

GFAQ

GERMAN FILMS QUARTERLY

ISSUE 3-2021

WITH ARTICLES AND PORTRAITS ON
**DIVERSITY IN GERMAN FILMMAKING #3 - TV STATIONS,
SCREENWRITERS' AND DRAMATURGES' ASSOCIATIONS**
DIRECTORS **ALISON KUHN & FARAZ SHARIAT**
PRODUCER **MAITE WOKÖCK**
ACTOR **NOAH SAAVEDRA**

german
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Congratulations!
The **Ernst Lubitsch Prize 2021** is being awarded to

SIMON VERHOEVEN

for his comedy **Nightlife**.
*The ceremony is expected to take place
in Berlin later this summer.*

Berlin native **Ernst Lubitsch** emigrated to the United States in 1922. Wishing to pay homage to his friend and mentor, Billy Wilder originated the idea for this honor. Thus, the **Ernst Lubitsch Prize** was born and has been awarded yearly since 1958.

Previous winners include Ladislao Vajda, Gert Fröbe, Cornelia Froboess, Mario Adorf, Elisabeth Bergner, Marianne Sägebrecth, Percy Adlon, Katja von Garnier, Tom Tykwer, Dani Levy, Til Schweiger, Mel Brooks, Peter Simonischek and Katharina Thalbach.



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Dear Readers,

The pandemic is not yet fully over, but our hopes for a halfway to normal summer season seem to have been fulfilled, as the film festivals from August to October are planned as physical events. Maybe some of you are even holding this issue in your hands on the Piazza Grande or at the Lido, enjoying the special atmosphere and the interaction with colleagues that has been denied us, not only in the film industry, for so long.

In spring, there were signs of a slight easing of the situation, so that the Festivals of German Films in Australia, Madrid and Rome, organised by German Films, could be held on location in the film metropolises and with an audience, except for minor cutbacks. They have also shown that cinema is slowly but surely returning and along with it, our task and desire to make German filmmaking visible internationally.

There are high expectations on both sides: Following the cinema openings, filmmakers and cinema operators – in view of the many pending premieres of finished titles – hope for loyal viewers who, as soon as a safe return is possible, will shift their film consumption back into our cinemas. Audiences, on the other hand, expect a unique cultural experience that they cannot find in their living rooms or in other forms of entertainment; one that only cinema can and, more than ever, should offer them. Only time and the still tense global situation will show whether these expectations can be fulfilled.

The line-up in Locarno provides a strong start to the festival summer: 20 German films and co-productions are represented in various sections. Among the films competing for a Leopard are ZEROS AND ONES (DE/UK/US) by Abel Ferrara, in the main competition, and Sabrina Sarabi's adaptation of the novel NO ONE'S WITH THE CALVES, celebrating its world premiere in the Concorso Cineasti del presente. There are also several German films in competition in Karlovy Vary, including e.g., LE PRINCE by Lisa Bierwirth or NÖ by Dietrich Brüggemann. Meanwhile, an exciting announcement came from Toronto: In the Special Presentations section, the audience in September can look forward to Maria Schrader's I'M YOUR MAN.

We are eagerly anticipating things to come.

But first of all, I hope you enjoy the new GFQ issue and find fresh inspiration, including from the continuation of our series on diversity in the German film industry, many new productions, and exciting portraits.

It still sounds a bit odd, but I'm sure we'll see you at one of the upcoming festivals!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Simone Baumann".

Yours, Simone Baumann
Managing Director

°future frames

generation next of european cinema



Austria
Home is Where the Scars are From
by Mathias Seebacher



Belgium
Versailles
by Hyun Lories



Denmark
True Mirror
by Glen Bay Grant



Hungary
Szeurum
by Marcell Farkas



Poland
The Cracks
by Magdalena Gajewska



Estonia
My Dear Corpses
by German Golub



Germany
I Am
by Jerry Hoffmann



Iceland
All Dogs Die
by Nína Pálmadóttir



Slovak Republic
Rheum
by Kateřina Hroníková



Spain
Silent Club
by Irene Albanell Mellado

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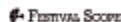
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DIVERSITY IN GERMAN FILMMAKING #3 –

TV STATIONS, SCREENWRITERS' AND DRAMATURGES' ASSOCIATIONS

Last year, German Films set itself the task of assessing the German film and television scene in regard to efforts towards more diversity and the desire for reform in the industry. With this purpose in mind, a separate survey with a comprehensive catalogue of topics was launched at many different institutions. In the previous two issues of GFQ, the standpoints of agencies, casting associations and universities have already been examined in more detail, and the results of the online survey of the alliance #VielfaltIm-Film (diversity in film) also presented. 6000 filmmakers from 440 professions took part in this survey. Many complained about experiencing a lack of inclusion, as well as discrimination in front of and behind the camera.

The will of all those involved is clear, reverberating at least as lip service: More diversity! But what sounds so easy is a difficult topic in the German entertainment industry today. For the current issue, German Films contacted TV stations, and associations of screenwriters and dramaturges on the subject, asking them to have their say. How do you get more gender equality, more colour, more participation, more perspectives into moving images – and show fewer stereotypes? Perhaps by having a gay protagonist confronted by all kinds of prejudices about his supposedly family-unfriendly, wild existence, shout out: “I wish everyone would party, flirt and fuck more!”

Certainly, that is what happens in the series ALL YOU NEED, produced by the historically first German TV channel, ARD. This public broadcaster, like so many comparable ones in Europe, is financed by licence fees and consequently bears the weight of a noble obligation, a social mandate.

When ARD launches a dramedy series like ALL YOU NEED, which is about four gay men in Berlin, it's worth talking about in Germany, not yet something that can be taken for granted. Christoph Pellander, the editorial director of ARD's own production company Degeto, explains in the follow-up: “Our new series, planned primarily as a media library offering, addresses a younger audience for the first time, and in an episodic format that is new to us. In five

20-minute episodes, we tell the varied stories of our four protagonists: diverse and edgy, modern and with a finger on the pulse of the times.”

The second German TV channel, ZDF, is trying its hand at something comparable. Recently, it not only put an “instant fiction series” entitled LOVING HER into its media library, but also broadcast the programme on its special interest channel ZDFneo. Each of the six episodes is up to 15 minutes long and peppered with topical references. The focus is on Hanna. Because of Covid-19, she can't find a job after graduating. She is forced to move back in with her parents and recapitulates what has happened so far in her life; to be more precise in her love life, with all the women who have influenced her so much.

The author of LOVING HER, the adaptation of a Dutch series, is Marlene Melchior. “When I myself first fell in love with a girl as a teenager, I missed series, stories and narratives about queer women and their lives,” she says. “Beyond novels, I often found it hard to identify with the portrayal of characters and their relationships in mainstream media.” So now she has the opportunity to approach things differently. Her main character Hanna has been cast by director Leonie Krippendorff with German-Iranian actress, Banafshe Hourmazdi.

ZDF also responded to German Films' catalogue of questions and took a very differentiated and self-critical position, including on the question of any unspoken difficulties that its own institution struggles with. “Occupied management positions remain occupied,” it says. Where there is little fluctuation, young, diverse and female people get very few opportunities. In addition, high demands on formal qualifications are often exclusion criteria, making it difficult for anyone with a more unconventional biography.

Nevertheless, change is emerging in many places in traditional German television. In the cosmos of the German crime thriller icon, TATORT, for example, which has been airing in Germany's living rooms for four decades of Sundays now. In the latest TATORT episode produced by NDR (the ARD regional office of the North German Broadcasting Corporation) with the working title

SCHATTENLEBEN (SHADOW LIFE), a so-called inclusion rider was used for the first time. The initiative came from director, Mia Spengler. She is a frequent advocate for the issue of diversity – and not only in the numerous panel discussions held on the subject at industry events. The aim of the inclusion rider concept, which originated in Hollywood, is to work with as diverse a cast and crew as possible.

The state broadcasters of Bavarian and Hessian Broadcasting, BR and hr, also participated in the German Films survey. In 2014, Bayerischer Rundfunk (BR) signed the “Diversity Charter”, a voluntary commitment to promote diversity and tolerance, fairness and appreciation of all people in working life. BR regards monitoring as an important way to live up to this pretension: In the programming field of feature film series, therefore, characters are collected on the ratio of female to male protagonists. This applies to all continuous formats, fictional as well as documentary, including the Bavarian daily series DAHOAM IS DAHOAM, the portrait series LEBENSLINIEN and the weekly cinema programme KINOKINO. Indicating their efforts to promote diversity and intersectionality, they point proudly to early feature film co-productions such as TRANSPAPA or the old people’s flat-sharing comedy WIR SIND DIE NEUEN.

This year, BR won the Civis Prize with its TV film HERREN. This prize rewards examples of integration and diversity in the media. Films were submitted from more than 20 European countries. In HERREN, all three protagonists are POC, people of colour. Meanwhile, BR also outlines how it intends to achieve more gender equality behind the camera: in eight-part series, for example, men and women take equal turns on the director’s chair, so that four episodes are directed by women and four by men.

The Hessian Broadcasting Corporation (hr) signed the “Diversity Charter” in 2019. It has established a “diversity management” and inscribed the goal “younger, more diverse, more digital” into its corporate vision. The management also decided in 2019 to use gender-equal language in the company, and in early 2021 to use it in their programmes. The selection procedure

for traineeships has been adapted by hr, and it participates in the initiative “Klischeefrei” (stereotype-free) for open development in the profession. In addition, the station points out that it employs twice as many people with disabilities as the statutory quota requires.

But hr also recognises some difficulties: “The simultaneity of many current transformation processes” is affecting the media sector as much as any other: The exponential changes in technology and media behaviour, the multitude of new playout channels, the dismantling of hierarchical thinking. All these changes are also leading to an increase in uncertainties. In turn, this fosters defensive reactions. hr’s answers to the German Films survey point out that this is also true in face of efforts for more diversity. However, the majority of its employees are still very interested in the topic.

Even if the social mandate of private and pay-TV broadcasters is less clearly formulated than that of the public broadcasters, they also acknowledge an obligation when it comes to diversity. And they are aware – by their very definition – of the economic potential of the topic. Elke Walthelm, Executive Vice President Content of Sky & Managing Director NBC Universal Global Networks Germany, for example, says: “Along a clearly defined roadmap and with our pop-up channels on focal points, it is our goal to raise more awareness for topics such as LGBTQAI+, strong women, age or racism. In addition, we want to reflect diversity more strongly in our own productions in future, for example in the composition of their casts, and to define clear guidelines in this respect when purchasing external content. Of course, we are still at the beginning in some aspects.”

The newer the player on the German television market, the more self-evidently the topic of diversity appears to be integrated into the corporate concept. The streaming platform Joyn, which also produces its own content, was launched in 2019. Joyn works with a “code of conduct” that regulates how its employees treat each other as well as their efforts to create appropriate content. However, the company occasionally finds itself in conflict with the market in the entertainment sector. Content as suitable for the masses as

possible, with high TV ratings and call-up figures, is set against content currently more likely to be found in the arthouse sector: explicitly diverse, for example. Established concepts and names are often still used because of a supposedly lower economic risk.

Because this mechanism is universally known, many filmmakers see the public broadcasters, mainly financed by quasi-taxes, as having an obligation in matters of diversity. Some, including the private TV competition, would like to see more than voluntary declarations of intent from these state-funded broadcasters. But in its German Films survey the German Screenwriters Association (VDD) sums up what the creative scene thinks about too much regulation: "Obligation sounds very coercive. Voluntariness goes down better with creatives. Checklists may provide food for thought regarding diversity, but they are only an indirect and very formal impulse for the actual challenge on the part of the authors." Diversity can only come via long-term expansion of the narrative radius – and if the corsets of the fixed television formats that currently have to be implemented are loosened. Because this is how what was once different, crazy, wild and deviant is often made to fit in.

In order to break this vicious circle of expectations and creatives' ability to adapt, the industry is attempting to help itself. Authors and the ARD meet for "dialogue platforms", for example, hosting a search for new approaches. However, the Covid-19 pandemic has also put the brakes on positive approaches, the authors complain. It is especially important to revive them now. The VDD is campaigning intensively for an amendment to funding for the development of new material. This is because in Germany, even in the cinema sector, it is so much influenced by the TV broadcasters.

It is obvious how much the pandemic and its effects have hit the industry. Not least if you take a look at the schedule of an institution like the Association for Film and Television Dramaturgy VeDRA. This association – also interviewed by German Films – had to postpone its "Film Material Development Day" in 2020 to November 2021 and hopes it can be realised on this new date. But the current summer issue of the association's own

magazine, "Wendepunkt", already focuses on the ever-present theme: "Diversity in the development of material". The fact that the dramaturges have already dealt extensively with the key facets of their leitmotif is emphasised by their reference to the many blind spots still existing on the thematic charts of German film and television: "Homeless people, old people, also older migrant women, people with low incomes or those who live in the urban peripheries, enlightened people who are nevertheless religious" – all these and many more would have stories to offer that are as yet untold or at least far too infrequently.

This (market) gap should not be open for much longer in Germany, therefore. At least this is what we may hope. Start-ups like the "Office for Diverse Storytelling" aim to advocate such progress. The two authors Leticia Milano and Johanna Faltinat launched the project in 2019. Since then, they have been offering training, lectures and dramaturgical advice for creatives. And so, in the best-case scenario, the rigidities of the film and television world are being loosened in several places: in the broadcasting stations, among the promoters, the makers, and the viewers themselves.

In the next issue of GFQ, which will be published in autumn, this development will be monitored further. We will also be presenting the answers given by directors' and producers' associations as well as film funders to German Films' catalogue of questions.

Susanne Hermanski

A close-up portrait of a young woman with long, dark brown hair and light green eyes. She is looking directly at the camera with a neutral expression. The background is a blurred, textured wall. A dark horizontal bar is overlaid at the bottom of the image, containing white text.

QUESTIONING POWER STRUCTURES

A PORTRAIT OF DIRECTOR ALISON KUHN

In spring 2018, Alison Kuhn was confronted with a traumatic memory. Then 22 years old, the German-Vietnamese was in the midst of entrance exams for the directing programme at the Film University Babelsberg KONRAD WOLF. But one of the applicants recognised her from a context that she had been repressing up until then: Kuhn also works as an actress, and three years earlier she had attended an audition that went far beyond what might be considered tolerable. In front of the camera, the director and his team harassed the applicants with violent and sexual assaults – all under the pretext of art. Although Kuhn had been spared the worst excesses at that time, the chance conversation stirred up those “super unpleasant experiences”. Not least because she found out that the casting recordings were going to be exploited in a film. But she told herself, “If I manage to get accepted here, I’ll make a film out of it. That gave me the strength for the rest of the application week.”

In spring 2019, therefore, she brought together five actresses who had been particularly viciously attacked for her documentary *THE CASE YOU*. In a theatre auditorium, they set about working through the events on various cinematic levels. With enormous emotional authenticity and simultaneous formal reduction, which directed a clear focus onto the protagonists’ emotional lives, she asked sensitive questions and got the young women to reconstruct the events of that time. Thanks to the intensity of her work, she impressed the jury of the German Documentary Film Award, among others, and they presented her with a prize in the category ‘Art and Culture’ this year. She also succeeded in winning the megahertz Student Award 2021 at the 36th DOK.fest in Munich.

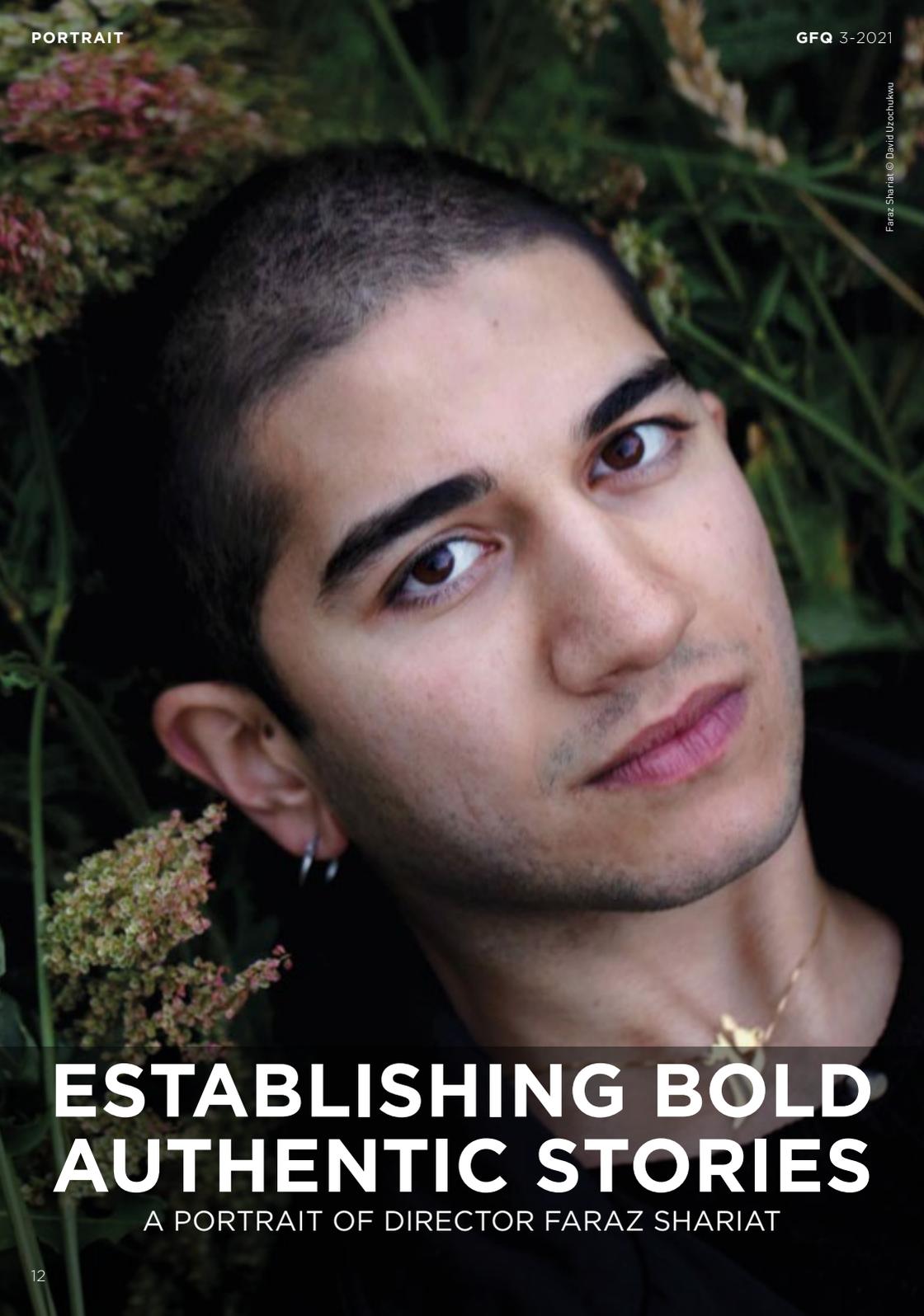
At the very beginning, however, there was an idealistic dream. Growing up in a village north of Saarbrücken, the local cinema offered her a perspective on a bigger universe: “When I stepped out of the projection room, the world was suddenly different”. The desire to direct a film arose early on, therefore. She shot – and edited – her first film on her father’s camcorder, but it was never finished. At 15, she completed a directing internship in Berlin, where she was asked to speak a monologue in front of the camera: “Then, some-

thing happened to me psychologically, and I wanted to explore it further.” And so first, she completed a training course in acting from 2013 to 2015. The experiences of the following years were to shape her view of the industry in particular and social encrustations in general. Although she filmed with directors such as Jan Schomburg (series *RABENMÜTTER*) and won the Federal Prize for Young Poetry ‚lyrix‘ in 2017 with one of her poems, she found herself repeatedly confronted by absurd prejudices. In auditions for daughter roles, she was always eliminated in the second round, “because my ethnic origin did not explain itself”. And when she then applied to study directing, she heard voices like, “you’ll have a particularly hard time there as a woman.”

She has proven all the doubters wrong with her short films, which were screened at the Max Ophüls Festival, among others, and her screenplays that have put her on the shortlist for the German Young Screenwriters Award and earned her a prestigious grant, the ‘Stipendium des Deutschen Volkes’.

THE CASE YOU, which has been shown at festivals from IDFA in Amsterdam to Encounters in Cape Town, marks a new stage in her career. “How power structures emerge and become entrenched” has emerged as a central theme for Kuhn. This is also the subject of her graduation film, a modern adaptation of Rainer Maria Rilke’s novella “The Gym Class”, which she is preparing currently as a broadcasting co-production. Even if she is aware that “hierarchies are necessary on the set”, she still attempts to break down those structures. For example, by emphasising a balanced gender ratio in her teams or “meeting actors eye-to-eye” during castings. As a director, Kuhn stands for an era in which gender stereotypes and the abuse of power could be overcome. She has a tool for this, which also played a decisive role in the filming of *THE CASE YOU*: “Communication is the key. You can talk about everything; you should talk about everything. That’s what the craft of directing is all about.”

Rüdiger Sturm

A close-up portrait of a young man with short dark hair, looking slightly upwards and to the right. He has a slight smile and is wearing a small hoop earring and a gold necklace. The background is filled with green foliage and small pinkish flowers.

ESTABLISHING BOLD AUTHENTIC STORIES

A PORTRAIT OF DIRECTOR FARAZ SHARIAT

The future of German cinema? Faraz Shariat prefers people not to use such lofty expressions. "To claim that something like that isn't flattering would be a lie, of course," laughs the director, who was born in Cologne in 1994. "And for a distributor, such statements are a real gift, since they can be used to market a film ideally." But he does not wish to take on the role of the innovator bringing salvation that was attributed to him recently in the context of his debut film *NO HARD FEELINGS*.

"I'm neither the future nor totally alone in the wilderness here; my work is anchored in various traditions and simply building on decades of groundwork," he stresses emphatically. "For example, there has been a very active Turkish-German film industry since the first waves of guest workers, and in the nineties, there were cinematic positions already linking queerness and migration. And elsewhere, for a long time the Maxim Gorki Theatre has been doing important work for the German cultural scene by drawing attention to post-migrant perspectives. These past achievements are made to disappear when people say I'm the first German filmmaker working in that direction."

In any event, there is no denying that *NO HARD FEELINGS*, which won the First Steps Award in autumn 2019 and then celebrated its official world premiere at the Berlinale in 2020, caused quite a stir and generated a lot of enthusiasm. The autobiographically inspired story about a young gay man with Iranian roots and a brother and sister who fled from Iran to Germany was impressive, not only for its visually assured realisation. The protagonists also made it an exception in the German film landscape, where queer and/or non-white people are not yet at the focus of enough stories.

Shariat's film, realised independently of the usual film school networks after he had studied applied cultural sciences at the University of Hildesheim, struck a nerve. *NO HARD FEELINGS* not only won the prestigious Teddy Award at the Berlinale: When it was released in Germany in September 2020, it also attracted more than 30,000 viewers in just seven weeks. "Many cinema owners contacted our distributor to say how many young

people and non-whites attended the screenings," the director recalls. "We really brought an audience into the cinemas that wouldn't normally go. And that was in the middle of a pandemic."

By "we" Shariat means the collective *Jünglinge*, which he founded and now runs together with Paulina Lorenz and Raquel Dukpa. Casting, material development, production – in all aspects of filmmaking, the trio and their collaborators are dedicated to perspectives beyond the heterosexist, standardised view, focusing instead on queer, anti-racist themes. Currently, the company sees itself primarily as a label that develops a lot of material and then works together with other production companies. In the long term, however, the aim is to realise projects independently, as well.

One of their role models is Komplizen Film and Maren Ade, who is currently mentoring Shariat. "I'm very interested right now in how you can manage to maintain your own artistic practice as a director and at the same time work as a producer and set up a production company," he summarises. "Maren is an exciting role model in that context."

Since winning the Teddy for *NO HARD FEELINGS*, he has been working with a British agency and has introduced himself to dozens of potential clients. At the time of our interview, he was directing three episodes of the new HBO/Sky series *THE BABY* in London, citing films like *GET OUT* or *PARASITE* as inspirations, "super political, but not with a sledgehammer, absolutely entertaining as well". However, despite some frustrating experiences with presenting bolder ideas and cool genre experiments, this is not intended to signify a turn away from the German market: at the same time, *Jünglinge* is developing another three series and three feature films.

Patrick Heidmann



CREATING FANTASTIC WORLDS

A PORTRAIT OF PRODUCER MAITE WOKÖCK, TELESCOPE ANIMATION

It was all something of a coincidence that producer Maite Woköck should come to specialise in animation. She had originally wanted to work in children's films after training as a script editor for that sector, but the world of animation beckoned when she found her story ideas more at home there than in live-action settings. "What fascinates me about animation is that you can create fantastic worlds without any limitations," Maite explains, adding that "there is often something really magical about the stories being told."

Working then as a producer and script editor for the Hamburg-based animation studio Ulysses Filmproduktion from 2007-2015, she acquired, developed and financed numerous international co-productions, including the animation feature films NIKO – THE WAY TO THE STARS, NIKO 2 – LITTLE BROTHER, BIG HERO, OOPS! NOAH IS GONE..., and RICHARD THE STORK.

In 2016, Maite then established her own company Ella Film to develop and finance feature films and TV productions for children. The boutique outfit's first project, Caroline Origer's 3D animated feature MY FAIRY TROUBLEMAKER, had been developed as a project during the EAVE year-long producers workshop and is currently in production as a co-production with Luxembourg-based Fabrique d'Images and SERU Animation in Baden-Württemberg.

In addition, Maite has served as a freelance producer on the projects of other production companies such as Akkord Film for its ZDF animation series PETRONELLA APPLEWITCH which is based on Sabine Städing's bestselling children's book series and has a feature film version in the works.

An exciting new chapter in her career was then launched in 2018 when she joined forces with Reza Memari, co-director of RICHARD THE STORK, to found the Berlin- and Hamburg-based trans-media company Telescope Animation to develop and produce animated feature films, series, games, XR and interactive books for a global family market. "I liked the idea of the company being built on different pillars so that we aren't just relying on working only in the area of feature films to be a sustainable business," Maite recalls.

Telescope's first project THE LAST WHALE SINGER is described as "an epic underwater story universe about a family of humpback whales who are whale singers, the chosen protectors of the oceans and their inhabitants. Gifted with mystical singing abilities, Whale Singers inherit special powers that allow them to heal, freeze or heat the water."

"Reza and I had initially been working on the idea for a feature film, but then thought that it would be good to expand it to a game because his background is in games," Maite says. "So we decided to create a storyworld that isn't just based on the feature film, but is one that is completely new one complementing that of the feature film."

"We are following the latest technological possibilities for THE LAST WHALE SINGER which we would like to produce in Unreal Engine," she explains. "Storytelling and technology are really intertwined here because now you can not only think in terms of a film or a series, but also look at how to tell a story on different platforms."

Funding for the 9 million Euros feature film version of THE LAST WHALE SINGER has come through the "Outstanding Films for Children" initiative from diverse partners. Production is scheduled to kick off from the middle of next year for the film to be ready for global release in 2024 at the same time as the launch of the video game on different consoles, with the 26-episode series to follow a year later.

Meanwhile, Maite and this ambitious project were put in the spotlight when she was invited to represent Germany as the first ever animation producer to participate in European Film Promotion's Producers on the Move initiative in Cannes this year. "It had been my dream since starting out in the industry to take part in this programme," Maite says. "I didn't think that they would take me as an animation producer, but it was interesting to see that quite a few of this year's line-up had been involved in producing animation shorts in the past. And what's more, there were producers there interested in becoming partners on THE LAST WHALE SINGER."

Martin Blaney



AN UNUSUAL CAREER

A PORTRAIT OF ACTOR NOAH SAAVEDRA

The path to success in acting doesn't always have to begin as a child actor or in a school theatre club. As Noah Saavedra's career shows, you can also stumble upon your vocation more by chance – and things can still take off quickly.

Actually, the Austrian – who grew up in Vienna although his mother is from Chile – wanted to become a kindergarten teacher or a carpenter. He wasn't really sure, as he recalls: "I kind of wanted to create art and be an artist. But actually, I didn't know exactly what that meant, or how to go about it." The decisive nudge came from an acquaintance: "She recommended that I go to the Junge Burg. That's a programme of workshops for young people at the Burgtheater, and she said it was something for the undecided, for people who hadn't yet found their way. Because you get a taste of several fields: carpentry in stage-set construction, writing in dramaturgy. Or indeed acting."

During that time at the Burg, a so-called "About Me" video was made, which fell into the hands of casting agent Eva Roth. "That was really lucky," says Saavedra in retrospect, because this coincidence had far-reaching consequences. He was not a suitable candidate at the first audition Roth arranged for him, but when she sent him to a second directly afterwards, without any preparation at all, it proved decisive. "I had no idea what to expect, first confusing the director with the lighting technician, and then taking off my shoes to combat my nervousness with more grounding," says the actor, born in 1991, with a laugh as he looks back on his first major film role in *EGON SCHIELE: DEATH AND THE MAIDEN*.

"When I got the part, it turned into a year and a half of preparation, during which I first learned how to stand in front of the camera and how to approach a role. The director Dieter Berner was also an actor and teacher, and he had quite a few tools available that he passed on to me," Saavedra continues. "Suddenly, I was playing the title role in a film that premiered in 44 countries. I felt like I had skipped ten steps on my journey as an actor right at the start."

However, Saavedra didn't want to rest on his laurels after being catapulted from nothing into the film industry with *EGON SCHIELE*, (which earned

him both the Austrian Romy Film Prize and a New Faces Award). In 2015, he left Vienna and began studying at the renowned Ernst Busch Academy of Dramatic Arts in Berlin. "I wanted to learn the classical craft to give myself a different foundation," he explains, and cites his colleague Nicholas Ofczarek as a role model because he acts in a lot of films but has always stayed in the theatre as well.

Saavedra, who has been a member of the ensemble at the Residenztheater in Munich since 2019, also intends to pursue a twin-track career for the time being. He has appeared regularly in front of the camera in recent years, for Xaver Böhm's *O BEAUTIFUL NIGHT*, which premiered at the Berlinale, as well as for leading roles in series such as *BAD BANKS* and *FREUD*. In 2020 he also appeared in *AND TOMORROW THE ENTIRE WORLD* by Julia von Heinz, the German Oscar submission. Anti-fascist commune meets the glamorous high-end film world, is how the actor describes the moment of the world premiere in Venice: "The filming was low- to no-budget, and now we were standing there in our designer clothes on the red carpet. We had to laugh because it was such an unreal situation. And then at the screening Cate Blanchett sat next to us and gave us the thumbs up. It was like being in a fantasy world."

Saavedra has long since attracted international attention. Filming is now complete on a first leading English-language role in *EVERYTHING WILL CHANGE* by Martin Persiel, and two more films in English and a French production could well be added soon. He certainly wants to remain true to his resolution to work only on stories that touch him; ones that he himself would like to watch. In the future, he can imagine writing his own scripts and directing. "It definitely appeals to me, but I don't quite have the courage yet," he tells me in farewell. "It's not the time yet." But that doesn't mean that chance won't step in again.

Patrick Heidmann



© 2021 Weydemann Bros. / Constanze Schmitt & David Schmitt

IVIE WIE IVIE

PRECIOUS IVIE

Ivie is a graduate with African roots and in search of steady employment as a teacher following an internship. "Schoko" (literally: "Choco"), as she's known to her friends, lives in Leipzig with her best friend Anne and is working on a temporary basis for her ex-boyfriend Ingo at Bondi Beach Solarium. Suddenly, her younger half-sister Naomi from Berlin shows up at the front door. Ivie had no idea she ever existed. More confusing still is her news: Their father has died in Africa. All of a sudden, the salient question is as to whether she will travel to Senegal with Naomi for the funeral. But first of all, the two of them have to get to know each other. Ivie has the feeling she suddenly represents a culture she doesn't even know with a nickname she cannot accept anymore!

GENRE Drama **YEAR OF PRODUCTION** 2021 **DIRECTOR** Sarah Blaßkiewitz **SCREENPLAY** Sarah Blaßkiewitz **CINEMATOGRAPHY** Constanze Schmitt, David Schmitt **CAST** Haley Louise Jones, Lorna Ishema, Anne Haug, Maximilian Brauer, Anneke Kim Sarnau **PRODUCERS** Milena Klemke, Yvonne Wellie, Jakob D. Weydemann, Jonas Weydemann **PRODUCTION COMPANY** Weydemann Bros. **RUN-TIME** 112 min **LANGUAGE** German, English **FESTIVALS** Munich International Film Festival

SALES Weydemann Bros., Jonas Weydemann
 ivie@weydemannbros.com • www.weydemannbros.com



© Westside Filmproduktion

LAURAS STERN

Laura's Star

After moving to the big city, Laura misses her old home very much. She feels lonely, does not like the new apartment and finding friends is not the easiest. When she watches a tiny star fall from the sky one night, Laura goes off to retrieve it. She comforts it and carefully treats its broken-off piece with a band-aid. A magical friendship between Laura and the star begins.

GENRE Children & Youth **YEAR OF PRODUCTION** 2021 **DIRECTOR** Joya Thome **SCREENPLAY** Piet de Rycker, Alexander Lindner, Thilo Graf Rothkirch, Michael Mädler, Joya Thome, Claudia Seibl **CINEMATOGRAPHY** Daniela Knapp **CAST** Emilia Kowalski, Michel Koch, Luise Heyer, Ludwig Trepte, Jonas May **PRODUCERS** Maya Gräfin Rothkirch, Christian Becker **CO-PRODUCER** Joern Radel **PRODUCTION COMPANIES** Westside Filmproduktion GmbH, Rothkirch Cartoon-Film GmbH, Warner Bros. Film Productions Germany, in co-production with Animationsfabrik GmbH **RUNTIME** 79 min **LANGUAGE** German

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NIEMAND IST BEI DEN KÄLBERN

NO ONE'S WITH THE CALVES

It's the height of summer in the middle of nowhere in Mecklenburg, Germany. Five houses, one bus stop, cows and nothing but fields. 24-year-old Christin (Saskia Rosendahl) lives on the farm of her long-term boyfriend Jan, 25 (Rick Okon). The exciting post-reunification years that defined her childhood are long gone.

Her relationship is loveless. Her father drinks. Christin, too, keeps the cherry liqueur close at hand, tucked under her car seat. In the shimmering heat of summer, time seems to stand still – that is, until 46-year-old wind energy engineer Klaus (Godehard Giese) arrives from Hamburg and sets the world spinning again.

GENRE Drama **YEAR OF PRODUCTION** 2021 **DIRECTOR** Sabrina Sarabi **SCREENPLAY** Sabrina Sarabi (based on the novel by Alina Herbing) **CINEMATOGRAPHY** Max Preiss **CAST** Saskia Rosendahl, Rick Okon, Godehard Giese, Elisa Schlott, Enno Trebs **PRODUCERS** Milena Klemke, Yvonne Wellie, Jakob D. Weydemann, Jonas Weydemann **PRODUCTION COMPANY** Weydemann Bros. **RUNTIME** 113 min **LANGUAGE** German, English **FESTIVALS** Locarno Film Festival

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ROTZBUB

SNOTTY BOY

In 1960s Siegheilkirchen, a small town in the Austrian hinterland that is steeped in reactionary, ultra-Catholic attitudes, the son of a hard-working innkeeper – known as Snotty Boy to all and sundry – is at odds with the narrow-minded confines of his home town. But his unstoppable talent for drawing gives him an outlet for his discontent as well as entertaining his school mates and exposing the town's bigwigs in all their ridiculousness to a collective orgy of unashamed laughter, thus saving his beloved, the ravishingly pretty Mariolina, from malicious persecution by a handful of political die-hards.

GENRE Animation **YEAR OF PRODUCTION** 2021 **DIRECTORS** Marcus H. Rosenmüller, Santiago López Jover **SCREENPLAY** Martin Ambrosch **CINEMATOGRAPHY** Santiago López Jover **CAST** Markus Freistätter, Gerti Drassl **PRODUCERS** Josef Aichholzer, Ernst Geyer **CO-PRODUCERS** Josef Reidinger, Antonio Exacoustos **PRODUCTION COMPANIES** Aichholzer Film/Vienna, Filmbüro Münchner Freiheit **RUNTIME** 84 min **LANGUAGE** German, English

SALES Picture Tree International GmbH

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© Kordes & Kordes Film

DIE SCHULE DER MAGISCHEN TIERE

THE SCHOOL OF MAGICAL ANIMALS

Ida has had to move to another town and is now the “new girl” at school. She is thrilled when her teacher Miss Cornfield introduces the children to Mortimer Morrison who travels the world looking for “magical animals”. Each of these animals is destined to become a child’s soul mate. Of all people, newcomer Ida and outsider Benni are the first in the class to have magical companions! From now on, Benni has the ancient, wise turtle Henrietta at his side and Ida the cunning fox Rabbat. When objects keep disappearing at school, the children and the magical animals have to stick together to solve the mystery of the school thief.

A charming live-action adventure with CGI animated animals, based on the bestselling book series by Veit Auer which was translated to more than 20 languages so far.

GENRE Family Entertainment **YEAR OF PRODUCTION** 2021 **DIRECTOR** Gregor Schnitzler **SCREENPLAY** Viola M.J. Schmidt, John Chambers **CINEMATOGRAPHY** Wolfgang Aichholzer **CAST** Emilia Maier, Leonard Conrads, Loris Sichrovsky, Nadja Uhl, Justus von Dohnányi, Heiko Pinkowski, Marleen Lohse, Milan Peschel and the voices of Max von der Groben, Katharina Thalbach, Sophie Rois
PRODUCERS Alexandra Kordes, Meike Kordes **CO-PRODUCERS** Cosima von Spreiti, Michael Katz, Veit Heiduschka, Laura Clever **EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS** Fred Kogel and Josef Brandmaier, Herbert L. Kloiber **PRODUCTION COMPANY** Kordes & Kordes Film Süd, in co-production with LEONINE Studios, Wega Film/Vienna, Clever Production **RUNTIME** 90 min **LANGUAGE** German, English

SALES Global Screen – a brand of Telepool GmbH • info@globalscreen.de • www.globalscreen.de



© Max Bertani

STAND UP! WAS BLEIBT, WENN ALLES WEG IST

STAND UP! LOOKING FOR LOVE IN ALL THE WRONG PLACES

Charlie Schwarzer's (Timo Jacobs) great career in comedy just won't take off as planned. Firstly, his forgetfulness is diagnosed as dementia – and before he can speak to his beloved wife about it, she walks out on him. With his image of perfect love shattered, Charlie sets off on an odyssey to get back up onto life's stage once more. He reflects back on all his failures, and tries to correct his mistakes and to rediscover his humour, in the course of which he becomes involved in a bizarre art theft. Does that mean "game over" for Charlie? All he knows is his motto: "Stand Up!"

STAND UP! is a film about the beauty of failure and transience. A praise of indifference.

GENRE Comedy, Drama, Tragicomedy **YEAR OF PRODUCTION** 2021 **DIRECTOR** Timo Jacobs **SCREEN-PLAY** Timo Jacobs, Sam Martin, Federico Avino **CINEMATOGRAPHY** Nuno Martini, Additional Camera: Frank Schwaiger **CAST** Timo Jacobs, Pegah Feridony, Sandra von Ruffin, Katy Karrenbauer, Dieter Landuris, Lana Cooper, Rolf Kanies, Alina Levshin, Friedrich Liechtenstein, Jens Münchow, Barbara Philipp **PRODUCER** Timo Jacobs **CO-PRODUCER** Thore Vollert **PRODUCTION COMPANY** Jacobs Productions **RUNTIME** 90 min **LANGUAGE** German

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© Filmakademie Baden-Württemberg

VIVA FOREVER

Every year since high school, Francesca, Sophie, Amali, Fana, Luz and Lotte spend a few days in summer at lake Garda. But this time, Lotte doesn't join the beloved tradition. Her decision remains mysterious for the friends, fueling long-kept doubts about the value of this friendship that has become more superficial throughout the years. Now in their late twenties, the friends have grown apart, lifestyles and personalities have changed.

The Lotte-topic becomes an "elephant in the room", slowly poisoning the holiday vibes until it all escalates on the last day. Hurtful truths and accusations come to light. The friends start to realize that they relied too much on the past, taking their friendship for granted. For the first time in years they are honest with themselves, committing to define their friendship in the here and now.

GENRE Tragicomedy **YEAR OF PRODUCTION** 2021 **DIRECTOR** Sinje Köhler **SCREENPLAY** Sinje Köhler **CINEMATOGRAPHY** Fabian Gamper **CAST** Homa Faghiri, Ina Maria Jaich, Janet Rothe, Natalia Rudziewicz, Thandi Sebe, David Brizzi, Timo Weisschnur **PRODUCERS** Kathrin Rodemeier, Nils Gustenhofen **CO-PRODUCER** Joachim Weiler **PRODUCTION COMPANY** Filmakademie Baden-Württemberg, in co-production with ZDF **RUNTIME** 99 min **LANGUAGE** German, English

SALES Filmakademie Baden-Württemberg, Nils Gustenhofen
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BILDER (M)EINER MUTTER

LIFE ON TAPE

In **LIFE ON TAPE** director Melanie Lischker reconstructs the life of her mother whom she barely remembers from over 100 hours of video material of the family. In her diaries she finds the tragic story of a young woman who, driven by the spirit of emancipation of the 1970s, tries to free herself from the old thought patterns of her authoritarian parents. She is torn between her desire for freedom and that to lead a well-ordered family life. Even 20 years later her ongoing struggle with this rubs off on the childhood of the director. Both personally and politically the film travels through the decades and shows a woman in conflict with the patriarchal structures of her day.

GENRE Biopic, Coming-of-Age Story, History, Love Story **YEAR OF PRODUCTION** 2021 **DIRECTOR** Melanie Lischker **SCREENPLAY** Melanie Lischker **CINEMATOGRAPHY** Thomas Lischker, Melanie Lischker **PRODUCER** Maria Wischnewski **PRODUCTION COMPANY** Koberstein Film, in co-production with WDR, ARTE **RUNTIME** 79 min **LANGUAGE** German, English **FESTIVALS** DOK.fest München 2021, Section: DOK.deutsch

SALES Koberstein Film, Maria Wischnewski
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© Thomas Riedelsheimer

IN DEN UFFIZIEN

INSIDE THE UFFIZI

Backstage of the Uffizi Gallery built in 1561, one of the oldest museums in the world every task becomes a ritual. We meet the passionate staff of German director Eike Schmidt, his assistants, architects, custodians and the concierge. We witness sensitive negotiations with British artist Antony Gormley over the placement of one of his sculptures. Different mentalities and viewpoints collide – European cooperation “en miniature”. Meanwhile the film invites us to immerse ourselves into the works of Botticelli and Artemisia Gentileschi, discovers the 17th century painting ‘Fall of the Rebel Angels’ that confront us with our contemporary vulnerability and hubris. Wartime scenes and a Mafia bomb attack show the history of threats and the endless efforts to protect and maintain this unique collection for future generations.

GENRE Art **YEAR OF PRODUCTION** 2021 **DIRECTORS** Corinna Belz, Enrique Sánchez Lansch **CINEMATOGRAPHY** Johann Feindt, Thomas Riedelsheimer **PRODUCER** Thomas Kufus **PRODUCTION COMPANY** zero one film, in co-production with ZDF, Bayerischer Rundfunk **RUNTIME** 96 min **LANGUAGE** English, German, Italian **FESTIVALS** DOK.fest München 2021, Shanghai International Film Festival 2021

SALES MAGNETFILM GmbH, Georg Gruber
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LOST WOMEN ART

PART 1 | FROM IMPRESSIONISM TO ABSTRACTION

PART 2 | FROM NEW VISION TO THE FEMINIST AVANT-GARDE

Women have always written art history and worked on eye-level with their male contemporaries. Together they claimed new paths and caused sensations – but despite this neither their names nor their works are known today. Up to this day women play minor roles in art history and are rarely mentioned as trailblazers of new art styles. LOST WOMEN ART explores the mechanisms of this systematic omission of highly talented artists. In two parts the documentary takes a look at the forgotten artists, tells the story of the suppressed female avant-garde and by doing so re-tells art history.

GENRE Art, History **YEAR OF PRODUCTION** 2021 **DIRECTOR** Susanne Radelhof **SCREENPLAY** Susanne Radelhof **CINEMATOGRAPHY** Thomas Eirich-Schneider **PRODUCER** Maria Wischnewski **PRODUCTION COMPANY** Koberstein Film, in co-production with MDR, ARTE **RUNTIME** 2 x 52 min **LANGUAGE** German, French, English

SALES Koberstein Film, Maria Wischnewski
 mw@koberstein-film.de • www.koberstein-film.de



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ROAMERS – FOLLOW YOUR LIKES

“The problem is: I never had a bad life. So I’m more concerned about how to make life go from good to great, from good to amazing, from good to freakin’ fantastic.” Nuseir Yassin, 21 Mio. Followers

In a society in which all basic needs have long since been satisfied, a utopia becomes the life goal of an entire generation: absolute freedom and independence. Get out of the hamster wheel of the eternally same. No more annoying jobs, no “what’s it all for?”, no more living between traffic jams, bad weather and always saving yourself in the weekend. Instead, a self-determined life as a citizen of the world. The motto: get the best out of every day – and still earn a decent living. The so-called digital revolution and cheap flights make it possible. And so impressions of this “freakin’ fantastic life” flood the feeds of Instagram & Co. – and make it difficult for their normal mortal followers to find a justification for the apparently mediocre life they lead.

GENRE Society **YEAR OF PRODUCTION** 2021 **DIRECTOR** Lena Leonhardt **CINEMATOGRAPHY** Josua Stähler, Sebastian Bäumler **PRODUCERS** Moritz Schreiner, Benjamin Wiedenbruch, Eva Weingart, Christian Hünemörder **PRODUCTION COMPANY** Royal Film Company GmbH **RUNTIME** 52/97 min **LANGUAGE** German, English, Spanish, Italian

SALES MAGNETFILM GmbH, Georg Gruber
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DIE ROTE KAPELLE

THE RED ORCHESTRA

The Red Orchestra was a most important resistance net in Nazi Germany, which also collected military information. With the assistance of a Jewish espionage ring in Brussels and Paris, they passed it to the Soviets. After locating their radio transmissions, Hitler set off a deadly hunt.

During the Cold War, the legacy of the Red Orchestra got ground down between the propaganda of East and West. Two large-scale feature films were launched on both sides, each telling merely half of the truth. Excerpts are now 'reunited' to impart the story in full. Furthermore, descendants of the people involved, in Berlin, Brussels, Paris, Jerusalem and New York contribute to this first comprehensive filmic account of the defamed resistance network.

GENRE Biopic, Drama, History, Thriller **YEAR OF PRODUCTION** 2020 **DIRECTOR** Carl-Ludwig Rettinger **CO-DIRECTOR** Lorenz Findeisen **SCREENPLAY** Carl-Ludwig Rettinger **CINEMATOGRAPHY** Lutz Reitemeier, Olivier Verdoot **PRODUCER** Joachim Ortmanns **CO-PRODUCERS** Isabelle Truc, Gidi Avivi **PRODUCTION COMPANY** Lichtblick Film, in co-production with Iota Production, Vice Versa Films **RUNTIME** 120 min **LANGUAGE** German, French, English (narrated by Brendan Coyle), Hebrew **FESTIVALS** Solidarity Film Festival, Tel Aviv 2020, Section: International Programme, New York Jewish Film Festival, San Diego Jewish Film Festival

SALES Lichtblick Film GmbH, Yvonne Gottschalk
gottschalk@lichtblick-film.de • www.lichtblick-film.de



© Karin Kaper Film

WALTER KAUFMANN – WELCH EIN LEBEN!

WALTER KAUFMANN - WHAT A LIFE

In the life of Walter Kaufmann, who lives in Berlin and is now 97 years old, important events, catastrophes, and tremors of the last century are reflected in the most extraordinary way, and they continue to have an impact on our present day.

The film follows the traces of his life in international locations: USA, Cuba, Australia, Japan and Israel. In Germany the film stations are Berlin, where he has lived since 1956, Duisburg, where he experienced his youth, and Born am Darß, where he spends the summer months. For us filmmakers, the essential contents of Walter Kaufmann's life are: the catastrophic consequences of National Socialism, the civil rights movement in the USA, the legendary trial against Angela Davis, the revolution in Cuba, the confrontation with Stalinism, the effects of the atomic bombing in Japan, the never-ending story of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the collapse of the GDR, the return of nationalistic, anti-Semitic currents in Germany.

GENRE Biopic, History **YEAR OF PRODUCTION** 2021 **DIRECTORS** Karin Kaper, Dirk Szuszie **SCREENPLAY** Dirk Szuszie **CINEMATOGRAPHY** Tobias Rahm, Dirk Szuszie **PRODUCER** Karin Kaper **PRODUCTION COMPANY** Karin Kaper Film **RUNTIME** 101 min **LANGUAGE** German, English **FESTIVALS** International Jewish Film Festival Berlin Brandenburg 2021

SALES Karin Kaper Film, Karin Kaper
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© Koberstein Film

WIR ALLE. DAS DORF

WE THE VILLAGE

Somewhere, in the middle of the economically underdeveloped region Wendland in Germany, people have decided to found a village. It is supposed to become a model village for Europe's future, for a hundred old, a hundred refugees and a hundred young people. Quickly, the social experiment has become its very own micro cosmos of society. As if under a burning glass hot topics are being discussed in order to find solutions to problems that affect our whole society: the integration of refugees, an aging society, social isolation and the difficulties of people with disabilities, seniors or single parents, the lack of perspective for young people in the provinces...

GENRE Adventure, Environment/Ecology, Social Experiment **YEAR OF PRODUCTION** 2021 **DIRECTORS** Antonia Traulsen, Claire Roggan **SCREENPLAY** Antonia Traulsen **CINEMATOGRAPHY** Claire Roggan **PRODUCER** Maria Wischnewski **PRODUCTION COMPANY** Koberstein Film, in co-production with NDR **RUNTIME** 89 min **LANGUAGE** German, English **FESTIVALS** Filmfestival Max Ophüls Preis 2021, Section: Competition

SALES Koberstein Film, Antonia Traulsen
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© Nicolaas Schmidt

FIRST TIME [THE TIME FOR ALL BUT SUNSET - VIOLET]

We listen to music and we are on our way. We look at things and the world differently than before, so that things don't always repeat themselves, but get better instead: Two boys meet on a round trip with the Hamburg U3 line. Something evolves – not much but yet everything. The train runs through station after station. Lights changing on the outside and inside. Passengers and protagonists in the midst of noise & music. Glances, silence, a KitKat is broken, a Coke is being drunk. Outside: sunset & nightfall constantly interrupted by tunnels, platforms, posters & facades. The train passes the boarding station again. The timeline of love could be a circle. A common sensations music movie.

GENRE Art, Cross Documentary Concept Fiction, Drama, Experimental, Love Story, Music, Road Movie
YEAR OF PRODUCTION 2021 **DIRECTOR** Nicolaas Schmidt **SCREENPLAY** Nicolaas Schmidt **CINEMATOGRAPHY** Julia Lohmann, Nicolaas Schmidt **CAST** Aaron Hilmer, Fynn Grossmann **PRODUCERS** Nicolaas Schmidt, Anne Döring **PRODUCTION COMPANY** ETTG FILM, in co-production with Leistung-symbiose Doppelte Unendlichkeit **RUNTIME** 50 min **LANGUAGE** no dialogue **FESTIVALS** Locarno Film Festival 2021, Section: International Competition Pardi di domani

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© Fabian&Fred, ses-studio

DIE NACHT

NIGHT

The dust of war keeps the eyes sleepless. Night brings peace and sleep to all the people in the broken town. Only the eyes of the mother of the missing child stay resilient. Night has to trick her into sleeping to save her soul.

GENRE Animation, Drama, Fantasy **YEAR OF PRODUCTION** 2021 **DIRECTOR** Ahmad Saleh **SCREEN-PLAY** Ahmad Saleh **CINEMATOGRAPHY** Saed Saleh **CAST** Hiam Abbass, Rafia Aridi, Salma Saleh **PRODUCERS** Jessica Neubauer, Fabian Driehorst, Saleh Saleh **PRODUCTION COMPANIES** Fabian&Fred, ses-studio **RUNTIME** 16 min **LANGUAGE** Arabic, English, German, French, Spanish **FESTIVALS** Locarno Film Festival 2021, Section: International Competition Pardi di domani

SALES Fabian&Fred, Fabian Driehorst
fabian@fabianfred.com • www.fabianfred.com



© Contando Films / Valentin Selmke

SALIDAS

DEPARTURES

SALIDAS (span., DEPARTURES) is a fictional dance film which tells the story of Giralda, an undertaker who accompanies deceased human beings into their afterlife. Interpreted with the means of Spanish flamenco dance and music and set at an old East German ship canal lift, the film creates an associative fusion between Northern and Southern Europe, movement and silence, and farewells and eternity.

GENRE Drama, Dance **YEAR OF PRODUCTION** 2021 **DIRECTOR** Michael Fetter Nathansky **SCREEN-PLAY** Michael Fetter Nathansky **CINEMATOGRAPHY** Valentin Selmke **CAST** Anna Castillo, Christiane "La Mona", Nusta Kolter Irazoque, Ebla Sadek, Antonio Piñera Moreno "Pumuki", Salvador Vega Carrasco "Rubin de la Ana" **PRODUCER** Virginia Martin **PRODUCTION COMPANY** Contando Films **RUN-TIME** 10 min **LANGUAGE** Spanish, Arabic, German, English **FESTIVALS** Filmfestival Max Ophüls Preis, Palm Springs ShortFest USA, Int. Short Film Festival Oberhausen, Filmfest Dresden, Bundesfestival junger Film, Sehnsüchte, Unified Filmmakers Filmfestival, Cinedans Fest Amsterdam NL, San Francisco Dance Film Festival USA, Dance Film Festival Prague CZK, PlatArtistic Spring Dancefilm Fest ES, FuoriFormato Festival IT **AWARDS** Best Short Dance Film at PlatArtistic Spring Dancefilm Fest ES, Best Director at FuoriFormato Festival IT, Honorable Mention at Cinedans Fest Amsterdam NL, Honorable Mention at Dance Film Festival Prague CZK

SALES Contando Films, Virginia Martin
virginia@contandofilms.com • www.contandofilms.com



© Finta, Fabian&Fred, Miyu

STEAKHOUSE

The steak has been marinating for a few days now. The pan is heated. Franc's stomach is rumbling. But Liza's co-workers surprise her with a birthday party. Will she be home on time?

GENRE Animation, Drama **YEAR OF PRODUCTION** 2021 **DIRECTOR** Špela Čadež **SCREENPLAY** Gregor Zorc **CINEMATOGRAPHY** Špela Čadež **CAST** Marko Mandić, Maruša Majer **PRODUCER** Tina Smrekar **CO-PRODUCERS** Fabian Driehorst, Emanuel-Alain Raynal **PRODUCTION COMPANIES** Finta Film, Fabian&Fred in co-production with Miyu Productions **RUNTIME** 9 min **LANGUAGE** Slovenian, English, German, French, Spanish **FESTIVALS** Locarno Film Festival 2021, Section: International Competition Pardi di domani

SALES Miyu Distribution, Luce Grosjean
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© Nicolas Gebbe

THE SUNSET SPECIAL

A secluded beach location, the perfect partner, the most exclusive Hotel: It is the life of your dreams. Join an eerie trip to a luxurious place of unfulfilled desire, nostalgia and endless longing. Catch a unique glimpse through the polished facades of a world shaped by abundance and the reality distorting imagery of social media.

GENRE Animation, Art, Experimental **YEAR OF PRODUCTION** 2021 **DIRECTOR** Nicolas Gebbe **SCREEN-PLAY** Nicolas Gebbe **CINEMATOGRAPHY** Nicolas Gebbe **PRODUCER** Nicolas Gebbe **RUNTIME** 17 min **LANGUAGE** English **FESTIVALS** Locarno Film Festival 2021, Section: International Competition Pardi di domani

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ALLE WOLLEN GELIEBT WERDEN

Katharina Woll's graduation film centres on Ina, a psychotherapist in her mid-40s who notices that something is not quite right. She's been feeling a tightness in her chest for several days now, but she doesn't have time to worry about it. She's very busy with her patients. Her 16-year-old daughter has been threatening to go and live with her father. Her boyfriend wants to emigrate to Finland. Her mother needs her to help organize her 70th birthday party. Ina's convinced she can find a way to please everyone, but then things take an unexpected turn...

ENGLISH TITLE EVERYBODY WANTS TO BE LOVED **GENRE** Tragicomedy **CATEGORY** Feature **DIRECTOR** Katharina Woll **SCREENPLAY** Florian Plumeyer, Katharina Woll **CAST** Anne Ratte-Polle, Lea Drinda, Ulrike Willenbacher, Urs Jucker, Jonas Hien, Frieder Venus **PRODUCERS** Markus Kaatsch, Nina Poschinski, Michael Grudsky **CO-PRODUCER** Katharina Woll **PRODUCTION COMPANIES** Deutsche Film- und Fernsehakademie Berlin GmbH, Zeitgeist Filmproduktion GmbH & Co. KG **WITH BACKING FROM** ZDF – Das kleine Fernsehspiel and Medienboard Berlin-Brandenburg **LANGUAGE** German

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DISTANZ (AT) DISTANCE (WT)

Marketing director Laszlo isolates himself in his apartment during a global pandemic to protect himself because of his high risk status. He avoids every kind of human contact – even to his wife, Sabina, and their two children, who are staying at their countryside house. But then his new neighbor Zoe appears at his doorstep one evening – with unforeseen consequences for both of them.

Inspired by the constraints on people's lives during the coronavirus lockdown over the past year, DISTANCE is a modern social drama delving deep into the human soul and addressing questions of identity and the patterns of life.

GENRE Drama **CATEGORY** Feature **DIRECTOR** Lars Knorrn **SCREENPLAY** Lars Knorrn, Aleksandar Jovanovic **CINEMATOGRAPHY** Felix Leiberg **CAST** Aleksandar Jovanovic, Hannah Ehrlichmann, Anne Schäfer, Malik Blumenthal, Lucas Englander, Kristin Hunold, Clelia Sarto, Peter Fieseler, Till Wonka, Aaron Friesz, Johanna Graen **PRODUCER** Felix Leiberg **EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS** Walter Peitz, Felix Leiberg **CO-PRODUCERS** Lars Knorrn, Aleksandar Jovanovic **PRODUCTION COMPANY** Conscious Content / Distanz Film GmbH in co-production with Carny Film GmbH **LANGUAGE** German

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FAKING HITLER

FAKING HITLER tells the story of the forged Hitler diaries: the biggest media scandal of the post-war period, from the forgery of the first diary to their publication and the conviction of the protagonists.

STERN reporter Gerd Heidemann buys the Hitler diaries which have been forged by Konrad Kujau. A journalist at the magazine, Elisabeth Stöckel, is being blackmailed by a young Jewish activist, Jeffrey Gold, about her father's Nazi past and hands over copies of the diaries. With Elisabeth's help, Gold wants to stop the diaries being published. However, they don't achieve their goal. The diaries are published, but exposed shortly afterwards as forgeries...

GENRE Drama, History **CATEGORY** Mini-Series
DIRECTORS Wolfgang Groos, Tobi Baumann
SCREENPLAY Tommy Wosch, Anna Cizek, Dominik Moser **CAST** Lars Eidinger, Moritz Bleibtreu, Sinje Irlsinger, Hans-Jochen Wagner, Tristan Seith, Richard Sammel, Ronald Kukulies, Lukas T. Sperber, Ulrich Tukur, Daniel Donskoy, Britta Hammelstein, Hanna Plaß, Jeanette Hain, Reiner Schöne, Ralf Dittrich, Katharina Heyer **PRODUCERS** Tommy Wosch, Markus Brunnemann **PRODUCTION COMPANY** UFA Fiction GmbH **LANGUAGE** German

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GESCHICHTEN VOM FRANZ TALES OF FRANZ

The late Austrian children's author Christine Nöstlinger's bestselling book series TALES OF FRANZ has provided the inspiration for Lola winner Johannes Schmid's family comedy which was filmed at original locations in Vienna this summer.

Franz Frostl is by far the smallest guy of his class. He has blond ringlets and gets a high squeaky voice when he is excited. Fortunately, he has his two best friends Gabi and Eberhard who are always there to help him out of any sticky situations. When Franz then discovers influencer Hank Haberer's "10 Rules for a Real Man" the trio's world is turned upside down and their friendship put to the test...

GENRE Children's Film, Family Entertainment
CATEGORY Feature **DIRECTOR** Johannes Schmid
SCREENPLAY Sarah Wassermair, based on the book series by Christine Nöstlinger **CAST** Jossi Jantschitsch, Nora Reidinger, Leo Wacha, Ursula Strauss, Simon Schwarz, Maria Bill, Philipp Dornauer **PRODUCERS** Michael Kitzberger, Katharina Posch **CO-PRODUCER** Ingo Fliess **PRODUCTION COMPANY** Nikolaus Geyrhalter Filmproduktion GmbH in co-production with if... Productions Film GmbH **LANGUAGE** German **GERMAN DISTRIBUTOR** Wild Bunch Germany

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HERZOGPARK

Hannah, Elisabeth and Annabelle: they're beautiful, rich and want to stay where they are at all costs: in Munich's highly exclusive residential area of Herzogpark. There's only one problem and it's male, powerful and has all three of them in its grip: the construction mogul Nikolaus van der Bruck. The women decide that they have to get rid of van der Bruck. But how? Poison him, shove him, run him over, shoot him or suffocate him during sex? It's not so easy to dispatch someone with an element of elegance and discretion. Especially not in a world like Herzogpark where everyone is watching everyone else and at the same time trying to keep up the nice facade...

GENRE Comedy, Drama **CATEGORY** Series
DIRECTOR Jochen Alexander Freydank **SCREENPLAY** Annette Simon based on an idea from Yoko Higuchi-Zitzmann and scripts by Regina Dieltl with Nadine Keil, Enno Reese and John-Hendrik Karsten **CAST** Heike Makatsch, Lisa Maria Potthoff, Antje Traue, Felicitas Woll, Heiner Lauterbach, Jeanette Hain, Trystan Pütter, Lukas Spisser, and Francis Fulton-Smith in a guest role **PRODUCERS** Yoko Higuchi-Zitzmann, Michael Lehmann, Felix von Poser **PRODUCTION COMPANIES** Letterbox Filmproduktion and Amalia Film **LANGUAGE** German

SALES

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IN EINEM LAND, DAS ES NICHT MEHR GIBT

Based on true events and personal experiences, Aelrun Goette's film centres on the young machinist Suzie who becomes the new cover model of the GDR's renowned fashion magazine SIBYLLE, the Vogue of the East, after being photographed by chance on the way to work early one morning. Whilst being immersed in the underground scene of East Berlin, she falls in love with the photographer Coyote. However, the abrupt transition from her dreary everyday life to the dazzling world of fashion doesn't come without its challenges. Coyote longs to leave for the West, her little sister is causing problems, and Suzie has to decide how much she is willing to give for her happiness...

ENGLISH TITLE IN A LAND THAT NO LONGER EXISTS **GENRE** Drama **CATEGORY** Feature
DIRECTOR Aelrun Goette **SCREENPLAY** Aelrun Goette **CAST** Marlene Burow, Sabin Tambrea, David Schütter, Claudia Michelsen, Peter Schneider, Bernd Hölscher, Sven-Eric Bechtholf, Jördis Triebel **PRODUCER** Tanja Ziegler **EXECUTIVE PRODUCER** Susa Kusche **CO-PRODUCERS** Peter Eiff, Timm Oberwelland, Theodor Gringel, Christoph Fisser, Charlie Woebcken, Annegret Weitkämper-Krug **PRODUCTION COMPANY** Ziegler Film GmbH & Co. KG in co-production with Tobis Film GmbH, Babelsberg Film GmbH, Gretchen Filmproduktion GmbH **LANGUAGE** German **GERMAN DISTRIBUTOR** Tobis Film GmbH

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DIE KÄNGURU-VERSCHWÖRUNG

After the success of last year's adaptation of Marc-Uwe Kling's *The Kangaroo Chronicles*, the talking anarchic kangaroo and the struggling musician Marc-Uwe are now set return to the big screen in new adventures, this time with best-selling author Kling in the director's chair. And all the favourites will be there from neighbour Maria through the convenience store owners Otto-Von and Friedrich-Wilhelm Yilmaz to the hard as nails pub landlady Herta.

The producers promise that the new film will be "even funnier, even more exciting, even more political and 25 per cent more kangaroo for the same price!"

GENRE Comedy, Family Entertainment, Road Movie **CATEGORY** Feature **DIRECTOR** Marc-Uwe Kling **SCREENPLAY** Marc-Uwe Kling, Jan Cronauer **CAST** The Kangaroo, Dmitrij Schaad, Rosalie Thomass, Petra Kleinert, Carmen-Maja Antoni, Tim Seyfi, Adnan Maral, Michael Ostrowski, Benno Fürmann, Volker Zack, Melanie Straub **PRODUCERS** Uwe Schott, Stefan Arndt **PRODUCTION COMPANY** X Filme Creative Pool in co-production with Trixter, Sky Deutschland, and Seven Pictures **LANGUAGE** German **GERMAN DISTRIBUTOR** X Verleih AG

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LUCY IST JETZT GANGSTER LUCY GOES GANGSTA

10-year-old Lucy is actually a happy-go-lucky and loveable schoolgirl who would never dream of jaywalking when a traffic light is on red. But she's now decided that she has to rob a bank in the pedestrian precinct of Werlach-Bimsheim to get the money to buy a new ice-cream machine for her parents' ice cream parlour "Gelateria Felicità". Extreme situations call for extreme measures and so Lucy takes lessons from the school's bad boy, Tristan, to be introduced to his 'tricks of the trade' like stealing, lying, cheating and bribing. It's not long before Lucy has become Lucyfer, a true angel straight out of hell...

GENRE Children's Film, Family Entertainment **CATEGORY** Feature **DIRECTOR** Till Endemann **SCREENPLAY** Andreas Cordes, Till Endemann **CAST** Valerie & Violetta Arnemann, Brooklyn Liebig, Lisa Maria Trense, Kostja Ullmann, Franziska Wulff, Kailas Mahadevan, Esther Schweins **PRODUCER** Arek Gielnik **CO-PRODUCERS** Petra Goedings, Burny Bos, Sonja Ewers **PRODUCTION COMPANY** Indi Film GmbH in co-production with Phanta Film B.V., BosBros B.V., Senator Film Köln **LANGUAGE** German **GERMAN DISTRIBUTOR** Wild Bunch

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ROXY

40something taxi-driver Thomas Brenner experiences few surprises in his mundane day-to-day life and, ideally, would like to be invisible to the world around him. However, one day, a Russian gang and their bulldog "Roxy" get into his taxi. Igor, the boss, is a shady mobster on the run. Initially, Thomas joins the gang for the money and the excitement, but when he meets Aziza, Igor's attractive wife, and their young son, Vova, his motives change. It's not just about the money now. He falls in love with Aziza and becomes a father figure to young Vova. Thomas finds himself caught up in an ever deepening spiral of lies, friendship, love and loyalty and gradually develops skills he didn't think were possible...

GENRE Thriller **CATEGORY** Feature **DIRECTOR** Dito Tsintsadze **SCREENPLAY** Dito Tsintsadze **CAST** Devid Striesow, Vakho Chachanidze, Camilla Borghesani **PRODUCERS** Elaine Niessner, Tommy Niessner **CO-PRODUCERS** Beata Saboova, Nadya Gorshkova **PRODUCTION COMPANY** East End Film GmbH in co-production with Umedia and Viva Films **LANGUAGE** German **GERMAN DISTRIBUTOR** Kinostar

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SCHWEIGEND STEHT DER WALD

Actress Saralisa Volm's dark feature directorial debut follows 28-year-old Anja Grimm as she takes up a forestry internship in a remote part of the Bavarian Forest where her father had disappeared without trace when she was eight years old. Anja's sudden appearance triggers a brutal murder when a mentally retarded man kills his old, bedridden mother with a spade, and her desire to find out the truth about her father's fate is met with increasing suspicion and a wall of silence from the local villagers. Her uncanny ability to „read“ the forest puts her on the trail of something that even the local police want to keep hidden and could have catastrophic results.

ENGLISH TITLE THE SILENT FOREST **GENRE** Drama, History, Literature, Thriller, Mystery **CATEGORY** Feature **DIRECTOR** Saralisa Volm **SCREENPLAY** Wolfram Fleischhauer **CAST** Henriette Confurius, Noah Saavedra, August Zirner, Robert Stadlober **PRODUCER** Saralisa Volm **CO-PRODUCER** Ingo Fliess **PRODUCTION COMPANY** POISON GmbH in co-production with if... Productions Film GmbH **LANGUAGE** German **GERMAN DISTRIBUTOR** Alpenrepublik GmbH

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Hanna Doose © Benni Beck

WANN KOMMST DU MEINE WUNDEN KÜSSEN

The acting technique of improvisation has been adopted by director Hanna Doose for her second feature film which centres on two formerly inseparable best friends, Laura and Maria, who fell out when Maria's great love, Jan, cheated on her with Laura. After years of consciously avoiding any contact with one another, the two women meet again at the deathbed of Maria's sister, Kathi, at the parental home in the Black Forest. Carefully repressed conflicts erupt on Maria's arrival leading to an existential threat for them all as they relentlessly hold up a mirror to each other. Then, just when everything would seem to be lost, they start fighting for their friendship and look to give Kathi a dignified send-off...

GENRE Drama, Tragicomedy **CATEGORY** Feature
DIRECTOR Hanna Doose **SCREENPLAY** Hanna Doose **CINEMATOGRAPHY** Markus Zucker **CAST** Bibiana Beglau, Gina Henkel, Katarina Schröter, Alexander Fehling, Godehard Giese, Jonas Smulders, Marc Hosemann, Leni Wesselman
PRODUCERS Marcos Kantis, Dominik Utz, Martin Schwimmer **CO-PRODUCER** Stefanie Gross (SWR) **PRODUCTION COMPANIES** Schiwago Film & Domar Film in coproduction with Südwestrundfunk (SWR) **GERMAN DISTRIBUTOR** MFA+ Film-distribution

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OPENING THE DOORS TO GERMAN CINEMA



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GERMAN FILMS

SERVICE + MARKETING



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

SHAREHOLDERS are the German Producers Guild, the German Producers Alliance, the Association of German Film Exporters, the German Federal Film Board (FFA), the Deutsche Kinemathek, the German Documentary Association, FilmFernsehFonds Bayern, Film- und Medienstiftung NRW, Medienboard Berlin-Brandenburg, and the German Short Film Association.

German Films' budget of presently €4.8 million comes from film export levies, the office of the Federal Government Commissioner for Culture and the Media, and the FFA. The eight main regional film funds (FilmFernsehFonds Bayern, Filmförderung Hamburg Schleswig-Holstein, Film- und Medienstiftung NRW, HessenFilm, Medienboard Berlin-Brandenburg, MFG Baden-Württemberg, Mitteldeutsche Medienförderung, and Nordmedia) make a financial contribution towards the work of German Films.

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

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

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

RANGE OF ACTIVITIES

- Close cooperation with major international film festivals, including Berlin, Cannes, Venice, San Sebastian, Locarno, Sundance, Karlovy Vary, Toronto, New York, Shanghai, Warsaw, Moscow, and Busan
- Organization of umbrella stands for German sales companies and producers at international television and film markets
- Staging of Festivals of German Films in selected international territories in cooperation with the Goethe-Institut
- Staging of industry screenings in key international territories
- Providing advice and information for representatives of the international press and buyers from the fields of cinema, home entertainment, and television
- Providing advice and information for German filmmakers and press on international festivals, conditions of participation, and German films being shown
- Organization of the annual Next Generation Short Tiger short film program, which presents a selection of shorts and is internationally premiered in Cannes
- Publication of informational literature about current German films and the German film industry, as well as international market analyses and special festival brochures
- A website (www.german-films.de) offering information about new German films, a film archive, information and links to German and international film festivals and institutions
- Organization of the selection procedure for the German entry for the Oscar® for Best International Feature Film
- Organization of the German Films Previews geared toward arthouse distributors and buyers of German films
- Selective financial Distribution Support for the foreign releases of German films
- Organization with UniFrance of the annual German-French film meeting
- Presentation of the annual FACE TO FACE WITH GERMAN FILMS campaign which shines a spotlight on some of the most influential German talents currently working in the industry, who represent just some of the many dynamic 'faces' of German filmmaking today.

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