introverted Nora retreats into romantic daydreams.

When Thomas, a former lover of Anette’s, and his family move in next door, the family comes under yet more pressure. Nora starts projecting her own desires onto the charming neighbor. Uwe now feels he and the family-oriented life he has created are threatened. A dinner party leads to the two men heavily falling out. But that is just the start of an escalation that stretches the crumbling foundations of the suburban idyll to their limit.

Frueher oder spaeter’s director and co-writer Ulrike von Ribbeck, studied at the German Film & Television Academy (dffb) in Berlin. In 2003 her short, Am See, was selected for the Cinéfondation sidebar in Cannes and went on to win various international awards. Her next short, Charlotte (2004), screened at the Berlinale in the Perspectives German Cinema section and was also chosen again by Cannes, this time for the Director’s Fortnight.
Lola Klamroth, as Nora, makes her cinema debut, alongside her real life father, Peter Lohmeyer. Regular fans of contemporary German cinema will know him as the man from the road-movie-with-trains Zugvoegel (1996) for which he won the Bavarian Television Award and the German Film Award, and he also appeared alongside his son, Luis, in Soenke Wortmann’s 2003 hit, The Miracle of Bern.

Beata Lehmann (Anette) switches happily from cinema to TV to stage and starred in von Ribbeck’s previously mentioned Charlotte.

Co-author Katharina Held was nominated for the German Film Award for her work on The Edukators (co-author and director: Hans Weingartner), which screened in competition in Cannes in 2004.

Frueher oder spaeter is produced by Polyphon Film- und Fernsehgesellschaft, one of Germany’s leading television (light entertainment, series, TV movies, documentaries) production houses and marks the company’s debut in the genre of cinema of emerging talent.

Their most recent TV event movie, Der Untergang der Pamir (director Kasper Heidelbach, writer Fritz Mueller-Scherz), the story of the Pamir sailing training ship that sank in a hurricane, had literally millions of viewers glued to pubcaster ZDF. Expect quality of the same order with Frueher oder spaeter.

Even for many practicing Christians, the idea of religious artefacts and reliquaries is something that belongs to the Dark Ages, the years of ignorance and superstition. But for millions of others, they are a direct link between themselves and their God. As what we term civilization – our everyday existence based increasingly on fact, not fundamentalism, knowledge, not faith – advances, religion gets pushed further into the background. For many people, it becomes a weekly (if that) observance. At the same time, others cling tighter to their beliefs.

In Gebenedeites Gebein, Dominik Wessely examines the legend of Saint Ursula and the 11,000 virgins who supposedly chose a martyr’s death. Ursula herself became the patron saint of Cologne while three of her followers are venerated in the village of Eichsel, near Basel. Each year they are commemorated with a service and procession, but what’s the reality behind all this?

“She never existed,” says Wessely. “Her name and story are pure fiction, inventions of the Middle Ages! Historians have long since proven it. She’s been exposed as a fraud. The power of her reliquaries was used to move the pious masses and also exercised a worldly power.”

But the cult still remains, says Gebenedeites Gebein’s researcher and writer, Hellmuth Theilge, “even her followers are aware of the reality. And that’s what the film is about: why they continue to believe despite all the evidence to the contrary. Do people in today’s society still really believe in a higher order? Are the old concepts for dealing with the beyond still valid today?”

For producer Thomas Tielsch, the film also offers a journey into the world of, for want of a better description, bone cultists. “We actually meet the people who collect reliquaries,” he says, “and have filled their living rooms with bones! We also have a heretical city tour guide and the abbot who subjected his Saint Ursula to a DNA test!”

Director Wessely specialized in documentaries at the Filmakademie Baden-Wuerttemberg, winning the Adolf Grimme Award 2002 for his five-part series about provincial actors, Broadway Bruchsal.

Production company Filmtank develops and produces documentaries for cinema and television, as well as conceptualizing and realizing theme evenings for broadcasters. The emphasis lies on contemporary social developments and cultural phenomena, cross-culture and history. The company was founded in 2001 in Hamburg as a joint venture between Thomas Tielsch and Wueste Film. Their film Call Me Babylon took the 2004 Adolf Grimme Award for Best Documentary.

Gebenedeites Gebein is produced by the recently founded Stuttgart-based arm of the company.
Gegenueber

Type of Project Feature Film Cinema Genre Drama Production Company Heimatfilm/Cologne With backing from Filmstiftung NRW, WDR Producer Bettina Brokemper Commissioning Editor Andrea Hanke Director Jan Bonny Screenplay Jan Bonny, Christina Ebelt Director of Photography Bernhard Keller Editor Stefan Stabenow Production Design Tim Pannen Principal Cast Matthias Brandt, Victoria Trauttmansdorff, Wotan Wilke Moehring, Susanne Bormann, Anne Ratte-Polle

Production wrapped shortly before Christmas on Gegenueber, which will be the feature debut as well as graduation film for Jan Bonny from Cologne’s Academy of Media Arts (KHM).

However, this is not the first time that Bonny has worked with producer Bettina Brokemper and her Cologne-based outfit Heimatfilm. She had served as producer on the KHM student’s short 2nd and A which was shown at the Hof Film Days in 2004.

“We were involved at a very early stage with this new project when Jan came to me with an idea and we accompanied him in the development of the screenplay,” recalls Brokemper, who is producing the film as part of the “Sixpack” initiative between the Filmstiftung NRW and public broadcaster WDR, who each contribute half of the €800,000 budget.

At the center of Jan Bonny and Christina Ebelt’s screenplay are the school teacher Anne and her policeman husband Georg. Their children have just moved out and the two are regarded as the perfect married couple by friends and colleagues. But appearances are deceptive – one of them only dares to get changed when the changing room is empty as the scars and bruises people might see would only provoke a lot of embarrassing questions …

However, Brokemper is keeping quiet on which of the couple is the victim of domestic violence and says that people will have to wait until the film comes into the cinemas to learn the secret.

Bonny has the good fortune to have had a generous 31 shooting days for his debut and also has an experienced DoP Bernhard Keller at his side, whose credits include Christoph Hochhaeuser’s Low Profile – another Heimatfilm production – and Valeska Grisebach’s Berlinale 2006 competition film Longing.

“We had some ideas for the casting of the film at a very early stage, but then decided to finish the screenplay and come back to the casting later,” says Brokemper, who put an impressive cast together for the young director.

The role of Georg has been cast with film and TV actor Matthias Brandt who was seen as Guillaume in Im Schatten der Macht and in the Bavarian Television Award-winning title role In Sachen Kaminski as well as parts in Life with Hannah and Vini, while Victoria Trauttmansdorff, who appeared in Low Profile, Ghosts, and Mostly Martha, plays his wife Anne. Supporting roles have been taken by Wotan Wilke Moehring (The Experiment, Antibodies) and Susanne Bormann (Nightshapes, Learning to Lie).

While the film is being shot at original locations throughout Essen, it is not intended that the story should be connected specifically with this town and the filmmakers have consciously avoided putting any famous sights in camera shot: “Essen is standing in for a medium-sized German town – it is a story from the middle of society,” Brokemper argues.

Heinz und Fred

Type of Project Documentary Cinema Genre Society Production Company 42film/Halle, in co-production with MDR/Leipzig, ARTE/Strasbourg With backing from Mittel-deutsche Medienfoerderung, Land Sachsen-Anhalt Producer Thomas Jeschner Director Mario Schneider Screenplay Mario Schneider Director of Photography Peter Badel Editor Mario Schneider Music by Cornelius Renz Principal Cast Heinz Reichwald, Fred Reichwald Format HD, blow-up to 35 mm, color, 16:9, Dolby Digital Shooting Language German Shooting in Ahlsdorf, 30 days from August 2006 – May 2007
Pure chance brought director Mario Schneider together with Heinz and Fred Reichwald, the protagonists of his second documentary, which is being shot in blocks between August 2006 and May 2007.

“During the work on my first documentary Helbra I was looking for a location and saw this ‘castle’ below the old slag tip. I asked if I could shoot there and that’s how I got to know the two,” Schneider recalls. “I knew straightaway that I had to make a film about them because they are very special.”

The father and son live together in a kind of commune in the little village of Ahlsdorf, in the Mansfelder Land region in the middle of Germany, south of the Harz mountains. “They follow a strange goal in life: collecting old machines from all over Germany and bringing them back to their property. The only condition is that, at the beginning, it should be broken and then be repaired by the time they are finished,” Schneider explains. “None of these machines — tractors, cranes, excavators, airplanes, ships — are then sold, they just stand there on this plot of their land.”

Over almost a year, Schneider and his team — which includes DoP Peter Badel who has worked with such documentary filmmakers as Thomas Heise and Eyal Sivan — will spend 30 days following Heinz and Fred’s daily routine which begins each morning with them getting up at six o’clock and retiring to bed early after a long day of hard work. “It is quite inconceivable that people could be able to have such a life in a self-sufficient world in the middle of Germany,” he notes. “But they have a special philosophy of life which is particularly appropriate in these times of Hartz IV [unemployment benefits]. The way is their goal, the work in itself is what is valuable.”

“I understand Heinz and Fred very well,” says Schneider who grew up in the neighboring village of Helbra and knows about hard physical labor after having done a stint working in the local copper and silver mine. “With them, time follows other laws. It is strange to experience them outside of their walls, in direct contrast to ‘reality’ which within their realm doesn’t seem to have any kind of relevance. I am interested by this thin dividing line between their world and ours.”

“It will be both a very funny and very sad film because the big question posed at the end is what will happen to Fred when Heinz is no longer there,” Schneider continues. “They have built up their own little empire within this ‘castle’, so I want to make the film a bit like a fairy-tale as an antithesis to the outside world and globalization.”

MB
Hundeleben

Noethen and Monica Bleibtreu.

Preuss plays Paul, a doctor, part of a husband and wife team, who is struggling to deal with the loss of their son, Lukas. He is having an affair with Sophie, who is caught up in an unhappy marriage. What she takes to be morning sickness soon lands her in the hospital with something far worse, a brain tumor.

Joachim (Ulrich Noethen) is a successful international journalist who is on the road so often he has lost touch with his family. But when he makes a surprise visit home, he is surprised to receive a call from his wife’s lover: Sophie (the very same!) is in the hospital.

Hanns Dunkel is an orderly in the intensive care ward. He lives with his mother Marie (Monica Bleibtreu), who is senile, and has no time or space for a private life. Marie is unable to remember from one second to the next and today she has set fire to their apartment because she forgot she had a pan on the stove. Hanns is able to prevent a disaster at the last moment. During the emergency, he loses his job and quickly discovers that the methods he uses on himself and his fellow inmates, as well as those outside prison, do not work on a puppy.

Only when the dog, which Mosk still refuses to name, falls seriously ill does he discover his feelings for the animal. From then on, an intense friendship develops between him and the newly named Grappa. But the training is the easy part in comparison to what follows: Mosk has found himself enrolled in a program for training guide dogs for the blind. A man of few words and much use of his fists, Mosk would rather be weight-training for the prison championship, but the new prison governor, Gloria Cornelius, is determined to make a success of her new re-socialization scheme.

Under threat of being disqualified from competing, Mosk accepts the job and quickly discovers that the methods he uses on himself and his fellow inmates, as well as those outside prison, do not work on a puppy.

For producer Stefan Schubert, “good stories are usually simple. But what really impressed us about Drevs’ script was the mixture of strong emotion and exact detail. Because he knows his way around prisons’” (a reference to Drevs’ work as a documentarist and not any past misdemeanors!). “Mosk’s growth is genuine and thus moving.”

“This is essentially a true story,” says Schubert’s partner, Ralph Schwingel. “this re-socialization through dog training actually exists in the United States. Our research in various German prisons showed a similar program would be possible, even desirable, here.”

Drevs met the real Mosk, Danny Capaldo, in 2001 while directing a documentary for ARD. “So much love he and the others share with the dogs is something I’ve never seen before,” he says. “The dogs love exactly what inmates hate – routine and rules – and for the inmates they’re an emotional lifesaver.”

But as Hundeleben shows, parting can be more, much more, than sweet sorrow, and “this duality between suppressed and expressed emotion is what,” Drevs adds, “I want to bring to the screen as powerfully as possible.”
Teufelsbraten

Type of Project TV Movie Genre Historical Drama, Literature
Production Company Colonia Media/Cologne, in co-production with WDR/Cologne, ARTE/Strasbourg, NDR/Hamburg
With backing from Filmstiftung NRW, FilmFernsehFonds Bayern
Producer Dr. Guenter Rohrbach
Director Hermine Huntgeburth
Screenplay Volker Einrauch, based on the novel Das verborgene Wort by Ulla Hahn
Commissioning Editors Wolf-Dietrich Bruecker (WDR), Andreas Schreitmueller (ARTE)
Editor Eva Schnare
Production Design Bettina Schmidt
Principal Cast Anna Fischer, Nina Siebertz, Charlotte Steinhauser, Ulrich Noethen, Peter Franke, Barbara Nuesse, Margarita Broich, Corinna Harfouch, Ludger Pistor, Heinrich Pachl, Josef Quadflieg, Lucas Gregorowicz, Alice Dwyer, Anette Frier, Harald Schmidt
Commissioning Editors Wolf-Dietrich Bruecker (WDR), Andreas Schreitmueller (ARTE)
Contact Colonia Media Filmproduktions GmbH
Moltkestrasse 131 · 50674 Cologne/Germany
phone +49-211-51 40 40 · fax +49-211-51 40 44
email: coloniamedia@coloniamedia.de
www.coloniamedia.de

Germans make great event movies! In their well-established tradition of taking a great story that has depth as well as length, and transferring it, with all its layers, complexities and interweaving strands, to the big screen, it’s now the turn of Teufelsbraten.

Based on the classic novel by Ulla Hahn, Teufelsbraten is the poignant yet powerful emancipation story of a working class girl in the 1950s. In three epochs, it tells of Hildegard, a woman who grew up in the most limited and poverty stricken circumstances. Socially outcast and raised in an atmosphere of religious bigotry, she was fortunate to be supported by dedicated teachers. Driven by her great passion for literature, she successfully fought her way to achieving her own independence.

Director Hermine Huntgeburth belongs in the front rank of contemporary German directors. A specialist in character-driven films, her credits include Romeo (2000), which won the Adolf Grimme Award, Bibi Blocksberg (2002) and the box office smash hit The White Masai (2005).

"Teufelsbraten is the story of a woman,” says director Huntgeburth, “but this is so much more than just a woman’s film. It’s a powerful and moving piece about determination and drive, the human spirit and the will to succeed.”

The cast reads like a wish list of top German character actors. Anna Fischer is an up-and-coming teenager (Keep an eye on this one!), Ulrich Noethen moves from comedy to drama like the seasoned pro he is and has regularly worked with Huntgeburth in the past (His portrayal of Himmler in Downfall still chills the marrow) and Corinna Harfouch’s many credits include, most recently, Elementary Particles and the smash hit Perfume.

Colonia Media is a production company that prefers to let its work do the talking. But safe to say, they specialize in high quality dramas, event movies and series for German public broadcasters, as well as children’s films, all for a discerning audience.

Up! Up! To the Sky

Type of Project Feature Film Cinema Genre Love Story, Tragicomedy
Production Company schneider + groos filmproduktion/Cologne & Hamburg
With backing from FilmFoerderung Hamburg, Filmstiftung NRW, MSH Schleswig-Holstein
Producers Ute Schneider, Christof Groos
Director Hardi Sturm
Screenplay Hardi Sturm
Music by Duerbek & Dohmen
Production Design Birgit Esser
Principal Cast Max Riemelt, Anneke Kim Sarnau, Corinna Harfouch, Armin Rohde
Special Effects Pictorion Das Werk
Contact NFP marketing & distribution*/Berlin

Germans make great event movies! In their well-established tradition of taking a great story that has depth as well as length, and transferring it, with all its layers, complexities and interweaving strands, to the big (or, in this case small) screen, it’s now the turn of Teufelsbraten.

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SK
Up! Up! To the Sky will not be the first time that producers Ute Schneider and Christof Groos have worked with writer-director Hardi Sturm as they had served as co-producers on his previous film Feuer which was premiered at the Hof Film Days in 2005.

“It was a project he produced with his actors [Cielia Sarto and Aleksandar Jovanovic] with their own cash and shot on DigiBeta,” Schneider recalls. “They then came to us with the material and we helped Hardi with editing facilities and digital post-production to complete the film.”

“Although Hardi is a newcomer as a director, he has already done many other things in the past such as working as an actor and writing for television. But Up! Up! To the Sky will be, so to speak, officially his debut.”

The film centers on the young man Arnold who has believed from an early age that he is an extraterrestrial and now sees his time on earth coming to an end. He tries to build a flying machine so that he can return finally to where he belongs. In his native village, people regard him as a loveable fool. But when a child is hurt in an accident, Arnold is held responsible and admitted to a psychiatric ward. The young doctor Wanda takes on his case as a subject for her doctoral thesis, but the better she gets to know him, the more she becomes uncertain about the initial diagnosis. Could the impossible be possible? Could Arnold be a “visitor”?

“Hardi’s screenplay is very poetic and ambivalent in the way it shows the various reactions of the surrounding world to Arnold because there are people who believe that he is an extraterrestrial and others who think that he is a little disturbed and should be admitted to a psychiatric ward,” Schneider explains. “The great thing at the end of the film is that the spectator is given both possibilities of seeing what he believes. This is already the case in the screenplay, with two kinds of interpretation, and that is definitely our intention.”

As Schneider points out, they were able from the outset to attract a top-line cast for the project “because it is a screenplay that immediately convinces the actors.” The lead part of the young Arnold is played by Max Riemelt, who was Germany’s Shooting Star two years ago and became known to cinema audiences through roles in such films as Girls on Top, Napola, and The Red Cockatoo, while Anneke Kim Sarnau (Unveiled) has been cast as the young psychologist who handles his case and gradually falls in love with her patient. Corinna Harfouch (Downfall) plays Arnold’s mother and Armin Rohde (The Robber Hotzenplotz) will be a country doctor who has long had a crush on Harfouch’s character and now helps her get her son out of the psychiatric ward.
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The stage actor Peter Novan is an avid observer of his environment. But most of the time he just sees what he wants to see. And although he seems obsessed with the theater, he has never been trusted with playing a leading role. Then he gets to play Macbeth – King by murder. The day of the premiere arrives and Peter is less in shape than ever. Some people just function properly with their back against the wall.

**Genre** Melodrama, Psycho Thriller  
**Category** Short  
**Year of Production** 2006  
**Director** Andreas Krein  
**Screenplay** Dirk Stoppe  
**Director of Photography** Felix Cramer  
**Editor** André Hartmann  
**Music by** Friedemann von Rechenberg  
**Production Design** Benedikt Herré  
**Producer** Jean-Young Kwak  
**Production Company** Simon & Schlosser/Cologne  
**Principal Cast** Arnd Klawitter, Julie Braeuning, Michael Schoenborn, Nora Jokhosha  
**Casting** Die Besetzer/Cologne  
**Special Effects** Andreas Krein, Marcel Behnke  
**Length** 15 min, 545 m  
**Format** Super 16 mm, color, 1:1.85  
**Original Version** German  
**Subtitled Version** English  
**Sound Technology** Stereo  
**With backing from** Filmförderungsinstitut (FFA)  
**German Distributor** Simon & Schlosser/Cologne

To the Limit is the story of two brothers, Alexander and Thomas Huber, who have been testing themselves in the mountains since early childhood. Today they are known to be among the world’s best sport and alpine climbers, impressing the world with their courage and breathtaking exploits. They are brothers who trust their lives to each other in the mountains but who go their separate ways in private life; brothers who experience conflict because of their opposite ways yet who are as inseparable as twins; brothers searching for their limits.

They are risk-takers in the extreme.

Now Alexander and Thomas have set out to break the record in speed climbing at the wall of all walls, El Capitan in Yosemite Valley, California.

Genre Adventure, Sports Category Documentary Cinema Year of Production 2007 Director Pepe Danquart Screenplay Pepe Danquart Director of Photography Wolfgang Thaler Editor Mona Braeuer Music by Christoph Israel, Dorian Cheah Producers Kirsten Hager, Erich Lackner, Mirjam Quinte Production Companies Hager Moss, Lotus Film, Quinte Film, Freiburg

With Alexander Huber, Thomas Huber, Dean S. Potter, Chongo Length 95 min, 2,606 m Format 35 mm, color, 1:1.85 Original Version German/English Subtitled Versions English, German Sound Technology Dolby Digital Surround With backing from FilmFernsehFonds Bayern, Filmförderungsfonds (FFA), Oesterreichisches Filminstitut German Distributor Kinowelt Filmverleih/Leipzig

Pepe Danquart was born in 1955 and studied Communications from 1975-1981. He received an Academy Award in 1994 for his widely acclaimed short Black Rider (Schwarzfahrer, 1993). Together with Mirjam Quinte, he co-directed Passt bloss auf ... (1980) and Off Season (Nach Saison, 1996). His other films include: Daedalus (1991), a segment of Das 7. Jahr – Ansichten zur Lage der Nation (1997), Playboys (1998), Heimspiel (2000) which won him the German Film Award in Gold for Best Director in 2000, Moerderinnen (2001), Semana Santa (2002), Hell on Wheels (Hoellentour, 2004, in co-direction with Werner Swiss Schweizer), C(R)OOK (Basta. Rotwein oder tot sein, 2004), and To the Limit (Am Limit, 2007), among others.
Until he moved to the small town of Bellbach, 12-year-old Martin’s life seemed to be okay, but then suddenly he is confronted with an unexpected reality: his first love and Oliver’s fist. Pretty complicated! But Martin fights for what he believes in: for Silke and against Oliver, and finally for the friendship of both.

Genre: Children and Youth  
Category: Feature Film  
Cinema Year of Production: 2007  
Director: Johannes Schmid  
Screenplay: Johannes Schmid, Michael Demuth  
Director of Photography: Michael Bertl  
Editor: Thomas Kohler  
Music by: Michael Heilrath  
Production Design: Angelica Boehm  
Producers: Philipp Budweg, Ingelore Koenig  
Production Companies: schlicht & ergreifend/Munich, Kinderfilm/Erfurt, in co-production with BR/Munich, RBB/Potsdam  
Principal Cast: Johann Hillmann, Konrad Baumann, Lea Eisleb, Inka Friedrich, Stephan Kampwirth, Claudia Geisler, Andreas Hoppe  
Casting: Daniela Tolkien, Annekathrin Heubner  
Length: 91 min, 2,594 m  
Format: 35 mm, color, 1:1.85  
Original Version: German  
Subtitled Version: English  
Sound Technology: DTS Digital  
Festival Screenings: Berlin  
2007 (Generation/Kplus)  
With backing from: Mitteldeutsche Medienfoerderung, Medienboard Berlin-Brandenburg, BKM, Kuratorium junger deutscher Film, FilmFernsehfonds Bayern  

Johannes Schmid was born in 1973 and studied Theater, Film, Art History and Music in Regensburg, Erlangen and Munich. During his studies he was active as a director’s assistant in various theaters throughout Germany. Also active as a theater director, his films include: Halbdrei (short, 1999), Fluegelfisch (short, 2001), Merle (short, 2002), and Silly’s Sweet Summer (Bloede Muetze!, 2007).
They are, as it were, the eyes of the world: the members of the Peace Brigades International, a pacifist NGO that eschews any form of violence. For 25 years they have been working wherever the lives of human rights activists are in danger. These volunteers often accompany lawyers, unionists or women’s organizations whose work makes them the target of death squads. Rasmus Gerlach has recorded the day-to-day work of PBI volunteers in Mexico and Colombia, using a hand-held camera. We see them on duty in the Colombian jungle, in war zones and in prisons, amidst the beauty of the South American landscape and the terror of inhumane brutality.

Here’s a question: Can you name an Argentine form of music and dance that is NOT Tango? How many of you said Chamamé? Never heard of it? That’s something this documentary intends to put right, once and for all.

Chamamé is a passionate and mysterious style of music from the heart of Argentina’s rural northeast. Brought to life over 200 years ago when the cultures of the newly arrived European settlers, the Creoles and the native Guaraí commingled, Chamamé is still widely popular today.

This poetic-musical documentary introduces the viewer to four quite different musicians: Gicela Méndez Ribeiro, a rising young singer; Alberto Bofill, self-declared ambassador of the traditional Chamamé; Monchito Merlo, who together with his band represents a very popular style; and Chango Spasiuk, the undisputed star of Chamamé, who won the BBC’s and Radio 3’s World Music Newcomer Award in 2005 and whose latest album was nominated for a Latin Grammy Award in 2006.

For each of them, Chamamé is more than just music. It is their lifestyle, the element that connects them within their families and social circles and with the northeastern provinces they call their home.

Genre Music Category Documentary Cinema Year of Production 2006 Director Cosima Lange Screenplay Cosima Lange Director of Photography Marcus Winterbauer Editor Inge Schneider Producers Nina Kling, Cosima Lange Production Company fliegende-fische-film/Berlin, in co-production with CP Medien/Ludwigsburg With Chango Spasiuk, Alberto Bofill, Gicela Méndez Ribeiro, Monchito Merlo Length 104 min, 3,043 m Format HD Blow-up 35 mm, color, 1:1.78 Original Version Spanish Subtitled Versions English, German Sound Technology Dolby Digital 5.1 With backing from Filmförderungsanstalt (FFA), FilmFernsehFonds Bayern

The first ever recorded human voice incites the three Faraday sisters – Optica, Acustica and Writing – to visit several workshops of the 20th century in which humans are connected to machines so that the artist-engineers can open new circuits.

**Genre** Experimental  
**Category** Short  
**Year of Production** 2006  
**Directors** Hanna Nordholt, Fritz Steingrobe  
**Screenplay** Hanna Nordholt, Fritz Steingrobe  
**Animation** Hanna Nordholt, Fritz Steingrobe  
**Editors** Hanna Nordholt, Fritz Steingrobe  
**Music by** Giuseppe Gagliano, Imo Toshiba  
**Producers** Hanna Nordholt, Fritz Steingrobe  
**Production Company** Hanna Nordholt & Fritz Steingrobe Film/Hamburg  
**Length** 15 min, 408 m  
**Format** 35 mm, color, 1:1.66  
**Original Version** German/English  
**Subtitled Version** English  
**Sound Technology** Dolby SR  
**With backing from** FilmFoerderung Hamburg, BKM

**Hanna Nordholt** studied Visual Communication, specializing in Animation, and lectures in Computer Animation at the Academy of Fine Arts in Hamburg.

**Fritz Steingrobe** studied Graphic Design and Art in Hamburg, where he works as an illustrator.

They have been working together since 1985, making short films on Super 8, 16 and 35 mm.
From his early successes in silent German films such as *The Oyster Princess* and *Madame Dubarry* to his mature Hollywood masterpieces (*Ninotchka, To Be or Not to Be, The Shop Around the Corner*), the films of Ernst Lubitsch have had a lasting impact upon the cinema of Europe and America.

*Ernst Lubitsch in Berlin*, the first-ever feature documentary on the inventor of the “Lubitsch Touch”, tells the story of how the son of a Jewish tailor first came into contact with the theater while still attending school. In 1911 Lubitsch joined Max Reinhardt’s ensemble, and as of 1913 he started performing in film comedies. His immense popularity enabled him to take up directing.

In *Ernst Lubitsch in Berlin*, it is Lubitsch’s daughter Nicola who guides us through her father’s exciting time in Germany, supported by an illustrious group of film historians, Lubitsch experts and some of today’s most influential German film directors. Rare film clips, newly discovered photographs, newsreel footage and original audio recordings with actress Henny Porten, other first-hand witnesses and Lubitsch himself round off this comprehensive portrait of one of cinema’s few true geniuses.

**Genre** Biopic  
**Category** Documentary Cinema  
**Year of Production** 2006  
**Director** Robert Fischer  
**Director of Photography** Michael Ruediger, Manuel Lommel, Jonathan Rho  
**Editor** Frank Schoenfelder  
**Music by** Aljoscha Zimmermann, Sabrina Hausmann  
**Producer** Loy W. Arnold  
**Production Company** Transit Film/Munich  
**With** Nicola Lubitsch, Tom Tykwer, Michael Hanisch, Hans Helmut Prinzler, Enno Patalas, Jan-Christopher Horak, Wolfgang Becker, Dani Levy, Amanda Goodpaster, Evy Bettelheim-Bentley, Joerg Jannings, Henny Porten, Ernst Lubitsch  
**Length** 110 min  
**Format** HD, color/b&w, 16:9  
**Original Version** German/English  
**Subtitled Versions** English, German, Spanish  
**Sound Technology** Dolby Digital 2.0  
**Festival Screenings** San Sebastian 2006

The true story of Salomon Spiranoff, counterfeiter extraordinaire, who was living the high life until he got arrested and shipped off to the Sachsenhausen concentration camp in 1944. In order to survive, he agrees to help the Nazis in an organized counterfeit operation set up to help finance the war effort.

Stefan Ruzowitzky was born in Vienna in 1961. He studied Theater and History and attended film courses and seminars by such industry figures as Syd Field, Zdenek Mahler and Vilmos Zsigmond. In the first half of the 1980s, he worked in the theater as a director and wrote radio plays for the Austrian broadcaster ORF. From 1987, Ruzowitzky worked as a freelance director and author for television, commercials and music videos. In 1996, he made his feature directorial debut with Tempo, which won the Max Ophuels Award in 1997. His second feature, The Inheritors (Die Siebtelbauern, 1997), was sold to 50 countries and shown at numerous film festivals around the globe, winning many prizes including a Tiger Award in Rotterdam. The Inheritors was also Austria’s entry for the OSCAR for the Best Foreign Language Film in 1999. Since then, he has made Anatomy (Anatomie, 2000), All the Queen’s Men (2001), Anatomy 2 (Anatomie 2, 2002), and The Counterfeiters (Die Faelscher, 2006).
The shortest distance and at the same time the most obvious gap between the so-called Third World Countries and Europe is the Straits of Gibraltar. **Fair Trade** is one of the many stories that happen there every day.

**Genre** Drama  
**Category** Short  
**Year of Production** 2006  
**Director** Michael Dreher  
**Screenplay** Michael Dreher  
**Director of Photography** Ian Blumers  
**Editor** Wolfgang Weigl  
**Music by** Philipp F. Koelmel  
**Producers** Karim Debbagh, Michael Dreher  
**Production Company** Weltweit Filmproduktion/Munich, in co-production with Hochschule fuer Fernsehen und Film Muenchen (HFF/M)/Munich, Kasbah Films/Tangier  
**Principal Cast** Judith Engel, Barnaby Metschurat, Mohamed Oumai  
**Length** 15 min, 410 m  
**Format** 35 mm, color, 1:1.85  
**Original Version** German/French  
**Subtitled Versions** English, German  
**Sound Technology** Dolby SR

**Awards** German Short Film Award 2006, First Steps Award 2006, Audience Award Los Angeles 2006, Audience Award Wiesbaden 2006, Best Screenplay Munich 2006

**Michael Dreher** was born in 1974 near Stuttgart and studied at the Academy of Television & Film in Munich. Since 1999, he has been working as a freelance director for clips and commercials.

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*World Sales*  
**Premium Films · Frédéric Joubaud**  
103 rue de Turenne · 75003 Paris/France  
phone +33-1-42 77 06 31 · email: fred.joubaud@premium-films.com
Laura and Daniel, a young European couple, are traveling in the Moroccan desert when their car suddenly breaks down. The enigmatic Nick comes to their aid, repairs the car and promises to take them back to Agadir. Instead, however, he takes them further and further into the inhospitable desert. While Daniel increasingly distrusts Nick, who has a knife and wears a badge from the French Foreign Legion, Laura is fascinated by the mysterious man. In a fit of jealousy, Daniel punctures Nick’s motorcycle tires one night and flees with Laura as she sleeps. This later triggers a bitter argument between Daniel and Laura, which ends with Laura disappearing into a sandstorm. All three ultimately come together in a ghost town, the scene of a dramatic showdown …

Genre Drama Category Feature Film Cinema Year of Production 2006 Director Simon Gross Screenplay Simon Gross, Nana Ekvtimishvili, Stefan Stabenow Director of Photography Peter Steuger Editor Stefan Stabenow Music by Mariana Bernoski Production Design Oliver Hoese Producer Fritjof Hohagen Production Company Enigma Film/Gruenwald, in co-production with BR/Munich, Odeon Pictures/Geiselgasteig, Lunaris Film/Munich, Hochschule fuer Fernsehen und Film Muenchen (HFF/M)/Munich Principal Cast Matthias Schweighoefer, Marie Zielke, Jean-Hugues Anglade Casting Uwe Buenker Length 90 min, 2,462 m Format 35 mm, color, 1:1.85 Original Version German Subtitled Version English Sound Technology Dolby Digital 5.1 With backing from FilmFernsehFonds Bayern, Filmfoerderungsanstalt (FFA)

Simon Gross was born in 1976 in Berlin. He completed internships for feature and documentary projects and worked as a production and director’s assistant, set manager, and script & continuity assistant. After studies at the University of Southern California, he enrolled at the Academy of Television & Film in Munich, during which time he directed numerous short films. He worked for Spyglass Entertainment in Los Angeles as an editor and developed several treatments and screenplays. His films include: the shorts Schattenfrauen (1995), Out of Control (1996), Another World (1996), Der Faehrmann (1997), Suendenfall (1998), Nachtrausch (2001), and his feature debut Mirage (Fata Morgana, 2006).
Helmut and Sabine Halm have always managed vacations of lazy privacy at their favorite retreat on Germany’s Lake Constance. So when the energetic, handsome Klaus Buch turns up with his beautiful girlfriend Helene, Helmut is quite ready to dismiss this dimly familiar acquaintance. But Klaus is overjoyed to recognize his old schoolmate Helmut, eager to recall every incident of their shared time, and to display every detail of this successful lifestyle as a fit sportsman and author. The precious days of privacy give way to an unwanted and awkward intimacy, as the Buchs and the Halms hike, dine and sail together. Their joint activities aggravate myriad psychological tensions among the four characters, which are all the more intensely ironic for their peaceful veneer and which must eventually erupt.

Genre Drama, Literature Category Feature Film Cinema Year of Production 2007 Director Rainer Kaufmann Screenplay Ralf Hertwig, Kathrin Richter, based on the novel by Martin Walser

Director of Photography Klaus Eichhammer Editor Christel Suckow Music by Annette Focks Production Design Renate Schmaderer Producer Rikolt von Gagern Production Company Gate Film/Munich, in co-production with Clasart Film/Munich, ZDF/Mainz Principal Cast Ulrich Noethen, Katja Riemann, Ulrich Tukur, Petra Schmidt-Schaller

Casting An Dorthé Braker Length 95 min, 2,600 m Format 35 mm, color, cs Original Version German Sound Technology Dolby SR

With backing from MFG Baden-Wuerttemberg, Filmförderungsanstalt (FFA), FilmFernsehFonds Bayern German Distributor Concorde Filmverleih/Munich

Rainer Kaufmann was born in Frankfurt in 1959 and graduated from the Academy of Television & Film in Munich in 1990. During his studies he made several award-winning shorts, including The Most Beautiful Breasts in the World (Der schoeneste Busen der Welt, 1990). His first feature-length TV film, Dann eben mit Gewalt (1992), won numerous European awards. A selection of his other films includes: Einer meineraeltesten Freunde (TV, 1993), Der Unschuldsengel (TV, 1994), Talk of the Town (Stadtgespraech, 1995), Greenhorn (TV, 1995), The Pharmacist (Die Apothekerin, 1997), Long Hello and Short Goodbye (1998), Cold is the Evening Breeze (Kalt ist der Abendhauch, 1999), Ausflug (2001). Und die Braut wusste von nichts (TV, 2002), Queen of Cherries (Die Kirschenkoenigin, 2004), Maria’s Last Journey (Maria’s letzte Reise, TV, 2005), and Runaway Horse (Ein fliehendes Pferd, 2007).
The prominent American psychiatrist and distinguished professor Robert Jay Lifton is the author of many important works about the survivors of Hiroshima, Vietnam veterans, Nazi doctors, the Japanese Aum Shinrikyo sect and numerous current and challenging issues. He was the winner of many awards, including the American National Book Award, and is a founding member of the International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War, which was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1985.

After reading protocols of the Auschwitz Trial in Frankfurt, he was motivated for his psycho-historical research on Nazi doctors. In the late 70s, the Jewish scientist visited Auschwitz survivors and Holocaust perpetrators, mainly former Nazi physicians. In the film, he describes his approach and charts the way in which ordinary doctors changed from healers to killers.

Robert Jay Lifton takes us on a journey through his experiences, including his most personal insights. From the conversations evolved a picture of psychological trauma, spanning the 60 years from the Nuremberg Doctors’ Trial to today.

Katharina (Kat, 15) arranges blind dates via Internet for money. One day, surprisingly she meets up with her father who is sexually attracted to teenage girls. In exchange for a no-limit credit card, she promises to quit her “side job” and not to tell her mother about the father’s addiction.

Shortly thereafter the father commits suicide. Suddenly Kat faces the decision either to leave her mother in the dark or to open her eyes …

Stefan Kornatz was born in 1968 and grew up in Hamburg. After studying Sociology he enrolled in a program for Film, Theater & Media at the University of Hamburg. He has worked on numerous productions as a director’s assistant, scriptwriter and story and script editor. See You at Home (Lebenswandel, 2006) marks his debut as a director.
Years ago, Marlene left her husband Leonhard, a serious, strait-laced district judge, for his best friend Jan, a physician. It has taken a long time for the wounds to heal, but the trio has succeeded in restoring its friendship, even if it is more tenuous than in the past …

Then Anja enters their lives, a darkly beautiful, mysterious young student. Leonhard, in particular, is fascinated by her and showers her with his attentions. Flattered, Anja develops a tender affection for him and, when he proposes to her, she accepts. They marry and have a child, Daniel. The two couples begin seeing each other regularly, even vacationing together, but Leonhard soon returns to his neat, well-ordered, predictable life …

Anja grows increasingly apathetic when it becomes clear to her that Leonhard will never give her the love she yearns for. An accident in which little Daniel is injured pushes Anja closer to the edge. Alcohol looms large in her life, but not as large as her unquenchable longing for love. When she and Jan make love one day, it seems like the logical result of a long development for both. The circle of betrayal begins again…

Marlene leaves Jan. Leonhard files for divorce from Anja. But this time, history is not about to repeat itself. Jan knows that deep within himself, he loves Marlene. And: he is frightened by Anja’s erratic behavior, her possessive love that has assumed pathological traits. A love that threatens her sanity – and her life …

Genre Drama  Category Feature Film  Cinema Year of Production 2005  Director Torsten C. Fischer  Screenplay Torsten C. Fischer  Director of Photography Theo Bierkens  Editor Hansjoerg Weissbrich  Music by Annette Focks  Production Design Martin Schreiben  Producer Heike Richter-Karst  Production Company AllMedia Pictures/Munich, in co-production with NDR/Hamburg, ORF/Vienna, ARTE/Strasbourg  Principal Cast Tobias Moretti, Ulrich Thomsen, Barbara Auer, Jessica Schwarz  Length 112 min, 3,022 m  Format 35 mm, color, cs  Original Version German  Subtitled Version English  Sound Technology Dolby Digital Ex  With backing from FilmFoerderung Hamburg, Nordmedia, Filmstiftung NRW  German Distributor NFP marketing & distribution* / Berlin

Torsten C. Fischer studied Art History, Philosophy and Theater, followed by studies at the German Academy of Film & Television. His films include: Die fliegende Kinder (1992), Berlin, 10:46 (TV, 1994), Nina (TV, 1997), Doppeltes Dreieck (TV, 1998-1999), Mond, Schwarzblutrot (TV, 1999), Der Anwalt und sein Gast (TV, 2002), Mr. and Mrs. Right (TV, 2003), Dreh dich nicht um (TV, 2005), Impossibly Yours (Der Liebeswunsch, 2005), and Tod in der Siedlung (TV, 2006).
Ludgers Fall

FIRST CASE WORST CASE

Ransom: three million! Four teens have a sure-fire plan: They are going to kidnap themselves and sail to a lonely island to obtain their parents’ money from a courier. On this isle, Ludger controls law and order. But as he has nothing to do out there, his old rival Mayor Knut wants to fire him. So Ludger creates his own case – which clashes with the kidnapping. When the first body washes ashore, things have to be taken bloody seriously …

Genre Action, Comedy, Thriller Category Feature Film Cinema Year of Production 2006 Director Wolf Wolff Screenplay Wolf Wolff, Thorsten Nesch Director of Photography Heiko Rahnenfuehrer Editor Hilko Wolff Music by Max Wuerden, Dominik Schultes Production Design Dennis Duis Producers Wolf Wolff, Heiko Rahnenfuehrer Production Company Wolff & Rahnenfuehrer/Berlin, in co-production with Epix Media/Berlin Principal Cast Peter Silbereisen, Frank Brunet, Peter Nottmeier, Helmut Ruehl, Martin Semmelrogge, Ralph Kretschmar, Désirée Philipp, Jacob Matschenz, Patrick Heinrich, Marion von Stengel Special Effects Markus Hahn, Mirko Nied Length 92 min Format Super 35 mm, color, cs Original Version German Subtitled Version English Sound Technology Stereo Festival Screenings Luebeck 2006 With backing from Kulturelle Filmfoederung Schleswig-Holstein

Wolf Wolff’s films include: Der lange Marsch (1990), Ich weiss, was du brauchst (1992), Eigenleben (1993), Sins (1994), Digital Ghost (1998), Con Game (2005), Ludgers Fall (2006), and over 250 music videos, one of which – Lords of the Boards for the Guano Apes – won the Echo Award 1999.

World Sales Epix Media AG · Marc Lammers Stralauer Platz 34 · 10243 Berlin/Germany phone +49-30-2 00 56 63 00 · fax +49-30-2 00 56 63 29 email: info@epix.de · www.epix.de

german films quarterly

1 · 2007

new german films
Rita flees to Belgium with her baby because she is wanted for theft and other offenses in Germany. She sets out in search of her natural father whom she has never met. But he has a wife and children. Rita’s sudden appearance causes complications in the family. She is eventually arrested by the Belgian police and deported to Germany where she serves a lengthy prison sentence.

During this time, Rita’s four other children live with Rita’s mother Isabella. She runs a restaurant and has little time for the children. Fanny, the eldest, has to look after her siblings.

After Rita is released from prison, she takes her children back again – against the wishes of her mother Isabella. With the help of Marc – an American soldier stationed in Germany – an almost normal family life develops. But Rita doesn’t trust Marc’s feelings. They don’t fit into the pattern of her previous experiences. Rita resumes her former lifestyle. She sees other men and pilfers with a girlfriend. When Marc announces he is to be posted back in the USA, Rita’s life is thrown off balance.

The film gradually unveils a portrait of a woman who claims her mother was never a mother to her. But then she herself has one child after the next which she foists on her mother, forcing her to take on the role she denied Rita.

**Genre** Drama  **Category** Feature Film  **Cinema Year of Production** 2007  **Director** Maria Speth  **Screenplay** Maria Speth  **Director of Photography** Reinhold Vorschneider  **Editors** Dietmar Kraus, Ludo Troch, Maria Speth  **Production Design** Tim Pannen, Igor Gabriel, Marion Foradori  **Producers** Christoph Friedel, Claudia Steffen, Jean-Pierre & Luc Dardenne, Pascal Traechslin  **Production Company** Pandora Film/ Cologne, in co-production with ZDF Das kleine Fernsehspiel/ Mainz, Les Films du Fleuve/Liège, Cineworx/Basel  **Principal Cast** Sandra Hueller, Luisa Sappelt, Coleman Orlando Swinton, Susanne Lothar, Gerti Drassl, Oliver Gourmet  **Casting** Nina Haun, Patrick Hella  **Sound Technology** Dolby Digital  **Format** 35 mm, color, 1:1.85  **Subtitled Version** English  **Original Version** German/French/English  **Festival Screenings** Berlin 2007 (Forum)  **With backing from** Filmstiftung NRW, Hessen-Invest, Eurimages, Medienboard Berlin-Brandenburg, BKM, Filmförderungsanstalt (FFA), Centre du Cinema et de L’audiovisuel de la Wallonie, Hessisches Ministerium fuer Wissenschaft und Kunst, Hessische Filmförderung, MEDIA  

**Maria Speth** was born in 1967 and studied at the “Konrad Wolf” Academy of Film and Television in Babelsberg. She has worked since 1991 as an editing and directing assistant on various films and TV programs. Her films as a writer/director include: *Mittwoch* (short, 1995), *Barfuss* (short, 1999) winner of the 3sat Award at Oberhausen 1999, her feature debut *the days between (in den tag hinein)*, 2001 which won the VPRO Tiger Award at Rotterdam, the Grand Prix du Jury at Crêteil, and the MFG Star 2001, and *madonnen (madonnnen)*, 2007.
The Fuehrer’s Headquarter, December 1944. Berlin has been heavily bombed and the war seems to be lost. But Goebbels doesn’t give in so easily. His plan: On New Year’s Eve the Fuehrer is going to mobilize the masses again with a mighty and forceful speech. Re-staging of reality! But here’s the rub: The Fuehrer can’t do it, he is ill and depressed, avoiding the public. Only one person can help – Hitler’s former drama teacher, Professor Adolf Gruenbaum. But he is a Jew … However, time is short, in five days the Fuehrer has to be in top form …

**Genre** Comedy  
**Category** Feature Film Cinema  
**Year of Production** 2007  
**Director** Dani Levy  
**Screenplay** Dani Levy  
**Directors of Photography** Carl-Friedrich Koschnick, Carsten Thiele  
**Editor** Peter R. Adam  
**Music by** Niki Reiser  
**Production Design** Christian Eisele  
**Producer** Stefan Arndt  
**Production Company** X Filme Creative Pool/Berlin  
**Principal Cast** Helge Schneider, Ulrich Muehe, Sylvester Groth, Katja Riemann, Adriana Altaras  
**Casting** Simone Baer  
**Special Effects** Frank Schlegel  
**Length** 95 min, 2,600 m  
**Format** 35 mm, color, 1:1.85  
**Original Version** German  
**Subtitled Version** English  
**Sound Technology** Dolby SRD  
**Festival Screenings** Berlin 2007 (German Cinema)  
**With backing from** Filmförderungsgesellschaften (FFA), Medienboard Berlin-Brandenburg, Filmstiftung NRW, Hessen-Invest  
**German Distributor** X Verleih/Berlin

17-year-old Guido suffers since his early childhood from neurodermatitis. After being taken to the hospital due to a heavy attack, he starts to question his personal and familiar environment and discovers that his parents’ relationship – which he assumed to be happy and sound – is built on lies. Unable to deal with this disappointment, he flees from it and moves in with his older brother and his roommates. There he gets to know the charismatic scallywag Rudi whom he admires for his independence. Inspired by Rudi, Guido learns to become more of an egoist and in fact soon his state of health improves.

**Genre** Coming-of-Age Story  
**Category** Feature Film Cinema  
**Year of Production** 2006  
**Directors** Ingo Haeb, Jan Christoph Glaser  
**Screenplay** Ingo Haeb  
**Director of Photography** Ralf Mendle  
**Editor** Sarah J. Levine  
**Music by** Jacob Ilja  
**Production Design** Oliver Koch  
**Producer** Peter Rommel  

Rommel Film/Berlin, in co-production with GFP Medienfonds/Berlin, ZDF Das kleine Fernsehspiel/Mainz, ARTE/Strasbourg  

**Principal Cast** Jacob Matschenz, Andreas Schmidt, Johanna Gastdorf, Falk Rockstroh, Tim Egloff, Luana Bellinghausen  
**Casting** Die Besetzer/Iris Baumueller-Michel, Marc Schoetteldreier  
**Special Effects** Boerries Mueller-Buesching  

**Length** 103 min, 3,970 m  
**Format** HD Video  
**Blow-up** 35 mm, color, 1:1.85  
**Original Version** German  
**Sound Technology** Dolby SRD  
**Festival Screenings** Hof 2006, Ophuels Festival Saarbruecken 2007, Berlin 2007 (German Cinema)  

**With backing from** Medienboard Berlin-Brandenburg, Filmstiftung NRW  

**Ingo Haeb** was born in 1970 in Hamburg. He studied at the Academy of Media Arts (KHM) in Cologne and the German Film & Television Academy (dffb) in Berlin. After several short films, he wrote the story for *Narren* (2003) and the script for *The Day Bobby Ewing Died (Am Tag als Bobby Ewing starb, 2005)* which he co-directed with Lars Jessen. Also active as an actor, he played the role of Knut in Stefan Krohmer’s *They’ve Got Knut (Sie haben Knut, 2003)*. His other films include: *Derby* (short, 1999) and *Neandertal* (2006) in co-direction with Jan Christoph Glaser.

Six people leave their normal paths in life, in search of themselves. Paths and energies cross. Decisions need to be made. Deconstructivism or naturalism. The fight for survival and the small moments of happiness.

**Genre** Drama  
**Category** Feature Film Cinema  
**Year of Production** 2007  
**Director** Detlef Bothe  
**Screenplay** Detlef Bothe  
**Director of Photography** Luis de Maia  
**Editors** Constantin Brodt, Detlef Bothe  
**Music by** Werkstatt Raben, Fauna Flash  
**Production Design** Oliver Hoese  
**Producer** Detlef Bothe  
**Production Company** B-Filme/Munich  
**Principal Cast** Axel Milberg, Tom Schilling, Mia Florentine Weiss, Detlef Bothe, Gabrielle Scharnitzky, Wotan Wilke Moehring, Leslie Malton, Dominik Raacke, Oliver Korittke  
**Length** 90 min, 2,475 m  
**Format** HD Cam  
**Blow-up** 35 mm, color, 1:1.85  
**Original Version** German  
**Subtitled Version** English  
**Sound Technology** Dolby SR  
**With backing from** FilmFernsehFonds Bayern

**Detlef Bothe** was born in 1965 in Braunschweig and trained as an actor from 1989-1992. Since 1990, he has been acting for film, television and theater and debuted as a director in 2002 with *Feiertag*, which won the Special Jury Prize at the Filmfest Munich in the same year. Also active as a writer for film, television and the theater, his other films include: *My Wife, My Friends and Me* (Meine Frau, meine Freunde und ich, 2004) and *Tour Excess* (Neben der Spur, 2007).
Tales of unfulfilled love, hopes and dreams, based on Judith Hermann’s critically acclaimed international bestsellers Nothing But Ghosts and The Summer House, Later.

Judith Hermann sends her characters out into the world in five episodes dealing with her favorite themes: star-crossed love and the general rootlessness of Generation X. Whether they’re in Venice, Jamaica, Berlin, the Nevadan desert or Iceland – her characters always leave their familiar surroundings behind. They travel to various countries for various motives, but they all inevitably realize that there is something you can’t escape, no matter where you go: yourself …

Genre Drama Category Feature Film Cinema Year of Production 2007 Director Martin Gypkens Screenplay Martin Gypkens, based on the novel of the same name by Judith Hermann Director of Photography Eeva Fleig Editor Karin Jacobs Music by Martin Todsharow Production Design Joerg Prinz Producer Andreas Eicher Production Company box! Film- und Fernsehproduktion/Potsdam, in co-production with Marco Polo High Definition/Halle, Senator Film Produktion/Berlin, RBB/Potsdam-Babelsberg

Principal Cast August Diehl, Maria Simon, Jessica Schwarz, Janek Rieke, Brigitte Hobmeier, Wotan Wilke Moehring, Ina Weisse, Solveig Arnaudottir, Valur Freyr Einarsson, Fritzi Haberlandt, Chiara Schoras, Stipe Erceg

Casting Annette Borgmann

Length 116 min, 3,306 m Format 35 mm, color, cs

Subtitle Version English Sound Technology Dolby Digital 5.1

With backing from Filmfoerderungsanstalt (FFA), Mittel-deutsche Medienfoerderung, Medienboard Berlin-Brandenburg, FilmFoerderung Hamburg, MEDIA

German Distributor Senator Film Verleih/Berlin

Martin Gypkens was born in 1969 in Bonn. After his schooling, he went to New York, where he gained his first experience in film. From 1992-1996, he worked as a prop designer for various productions in Berlin. In 1993, he directed the play Unidentifizierte Leichtenteile und das wahre Wesen der Liebe in Bonn. In 1996, he enrolled in the Dramaturgy program at the “Konrad Wolf” Academy of Film & Television (HFF/B) in Potsdam and has written numerous feature screenplays. His films include: Papas (short, 2000), We (Wir, 2003), and Nothing But Ghosts (Nichts als Gespenstser, 2007).

World Sales
Beta Cinema / Dept. of Beta Film GmbH · Andreas Rothbauer
Gruenwalder Weg 28 d · 82041 Oberhaching/Germany
phone +49-89-67 34 69 80 · fax +49-89-6 73 46 98 88
email: ARothbauer@betacinema.com · www.betacinema.com
In his younger days Helge Block used to be a skilful and respected fisherman, but nowadays he hardly brings any fish back home. The people in the village have turned their backs on him and his beloved son Jonas. But nonetheless they lead a happy life in the small fishing hut by the sea. One stormy night Helge sets out to fulfill an old mysterious dream: To bring back “the silver of the heavens” – a large catch for his starving son – but he never returns. Thereupon little Jonas Block has to undergo the painful hardships of poverty, puritan austerity and loss. Slowly the little boy loses his smile and starts to embitter. But then a little miracle happens – at the magical place where the heavens and the sea become one …

**Genre** Historic Drama  
**Category** Feature Film  
**Cinema Year of Production** 2006  
**Director** Toke Constantin Hebbeln  
**Screenplay** Nina Vukovic, Toke Constantin Hebbeln  
**Director of Photography** Felix Novo de Oliveira  
**Editors** Simon Blasi, Andre Gelhaar  
**Music by** Martina Eisenreich  
**Production Design** Nobel Nobielski  
**Producer** Manuel Bickenbach  
**Production Company** Filmakademie Baden-Wuerttemberg/Ludwigsburg, in co-production with FRISBEEFILMS/Berlin

**Principal Cast** Leonard Proxauf, Sylvester Groth, Rolf Becker, Manni Laudenbach, Tom Lass, Ursula Graeff, Paula Kroh  
**Casting** Suse Marquardt Besetzungsbuero/Berlin  
**Special Effects** Holger Wenzi  
**Length** 60 min, 732 m  
**Format** 16 mm, color, 1:1.85

**Original Version** German  
**Subtitled Version** English  
**Sound Technology** Dolby Stereo  
**Festival Screenings** Hof 2006, Sao Paulo 2006, ISFF Hollywood 2006  
**Awards** Foerderpreis Deutscher Film & Eastman Award for Upcoming Talent Hof 2006, Best Foreign Drama Hollywood 2006, Kodak Camera Award  
**HIGH-LIGHTS** Baden-Wuerttemberg 2006  
**With backing from** Filmförderunganstalt (FFA)

**Toke Constantin Hebbeln** was born in 1978 in Itzehoe. After graduate studies in Literature and Philosophy, he studied Film Directing at the Filmakademie Baden-Wuerttemberg. During his studies, he directed more than 15 award-winning shorts and commercials. A selection of his films includes: the shorts **Stille Nacht** (2002), **Schaukeln** (2002), **Der ewige Tag** (2002), **Kuscheln mit Mama** (2003), **Er und Es** (2003), **Glueckliche Tage** (2003), **Traeume am Fenster** (2003), **Seance** (2005), **Mach mich los** (2004), and his feature debut **NeverMore (NimmerMeer)**, (2006).
As an “old-school” sales agent Wolfgang Zenker is selling clothes to “Best Ager” boutiques, catering to women aged thirty-five and above. When he loses his driving license he commandeers his son, Karsten, to drive him around the province with a car loaded full of next year’s fashion.

What nobody except Wolfgang knows is that he’s both bankrupt and under threat from a younger and increasingly successful rival. What nobody except Karsten knows is that he is not only desperate to leave the family home and party in Spain, but he also has a very big secret of his own. Things come, as they must, to a head.


Ingo Rasper was born in 1974 in Hildesheim. After studying at the Filmakademie Baden-Wuerttemberg, he spent a year in Los Angeles completing various scriptwriting internships and has served as a director’s and production assistant, editor and location scout for numerous other productions in Germany. His films include: the shorts Irregulaer (1999), Vor dem Essen (2000), Ruebergemacht (2001), Dufte (2002), Das Gruene im Himmel (2003), Mensch Maxi (2004), Neuschwanstein Conspiracy (2005), and the feature Purely a Matter of Taste (Reine Geschmacksache, 2007).
Up to now, Nickel and his single dad Thomas have been managing very well together. Then Nickel goes on a school excursion and brings the little piglet Rudy back with him in his rucksack. Once he’s home, he makes a terrifying discovery: dad has a girlfriend! Worse yet, she’s moved in with him and brought her daughter Felicitas, “Feli”, along! Nickel makes a deal with Thomas: if those two stay, then so can Rudy. When life becomes unbearable for Nickel, he flees with Rudy to “Porkland,” followed by Feli and pursued by two dumb crooks. It’s the beginning of an adventure that ends in the swamps of the Oder Valley, where Rudy saves the lives of the two children and finds a new home.

Following his hit family film Rudy, The Racing Pig, which won the Bavarian Film Award in 1996, director Peter Timm sets his prize porker loose again in the cinemas alongside top stars Sebastian Koch (The Lives of Others, Speer and Hitler), Sophie von Kessel, Dominique Horwitz and Andreas Schmidt.

Rubljovka Road is the traffic artery connecting the powerhouse Moscow with the Russian outback. At all times, the region bordering on Rubljovka has had a magnetic attraction for the ruling elite classes: Tsars, dictators, presidents. Of course, also present-day head of state Putin resides here. In Putin’s Russia, Rubljovka has become synonymous with wealth, social ascent and decadent lifestyles. Tell-tale signs of the past and gross excesses of Russian cut-throat capitalism have created a bizarre microcosm that does not have a parallel elsewhere in this giant empire. Nouveau riche upstarts have caused the price of property on the Rubljovka to rocket sky-high. Now the fight for the last remaining pieces of land has broken out. The huts of the poor are swept aside to make way for the palaces of the wealthy by means that could not be any more unfair or brutal. The Russian State, celebrating an imperial comeback bolstered by petrol-billions, has declared open season on the weak and poor. And hardly anyone dares to protest. No wonder, Rubljovka is a strictly guarded maximum security area, where many things are hushed up and kept under wraps. In spite of grudgingly granted filming permits, the film team was constantly harassed and threatened by the Russian security service FSB, traffic police and each and every security company. Many parts were filmed with a hidden camera. Nevertheless, the film was completed.

Genre  Society  Category  Documentary Cinema  Year of Production  2007  Director  Irene Langemann  Screenplay  Irene Langemann  Director of Photography  Maxim Tarasjugin  Editor  Kawe Vakil  Music by  Michael Langemann  Producer  Wolfgang Bergmann  Production Company  Lichtfilm/Cologne, in co-production with RBB/Potsdam-Babelsberg, ARTE/Strasbourg, WDR/Cologne  Length  94 min  Format  HD Cam  Blow-up  35 mm, color, 1:1.85  Original Version  Russian  Subtitled  Versions  English, German  Sound Technology  Dolby Digital  With backing from  Filmstiftung NRW

Irene Langemann was born in the Omsk region of the Soviet Union in 1959. She studied Acting and Germanics at the Tcepkin Theater Academy in Moscow. From 1980-1990, she worked as an actress, director and theater writer in Moscow. In 1983, she began moderating and directing for Russian television. In 1986, she became a director and scene editor at the Nasch Theater in Moscow. She moved to Germany in 1990 and was an editor at Deutsche Welle TV in Cologne until 1997. Since 1997, she has been working as a freelance filmmaker. A selection of her films includes: 
Garmisch-Partenkirchen, 1952. The hapless carpenter and would-be bobsledder Gamser is training like mad with his friends Franzl, Gustl and Leusl Peter to make the national qualifications for the Winter Olympics in Oslo – Germany’s first Olympic Games since the end of the war. Another team, however, has been selected to represent Germany, and it’s stronger than Gamser’s. Worse yet, it’s headed by Gamser’s old childhood rival Dorfler, a wealthy brewery owner, who’s already the official world champion and is planning to swoop down to victory with his teammates Basti, Kaspar and Toni. In snowy, bitter-cold Norway, the German sportsmen skid right into a hornet’s nest of sports-political intrigues and erotic adventures. Soon, the tension between the two equally strong teams becomes nearly intolerable. When it turns out that neither of the two teams can win on its own, the eight men have to take an important decision: either they pointlessly maintain their old hostility, or they pool their creative energies together to score a victory not only for themselves, but above all, for young, post-war Germany.

From breakout director Marcus H. Rosenmueller, whose Grave Decisions played 16 weeks in the top ten and sold more than 1.2 million tickets, Heavyweights is a breathtaking sports adventure that sparkles with humor and dazzling action sequences.
During the shooting of Screenwalker, the famous movie star Paul van Plemm falls in love with the extra L.A.X. 19/64. Co-star Charlotte Kenzo (well-known from Breakfast at McDonald’s) notices this and out of pure meanness tries to foil the budding love affair.

**Genre** Satire  
**Category** Short  
**Year of Production** 2006  
**Director** Michael Lutz  
**Screenplay** Michael Lutz, Ines Veith  
**Director of Photography** Michael Arnieri  
**Editor** Jenifer Stiller  
**Music by** Thomas Oberegger  
**Production Design** Petra-Marion Niethammer  
**Producer** Michael Lutz  
**Production Company** Ocean of Minds Entertainment/Stuttgart  
**Cast** Arijana Antunovic, Cornelia Lanz, Martin Rother  
**Casting** Michael Lutz  
**Length** 25 min  
**Format** Mini DV, color, 16:9  
**Original Version** German  
**Sound Technology** Stereo

Michael Lutz studied Visual Communications in Darmstadt and Journalism in Stuttgart-Hohenheim. Screenwalker is his debut as a director and producer.
For their fifth wedding anniversary, Albert and Birgit have a party for their best friends in their house in the countryside. But the party becomes a very dangerous event. Unknown involvements arise and lead to the destruction of friendships. Birgit slept with Albert’s best friend, but Albert doesn’t know about it, yet. He only noticed her coming home very late and freshly showered. Suspicious, his main reason for inviting his friends is: Do I have the right to know what happened with my wife that night? Birgit does not want to tell him because she only spent the night with another man to give their boring marriage a new impulse. And it worked well. She is pregnant. What she doesn’t know is that this friend fell terribly in love with her and had decided to “free” her from Albert. Albert behaves like a judge until it surfaces that the woman of the other couple is pregnant – but not from her husband. Albert seems to be the father.

A year and a half later they meet again at Dagmar’s wedding. She marries a Russian guy, a friend of her ex-husband, so that he can stay in Germany. The friends’ involvements have continued. The new guests are completely overwhelmed, and the bride and bridgroom don’t seem to be in love. The bridesmaid looks as if she were at a funeral, only a few guests come after the ceremony in the church, and a baby is passed around that seems to belong to no one. The group tries to stay intact, but finally Birgit announces that she wants to leave her husband and her friends to go to Baghdad as a journalist. The plane leaves in two hours …

_Swinger Club_ is a comedy about the question whether there is any chance for a loyal relationship in modern German society.

**Genre** Tragicomedy  
**Category** Feature Film  
**Cinema** Year of Production 2006  
**Director** Jan Georg Schuette  
**Screenplay** Jan Georg Schuette  
**Directors of Photography** Manuel Mack, Hi Khan Truong, Thorsten Berndt  
**Editors** Nina Schley, Jan Georg Schuette  
**Music by** Helge Dube, Christian Dabler  
**Production Design** Jan Georg Schuette  
**Producer** Jan Georg Schuette  
**Principal Cast** Marie Baumer, Oliver Sauer, Stephan Schad, Ole Schlosshauer, Jurij Schrader, Anne Weber  
**Casting** Jan Georg Schuette, Solar Ferrer  
**Length** 92 min, 2,699 m  
**Format** Mini DV  
**Blow-up** 35 mm, color, 1:1.66  
**Original Version** German  
**Subtitled Version** English  
**Sound Technology** Stereo  
**Festival Screenings** Zurich 2006, Festival des deutschen Films Ludwigshafen 2006, Ophuels Festival Saarbruecken 2007  
**Awards** Special Jury Prize Ludwigshafen 2006  
**With backing from** FilmFoerderung Hamburg  
**German Distributor** Ventura Film/Berlin  

Jan Georg Schuette was born in 1962 in Oldenburg. After training as an actor, he was a member of the ensemble in theaters in Dusseldorf, Cologne and Hamburg (Thalia Theater), among others. _Swinger Club_ (2006), a 92 minute film shot in 5 1/2 hours, marks his directorial debut.
Thomas Harlan, author and filmmaker, was born in 1929 as the only son of the German film director Veit Harlan and the actress Hilde Koerber. He grew up in Berlin and as a child sat at Hitler’s dinner table. In 1942 he was evacuated to Pommern. After WWII, he returned to Berlin, followed by emigration to France in 1948. An author of plays, prose and poetry he began researching National Socialist war crimes in 1959 in Poland, which led to numerous court cases against suspects in West Germany. In 1964 his father died. Since 2001 he has been residing in a respiratory clinic in Southern Germany.

“I came across Thomas Harlan for the first time in the course of a retrospective of his films at the Munich Film Museum. For a longer period of time, I had myself been working on the subject of ‘children and grand-children of the Nazi Period.’ I drove to Munich to meet Thomas Harlan and we decided to work on a film together.” (Christoph Huebner)

The result is a full-length documentary, consisting of major and minor fragments, circling around a topic without defining it in full and without offering easy explanations. Moving Shrapnel is what Thomas Harlan called these fragments at the beginning. They enter the body by injury. They can be painful and irritating in the long run.

Genre
Biopic, History
Category
Documentary Cinema
Year of Production
2006
Director
Christoph Huebner
Screenplay
Thomas Harlan, Christoph Huebner, Gabriele Voss
Director of Photography
Christoph Huebner
Editor
Gabriele Voss
Producer
Christoph Huebner
Production Company
Christoph Huebner Filmproduktion/Witten
With
Thomas Harlan
Length
96 min
Format
Betacam
Blow-up
35 mm, color, 1:1.66
Original Version
German
Subtitled Version
English
Festival Screenings
Duisburg 2006
With backing from
Filmstiftung NRW
German Distributor
Real Fiction Filmverleih/Cologne

In the first adventure of a planned feature film series based on the world-famous detective kids, *The Three Investigators: The Secret of Skeleton Island* follows a trip the three kids make to South Africa, where they are soon pulled into an adventure that has them facing a mysterious horrifying creature, helping a girl from the townships and chasing an evil treasure hunter through deserts and downtown Cape Town and finally flying off the table mountain with a paraglider …

**Genre** Family  
**Category** Feature Film  
**Cinema** Year of Production 2006  
**Director** Florian Baxmeyer  
**Screenplay** Philip LaZebnik  
**Director of Photography** Peter Joachim Krause  
**Editor** Ueli Christen  
**Music by** Annette Focks  
**Production Design** Albrecht Conrad  
**Producers** Sytze van der Laan, Malte Grunert, Ronald Kruschak  
**Production Company** Studio Hamburg International Production (SHIP)/Hamburg, in co-production with GFP Medienfonds/Berlin  
**Principal Cast** Nick Price, Chancellor Miller, Cameron Monaghan, Naima Sebe, James Faulkner, Fiona Ramsay, Akin Omotoso  
**Casting** Jennifer Smith, Deborah Aquila, Tricia Wood  
**Visual Effects Supervisor** Robert Pinnow  
**Length** 91 min, 2,800 m  
**Format** 35 mm, color, cs  
**Original Version** English  
**Sound Technology** Dolby Digital  
**With backing from** Filmfoerderungsanstalt (FFA), FilmFoerderung Hamburg, Medienboard Berlin-Brandenburg  
**German Distributor** Buena Vista International (Germany)/Munich  

“There aren’t any boxers like me anymore, with such a character. You have Henry Maske or Rocchigiani or Axel Schulz who can’t box. But someone who has is all... He’s a bandit, he’s a nice guy. Good for the brothel, good for the opera. I’m at home in both worlds. You might think, I’m an asshole, but one with a golden heart.”

Dariusz Michalczewski, aka the Tiger (born 1968), won 48 fights in a row out of 50 during his nine-year professional career – 39 of those wins through knockouts. In 2005, he challenged the French world champion Fabrice Tiozzo to one final fight.

Genre  Sports  Category  Documentary  Cinema  Year of Production  2006  Director  P.M. Starost  Screenplay  P.M. Starost  Director of Photography  P.M. Starost  Editor  P.M. Starost  Music by  Survivor, Manuel Goettsching, Steve Reich  Producer  Ilona Ziok  Production Company  CV Films/Berlin  With  Dariusz Michalczewski  Length  60 min, 1,600 m  Format  35 mm, color, 1:1.77  Original Version  German/Polish

Subtitled Versions  English, German, Polish  Sound Technology  Dolby SR  Festival Screenings  Munich 2006, ERA New Horizons Wroclaw 2006, Biberach 2006 (In Competition), Polish Film Festival Chicago 2006  Awards  Biber Award Best Documentary  Biberach 2006  German Distributor  MG.ART/Berlin

Stevie, a precocious 14-year-old girl, must cope with the instabilities of her immoderate parents.

When they decide to move to a small provincial town in Germany, Stevie attempts to slip into a normal life. Whilst her parents playfully escape their responsibilities, Stevie tries to make a good impression in town, spreading stories of grandeur and claiming to be the daughter of a diplomat. She makes progress. Yet the good weather doesn’t last and before long, she discovers that her parents have once more resorted to illegal means, as a way of supporting their leisurely lifestyle. As friends and hangers-on of her parents fill their new home, the chaos continually mounts. It is in this atmosphere of physical and emotional destruction, that Stevie must now start to define herself and perhaps even break free.

The Unpolished tells the story of a girl caught up in a complicated adult world. A world in which the child/parent roles have been washed away and responsibilities are thrown back and forth.

Pia Marais was born in Johannesburg/South Africa. After studying Art in London, Amsterdam and Duesseldorf, she took up studies in Film at the German Academy of Film & Television (dffb) in Berlin. Also active in casting, as a dialogue coach and writer, her films include: Loop (short, 1996), Deranged (short, 1998), Tricky People (short, 1999), 17 (short, 2003), and The Unpolished (Die Unerzogenen, 2007).
Three friends are trying to make it in the big city. They want to be a part of show business. Murat the actor, but who actually never attended an acting school, is not only trying to succeed as an actor, but also wants to play the lead role of the script he has written. Although he has never read a script or even had one in his hands, he already wrote one. He must be mad. So off he goes to Cologne to start his career, and this has some serious consequences. After being robbed, he arrives at his friend Azad’s apartment, but he’s not there, only a guy named Amir, in bed with an unknown beauty. Amir doesn’t know Murat, but he’s heard about him from Azad.

Amir is a musician. He believes that music can cross borders and wants to make the world a better place. If only they would let him try, but that is the problem. No label is interested in his music or his ideals.

Then there’s Azad, an aspiring poet and director. Although Azad has no luck, he has an idea: the three should establish their own casting company. They start with a table, two chairs and a camera – right in the middle of the city. Just as things start looking up, Azad is taken off to Istanbul to get married …

Murat Ercan has acted in numerous German films and television series. Since 2005 he has also been active as a director and producer. His films include: the shorts Faces (2005) and Kein Wort zuviel (2005), and the feature The Way of Trouble Action (2007).
Das Wilde Leben

8 MILES HIGH

A gripping love story based on the life of the legendary top model and groupie Uschi Obermaier, the sex symbol of the 1968 generation of sex, drugs and rock ‘n’ roll.

The beautiful young Uschi Obermaier from Munich is transformed at the end of the 1960s from a fashion top model to the figurehead of the sexual revolution and becomes the medium for an entire generation.

After meeting the pop-communard Rainer Langhans, Uschi moves into the Berlin “Commune 1” and runs through a whirlwind of relationships which make her a media icon, but useless for a “normal” life. When the commune falls apart in 1969, she takes up a relationship with the charismatic adventurer and bar-owner Dieter Bockhorn – during which time she is also involved with the Rolling Stones’ Mick Jagger and Keith Richards.

In search of the summer of eternal love and on the run from changing times, Uschi and Dieter take off on a long, adventurous trip in their camper bus around the world. But their dropout idealism soon becomes catastrophic as Dieter cannot come to terms with Uschi’s desire for independence. On New Year’s Day 1984, Dieter dies in Mexico and Uschi finds herself faced with an existential question: what is the price of freedom?

Genre Drama, Love Story Category Feature Film Cinema Year of Production 2006 Director Achim Bornhak Screenplay Olaf Kraemer, Achim Bornhak, Dagmar Benke Director of Photography Benjamin Dernbecher Editor Peter Przygodda Music by Alexander Hacke Production Design Eduard Krajewski Producers Eberhard Junkersdorf, Dietmar Guentsche Production Company Neue Bioskop Germany/Munich, in co-production with Hofmann & Voges/Munich, Senator Film Produktion/Berlin, TV60 Film/Munich, Kinowelt Filmproduktion/Munich, Babelsberg Film/Potsdam, Studio Babelsberg/Potsdam, B.A. Produktion/Munich, Neue Bioskop Film/Munich, Munich Animation Film/Munich Principal Cast Natalia Avelon, David Scheller, Matthias Schweighoefer, Alexander Scheer, Victor Noren Casting Karen Wendland, Suse Marquardt Besetzungs buro/Berlin, Silke Koch Susann Reitz Casting/Berlin Special Effects Alex Lemke Length 114 min, 3.150 m Format 35 mm, color, cs Original Version German Subtitled Version English Sound Technology Dolby SR With backing from FilmFernsehfonds Bayern, Filmfoerderungsanstalt (FFA), Medienboard Berlin-Brandenburg, Mitteldeutsche Medienfoerderung, MEDIA German Distributor Warner Bros. Entertainment/Hamburg


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After the victory over the Beastly Beasts, the Wild Soccer Bunch was in top form and won all of their following matches. But they need one more victory to get the “Pott”, the freestyle soccer trophy. And to get it, they have to beat the Ragnarok Wolves. But the Wolves are no ordinary opponents. They have a dark secret – and in the background lurks a certain power that is stronger than all of them: a clever girl named Horizon and the silver lights in mist. Marlon falls hopelessly for Horizon. She, however, has one simple goal: to pull Marlon and Leon apart. A bitter struggle breaks out and threatens to break up the Wild Soccer Bunch. Will they be able survive one of the greatest challenges of their lives?

Genre  Family Entertainment  Category  Feature Film  Cinema  
Year of Production  2007  Director  Joachim Masannek  
Screenplay  Joachim Masannek  Director of Photography  Benjamin Dernbecher  
Editor  Sandy Saffeels  Music by  Andrej Melita, Peter Horn, Bananafishbones  
Production Design  Manfred Doering, Maximilian Lange  
Producers  Ewa Karlstroem, Andreas Ulmke-Smeaton  
Munich  Principal Cast  Jimi Blue Ochsenknecht, Sarah Kimi Gries, Wilson Gonzalez Ochsenknecht, Leon Wessel-Masannek, Uwe Ochsenknecht  
Casting  Stefany Pohlmann, Anne Walcher  
Length  104 min, 2,545 m  Format  35 mm, color, 1:1.85  
Original Version  German  Subtitled Version  English  
Sound Technology  Dolby Digital  With backing from  Filmfoerderungsanstalt (FFA), FilmFernsehFonds Bayern, Bayerischer Bankenfonds  
German Distributor  Buena Vista International (Germany)/Munich  

Joachim Masannek was born in 1960 in Hamm and studied German, Philosophy, and Film in Munich. Since 1985, he has worked as a production designer, lighting technician, cameraman and author. After working on various animation projects, he wrote the children’s book Die Wilden Fussballkerle based on the soccer team he founded in Munich. His films include: Bomber (short, 1992), In Liebe, Catherine (short, 1992), Der Baer (commercial, 1992), and The Wild Soccer Bunch 1/2/3/4 (Die Wilden Kerle 1/2/3/4, 2004/2005/2006/2007).
Yella has decided to leave her small town for a promising job and new life, leaving behind her failed marriage and broken dreams. Nothing can stop her: not even a freak car accident with her psychotic ex-husband driving on the day of her departure.

After a humiliating professional setback, the winds change for pretty Yella when young executive Philipp takes a chance on her as his assistant. Although she has no experience in high-risk venture capital, coincidence lends a hand and Yella soon discovers she has a knack with ruthless businessmen. Negotiations become a thrilling game of quick wits in which Yella’s looks and icy demeanor are major assets.

Yella sees a potential future with Philipp. He is serious, determined, and his goals could become shared projects. It seems ambitious Yella could finally get everything she ever wanted. But strange sounds and events plague Yella. Truths from her past come back to haunt her. Her new life could be too good to be real.

Christian Petzold is one of the leading directors of recent German cinema. The German Film Critics Association has twice awarded him Best Film awards, for the urban drama Ghosts (Gespenster, 2005) and The State I Am In (Die Innere Sicherheit, 2000). He was twice named Best Director at the German Film Awards, for the psychological drama Wolfsburg (2002) and The State I Am In, which also won Best Screenplay at Thessaloniki and the Grand Prize at Valenciennes. Petzold has also received much acclaim for the made-for-TV features Something to Remind Me (Toter Mann, 2002), Die Beischlafdiebin (1998) and Cuba Libre (1995). Born in 1960, Petzold studied German and Theater Studies at the Free University in Berlin, then graduated from the German Film & Television Academy (dffb) in 1994.
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Film und Fernsehen 
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phone +49-30-30 09 03-0, fax +49-30-30 09 03-13 
email: info@deutsche-kinemathek.de, www.deutsche-kinemathek.de

Arbeitsgemeinschaft Dokumentarfilm e.V. 
German Documentary Association 
Schweizer Strasse 6, 60394 Frankfurt am Main/Germany 
phone +49-69-62 37 00, fax +49-69-62 37 00 
email: agdok@agdok.de, www.agdok.de

Arbeitsgemeinschaft Kurzfilm e.V. 
German Short Film Association 
Kameruner Strasse 60, 01090 Dresden/Germany 
phone +49-351-404 55 76, fax +49-351-404 55 76 
email: info@ag-kurzfilm.de, www.ag-kurzfilm.de

Der Beauftragte der Bundesregierung 
 fuer Kultur und Medien 
Referat K 35, Europahaus, Stresemannstrasse 94, 10963 Berlin/Germany 
phone +49-188 68 14 99 29, fax +49-188 68 15 49 29 
email: Ulrike.Schauz@bkm.bmi.bund.de

FilmFernsehFonds Bayern GmbH 
Gesellschaft zur Foerderung der Medien 
in Bayern 
Sonnenstraße 21, 80331 Munich/Germany 
phone +49-89-54 46 02 0, fax +49-89-54 46 02 21 
email: filmfoerderung@ffbf-bayern.de, www.ffbf-bayern.de

FilmFoerderung Hamburg GmbH 
Friedensallee 14-16, 22765 Hamburg/Germany 
phone +49-40-39 83 70, fax +49-40-39 83 70 
email: info@ffh.de, www.ffh.de

Filmstiftung NRW GmbH 
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phone +49-2 11-93 05 00, fax +49-2 11-93 05 05 
email: info@filmstiftung.de, www.filmstiftung.de

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Baden-Wuerttemberg mbH 
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<td>Action Concept Film- &amp; Stuntproduktion GmbH</td>
<td>Wolfgang Wilke</td>
<td>An der Hasenkaule 1-7</td>
<td>+49-22 33 50 81 00</td>
<td>+49-22 33 50 81 80</td>
<td><a href="mailto:wolfgang.wilke@actionconcept.com">wolfgang.wilke@actionconcept.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ARRI Media Worldsales</td>
<td>Antonio Exacoustos</td>
<td>Tuerkenstrasse 89</td>
<td>+49-89-38 09 12 88</td>
<td>+49-89-38 09 16 19</td>
<td><a href="mailto:aexacoustos@arri.de">aexacoustos@arri.de</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Atlas International Film GmbH</td>
<td>Stefan Menz, Dieter Menz, Philipp Menz</td>
<td>Candidplatz 11</td>
<td>+49-89-21 09 75-0</td>
<td>+49-89-22 43 32</td>
<td><a href="mailto:mail@atlasfilm.com">mail@atlasfilm.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ATRIX Films GmbH</td>
<td>Beatrix Wesle, Solveig Langeland</td>
<td>Aggensteinstrasse 13a</td>
<td>+49-89-21 09 75-0</td>
<td>+49-89-22 43 32</td>
<td><a href="mailto:atrixfilms@gmx.net">atrixfilms@gmx.net</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bavaria Film International Dept. of Bavaria Media GmbH</td>
<td>Thorsten Schaumann</td>
<td>Bavariafilmplatz 8</td>
<td>+49-89-64 99 26 86</td>
<td>+49-89-64 99 37 20</td>
<td><a href="mailto:international@bavaria-film.de">international@bavaria-film.de</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beta Cinema Dept. of Beta Film GmbH</td>
<td>Andreas Rothbauer</td>
<td>Gruenwalder Weg 28d</td>
<td>+49-89-67 34 69 80</td>
<td>+49-89-6 73 46 98 88</td>
<td><a href="mailto:ARothbauer@betacinema.com">ARothbauer@betacinema.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cine aktuell Filmgesellschaft mbH</td>
<td>Ralf Faust, Axel Schaarschmidt</td>
<td>Werdenfelserstrasse 81</td>
<td>+49-89-7 41 34 30</td>
<td>+49-89-74 13 43 16</td>
<td><a href="mailto:mail@cine-aktuell.de">mail@cine-aktuell.de</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exportfilm Bischoff &amp; Co. GmbH</td>
<td>Jochem Strate, Philip Evenkamp</td>
<td>Isabellastrasse 20</td>
<td>+49-89-2 72 93 60</td>
<td>+49-89-27 29 36 36</td>
<td><a href="mailto:exportfilms@exportfilm.de">exportfilms@exportfilm.de</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exportfilm bischoff &amp; co. gmbh</td>
<td>Silke Spahr</td>
<td>Breite Strasse 48-50</td>
<td>+49-92-1 92 06 90</td>
<td>+49-92-21 9 20 69 69</td>
<td><a href="mailto:silke.spahr@germanunited.com">silke.spahr@germanunited.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kinowelt International GmbH</td>
<td>Stelios Zannis, Anja Uecker</td>
<td>Karl-Tauchnitz-Strasse 10</td>
<td>+49-3 41 35 59 60</td>
<td>+49-3 41 35 59 41 9</td>
<td><a href="mailto:szannis@kinowelt.de">szannis@kinowelt.de</a>, <a href="mailto:auecker@kinowelt.de">auecker@kinowelt.de</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kinowelt International GmbH Futura Film Weltvertrieb</td>
<td></td>
<td>Oostenburger Strasse 10</td>
<td>+49-3 41 35 59 60</td>
<td>+49-3 41 35 59 41 9</td>
<td><a href="mailto:szannis@kinowelt.de">szannis@kinowelt.de</a>, <a href="mailto:auecker@kinowelt.de">auecker@kinowelt.de</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Media Luna Entertainment GmbH &amp; Co.KG</td>
<td>Ida Martins</td>
<td>Hochstadtenstrasse 1-3</td>
<td>+49-89-59 85 85-0</td>
<td>+49-89-59 85 85-20</td>
<td><a href="mailto:loy.arnold@transitfilm.de">loy.arnold@transitfilm.de</a>, <a href="mailto:mark.gruenthal@transitfilm.de">mark.gruenthal@transitfilm.de</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Progress Film-Verleih GmbH</td>
<td>Christel Jansen</td>
<td>Immanuelkirchstrasse 14b</td>
<td>+49-30-24 00 32 25</td>
<td>+49-30-24 00 32 22</td>
<td><a href="mailto:c.jansen@progress-film.de">c.jansen@progress-film.de</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Road Sales Gmbh</td>
<td>Frank Graf</td>
<td>Chausseestrasse 8</td>
<td>+49-91-1-479 36 66</td>
<td>+49-91-1-479 26 58</td>
<td><a href="mailto:graf@road-movies.de">graf@road-movies.de</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOLA Media GmbH</td>
<td>Solveig Langeland</td>
<td>Osmunstrasse 17</td>
<td>+49-7 11-4 79 36 66</td>
<td>+49-7 11-4 79 26 58</td>
<td><a href="mailto:post@sola-media.net">post@sola-media.net</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TELEPOOL GmbH</td>
<td>Wolfram Skowronnek</td>
<td>Sonnenstrasse 21</td>
<td>+49-89-55 87 62 29</td>
<td>+49-89-55 87 62 29</td>
<td><a href="mailto:cinepool@telepool.de">cinepool@telepool.de</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transit Film Gmbh</td>
<td>Loy W. Arnold, Mark Gruenthal</td>
<td>Dachauer Strasse 35</td>
<td>+49-89-59 85 85-0</td>
<td>+49-89-59 85 85-20</td>
<td><a href="mailto:loy.arnold@transitfilm.de">loy.arnold@transitfilm.de</a>, <a href="mailto:mark.gruenthal@transitfilm.de">mark.gruenthal@transitfilm.de</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>uni media film gmbh</td>
<td>Irene Vogt, Michael Waldleitner</td>
<td>Bavariafilmplatz 7</td>
<td>+49-89-59 58 46</td>
<td>+49-89-59 58 46</td>
<td><a href="mailto:info@unimediafilm.com">info@unimediafilm.com</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
features
television
documentaries
shorts

www.german-films.de
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, since 1966 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, new shareholders came on board the Export-Union which from then on continued operations under its present name: German Films Service + Marketing GmbH.

**Shareholders** are the Association of German Feature Film Producers, the Association of New German Feature Film Producers, the Association of German Film Exporters, the German Federal Film Board (FFA), the Association of German Television Producers, the Stiftung Deutsche Kinemathek, the German Documentary Association, FilmFernsehFonds Bayern and Filmstiftung NRW representing the seven main regional film funds, and the German Short Film Association.

Members of the **advisory board** are: Alfred Huermer (chairman), Peter Dinges, Antonio Exacoustos, Dr. Klaus Schaefer, Ulrike Schauz, and Michael Weber.

German Films itself has **14 members of staff**: Christian Dorsch, managing director Mariette Rissenbeek, public relations/deputy managing director Petra Bader, office manager Kim Behrendt, PR assistant Sandra Buchta, project coordinator/documentary film Myriam Gauff, project coordinator Simon Goehler, trainee Christine Harrasser, assistant to the managing director Angela Hawkins, publications & website editor Barbie Heusinger, project coordinator/distribution support Nicole Kaufmann, project coordinator Michaela Kowal, accounts Martin Scheuring, project coordinator/short film Konstanze Welz, project coordinator/television

In addition, German Films has nine foreign representatives in eight countries.

German Films’ budget of presently €5.4 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, FilmFoerderung Hamburg, Filmstiftung NRW, Medienboard Berlin-Brandenburg, MFG Baden-Wuerttemberg, Mitteldeutsche Medienfoerderung, MSH Schleswig-Holstein and Nordmedia) make a financial contribution – currently amounting to €360,000 – towards the work of German Films.

German Films is a founding member of the European Film Promotion, a network of 27 European film organizations (including Unifrance, Swiss Films, Austrian Film Commission, Holland Film, among others) with similar responsibilities to those of German Films. The organization, with its headquarters in Hamburg, aims to develop and realize joint projects for the presentation of European films on an international level.

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

- Close cooperation with major international film festivals, including Berlin, Cannes, Venice, Toronto, Locarno, San Sebastian, Montreal, Karlovy Vary, Moscow, Tribeca, Shanghai, Rotterdam, San Francisco, Sydney, Goeteborg, Warsaw, Thessaloniki, Rome, and Turin, among others
- Organization of umbrella stands for German sales companies and producers at international television and film markets
- Providing advice and information for representatives of the international press and buyers from the fields of cinema, video, and television
- Providing advice and information for German filmmakers and press on international festivals, conditions of participation, and German films being shown
- Organization of the annual NEXT GENERATION short film program, which presents a selection of shorts by students of German film schools and is premiered every year at Cannes
- Publication of informational literature about current German films and the German film industry (German Films Quarterly), as well as international market analyses and special festival brochures
- An Internet website (www.german-films.de) offering information about new German films, a film archive, as well as 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 European arthouse distributors and buyers of German films
- Selective financial Distribution Support for the foreign releases of German films
- On behalf of the association Rendez-vous franco-allemands du cinéma, organization with Unifrance of the annual German-French film meeting

In association and cooperation with its shareholders, German Films works to promote feature, documentary, television and short films.
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The film commitment of the BMW Group.

For the past 70 years the BMW Group has been actively supportive in the field of cinema. Special attention has been paid to inspiring and worthwhile film projects and the promotion of outstanding talent both national and international.

Please feel free to send your film projects and ideas to us at the following email address: film.placement@bmwgroup.com

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