

GFAQ

GERMAN FILMS QUARTERLY



ISSUE 2/3-2023

WITH PORTRAITS OF
DIRECTORS **FRAUKE FINSTERWALDER & AXEL RANISCH**
PRODUCER **SILVANA SANTAMARIA**
ACTOR **SANDRA HÜLLER**
SALES COMPANY **SOLA MEDIA**

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Dear Readers,

A few months has now passed since director Edward Berger and his crew were able to celebrate in Los Angeles. The anti-war drama *ALL QUIET ON THE WESTERN FRONT* was named Best International Film at the 95th Academy Awards. And it didn't stop there. The nine nominations translated into a total of four awards (Best International Film, Best Cinematography, Best Production Design and Best Score) for the Netflix production. This soon then had a positive impact for German films as they once more became the focus of greater attention from the international film industry.



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It's fair to say that the film festivals have fortunately changed again. For sure, the aftereffects of the pandemic can still be felt in some places. But our impression of Cannes was that the film festival on the Croisette - with more accredited professionals than ever before and at the Marché du Film in particular - is not only returning to normality, but in some ways also finding a new lease of life for itself. What's more, Wim Wenders' documentary *ANSELM* was a German production that was well received by many critics.

Shanghai held the first proper edition of its film festival in June since the end of the pandemic. From a German perspective, the film festival was special this year because the director Lukas Nathrath opened the International Panorama - Focus Germany section with his tragicomedy *ONE LAST EVENING*. Another 24 films produced and co-produced in Germany also screened in various sections of the festival. There was a similar success for German productions and co-productions - 19 in total - at the Karlovy Vary Film Festival. The productions *EMPTY NETS* (Special Jury Prize) and *DANCING ON THE EDGE OF A VOLCANO* (Special Jury Mention) received important awards. These prizes definitely have a special significance since Karlovy Vary is a good launchpad for the films' international careers.

Film buyers were able to see what a diverse and varied range German cinema has to offer when they attended this year's German Films Previews in Potsdam in July. We are delighted that almost 70 international buyers and 13 world sales companies accepted our invitation to come to Potsdam.

Following on from these wonderful experiences at recent film festivals, we are now looking forward to the summer and autumn festivals. The line-up for the Locarno Film Festival includes a total of 19 German productions and co-productions, five of them being in the competitive categories. Moreover, there are six shorts in the festival's competition, more than ever before. And several German productions will also have their premieres in Toronto and San Sebastian. Good news has also just been announced by the Venice International Film Festival: *THE THEORY OF EVERYTHING* by Timm Kröger will take part in the Competition section, and *LIFE IS NOT A COMPETITION, BUT I'M WINNING* by Julia Fuhr Mann is to screen in the Settimana Internazionale della Critica. Germany is the Focus Country at the 2023 edition of the Venice Production Bridge and this is a great opportunity for presenting new German film and VR projects and their filmmakers to the international film industry.

Despite the many festival successes, attendances for arthouse feature films are still below the pre-pandemic figures. And yet there are rays of hope: David Wnendt's drama *SUN AND CONCRETE* crossed the important threshold of one million cinema-goers in Germany. News that gives cause to be positive.

Simone Baumann

Yours, Simone Baumann
Managing Director

LUKAS NATHRATH
DIRECTOR, ACTOR & WRITER

LENA URZENDOWSKY
ACTOR

SÖNKE ANDRESEN
WRITER

DASCHA DAUENHAUER
COMPOSER

ALISON KUHN
DIRECTOR, ACTOR & WRITER

WELKET BUNGUÉ
ACTOR

REZA MEMARI
WRITER & DIRECTOR

FACE TO FACE WITH GERMAN FILMS

THE FILMMAKERS



IN THIS ISSUE

INTRODUCTION Simone Baumann	3	WAS VON DER LIEBE BLEIBT BETWEEN US - Kanwal Sethi	31
PORTRAITS		ZONE Christina Friedrich	32
I ALWAYS NEED TO KNOW WHERE THINGS ARE LEADING A portrait of director Frauke Finsterwalder	6	NEW DOCUMENTARIES	
HARDLY A DULL MOMENT A portrait of director Axel Ranisch	8	RADICAL HOPE Martin Oetting	34
LOOKING BEYOND HORIZONS A portrait of producer Silvana Santamaria	10	SILVER HAIR STILL ROCKS Andrea Rütthlein, Matthias Lukoschek	35
A VERY PRIVILEGED, COMFORTABLE SITUATION A portrait of actor Sandra Hüller	12	WAR AND JUSTICE Marcus Vetter, Michele Gentile	36
TRANSPORT VALUES WITHOUT MORALISING A portrait of sales company Sola Media	14	NEW SHORTS	
NEW FEATURES		7+1 FRAGMENTE 7+1 FRAMGMENTS - Atefeh Kheirabadi, Mehrad Sepahnia ...	38
15 JAHRE 15 YEARS - Chris Kraus	16	BLICK GAZE - Mehrad Sepahnia, Atefeh Kheirabadi	39
DAS FLIEGENDE KLASSENZIMMER THE FLYING CLASSROOM - Carolina Hellsgård	17	SLIMANE Carlos Pereira	40
DIE THEORIE VON ALLEM THE THEORY OF EVERYTHING - Timm Kröger	18	ZOOPTICON - SONGS FROM A POSTHUMAN ARK Jon Frickey, Thies Mynther, Sandra Trostel	41
ECHO HOMO - THE EVOLUTION OF MANKIND, BETWEEN BREATHING, HEARTS AND ETERNITY (TOLD WITHOUT WORDS) - Wolfgang Schmiedt	19	UPCOMING PRODUCTIONS	
EIN GANZES LEBEN A WHOLE LIFE - Hans Steinbichler	20	791 KM Tobi Baumann	42
FALLING INTO PLACE Aylin Tezel	21	A BODY LIKE MINE Maja Classen	42
JOHNNY & ME - EINE ZEITREISE MIT JOHN HEARTFIELD JOHNNY & ME - A JOURNEY THROUGH TIME WITH JOHN HEARTFIELD - Katrin Rothe	22	DAS MEER IST DER HIMMEL THE SEA IS HEAVEN - Enkelejd Lluca	43
LASSIE - EIN NEUES ABENTEUER LASSIE - A NEW ADVENTURE - Andreas Cordes	23	HYSTERIA Mehmet Akif Büyükkatalay	43
MONSTER IM KOPF MONSTER INSIDE - Christina Ebelst	24	JENSEITS VON SCHULD BEYOND GUILT - Katrin Nemeč, Katharina Köster	44
MÜNTER & KANDINSKY MUENTER & KANDINSKY - THE BLUE RIDER - Marcus O. Rosenmüller	25	KRANKE WELT Stefan Roloff	44
NEUE GESCHICHTEN VOM FRANZ NEW TALES OF FRANZ - Johannes Schmid	26	LA DUNA Emerson Culurgioni, Stefanie Schroeder	45
NIKO 3 - BEYOND THE NORTHERN LIGHTS Kari Juusonen	27	SIEGER SEIN (WORKING TITLE) WINNERS (WORKING TITLE) Soleen Yusef	45
PONYHERZ - WILD UND FREI WILD HEART - RIDE TO FREEDOM - Markus Dietrich	28	WIE SCHMECKT DIE WASSERMELONE WHAT DOES WATERMELON TASTE LIKE Zhongzixia Yao	46
THABO - DAS NASHORNABENTEUER THABO AND THE RHINO CASE - Mara Eibl-Eibesfeldt	29	WIESENWOOD (WORKING TITLE) Jannis Alexander Kiefer	46
TOUCHED Claudia Rorarius	30	Shareholders & Supporters	47
		German Films Profile	48
		German Films Team	49
		Film Exporters	50
		Imprint	51

A close-up portrait of Frauke Finsterwalder, a woman with blonde, wavy hair and blue eyes. She is looking directly at the camera with a neutral expression. Her hands are raised to her chin, with her fingers resting against her skin. She is wearing a dark blue or black short-sleeved shirt with white cuffs. She has several rings on her fingers and a thin bracelet on her left wrist. The background is slightly blurred, showing what appears to be a window with curtains.

**I ALWAYS NEED TO
KNOW WHERE THINGS
ARE LEADING**

A PORTRAIT OF DIRECTOR FRAUKE FINSTERWALDER

Frauke Finsterwalder already knew at the age of six that she wanted to be a director. "I always wanted to tell stories for an audience." Until she arrived there, however, she went through several stages that she now describes as difficult but nonetheless incredibly important.

Frauke Finsterwalder was born in Hamburg in 1975. After leaving school, she began studying literature and history in Berlin. At the same time, she worked as an assistant director at the Maxim Gorki Theatre and the Volksbühne, Berlin: a first step in the direction of creative storytelling. But subsequently, she switched to the media industry and took a job as an editor for the *Süddeutsche Zeitung's* magazine: "That foray into journalism happened by chance," says Finsterwalder in retrospect. "In the early 2000s it was very difficult as a female director - in theatre, but especially in film. The profession was almost impossible for a woman." Journalism did not bring her much joy, either. "I was really unhappy!" Today, she describes this unhappiness as important because it encouraged her to be courageous - a courage that led her to the Hochschule für Fernsehen und Film (University of Television and Film) in Munich.

A good 20 years later, Frauke Finsterwalder is touring the world with her second feature-length film. *SISI & I* premiered at the Berlinale 2023, where it wowed audiences and critics alike. The focus is on two women, Empress Elisabeth of Austria-Hungary, and her Hungarian lady-in-waiting, Irma Sztára - played by Susanne Wolff and Sandra Hüller. Frauke Finsterwalder not only directed the black-humoured drama but also wrote the screenplay - as she did for her first feature film *FINSTERWORLD* - in collaboration with her husband, author Christian Kracht. For *SISI & I*, the two incorporated historical facts about the famous empress, but went on to the story more freely. "I was never really interested in the historical Sisi, more in the fact that women at that time lived in a kind of parallel universe, to which men had no access." *SISI & I*, therefore, is far more about unequal power relations - also between the women, since the lady-in-waiting was naturally at the mercy of the empress to some extent - but also about friendship, love "and everything in between", Finsterwalder says.

To date, Frauke Finsterwalder has made only films for which she has written the screenplay. For her, it is always a broad overall process: from the first idea, to the screenplay, the preparation, the shooting and post-production. "Unfortunately, I haven't yet been sent any screenplays that I liked. So, I guess I will go on doing everything myself for the time being." Finsterwalder believes the most important thing, for her job as director and work as a screenwriter, is being at one with herself and knowing herself well. "I always need to know what exactly I want to say, and where things are leading. Then I can be brave and listen to my inner voice." In the same breath, she adds: "Don't look at others, what they are shooting or writing or what is going down well right now. That dilutes what you do and you get boring, become less authentic."

The artist finds her ideas and inspiration on her travels, but above all in the different cultures and countries she has lived in - like the USA, Argentina, Italy, Kenya, and India. Finsterwalder often returns to Germany to visit and then feels like a stranger in her own culture. But she does not see that as a disadvantage; in fact, it sharpens her perspective. For *FINSTERWORLD* and *SISI & I*, those were exactly the right perspectives. In general, new perspectives are essential for Frauke Finsterwald: "I don't want to get stuck in my own comfort zone." This also applies to her curiosity about other genres. "I definitely want to make a horror film and have made several attempts to write one. But in the end, there are so many dramaturgical rules about how it works that I don't feel free. That's why I've preferred to incorporate horror elements into my films so far." Still, there are new ideas. The next project is already in the works, the script is written and preparations are underway. "If everything goes well, I'll be shooting next year!"

Angela Sonntag



HARDLY A DULL MOMENT

A PORTRAIT OF DIRECTOR AXEL RANISCH

Axel Ranisch must be one of the busiest directors in German cinema with a career that also encompasses opera, theatre, television, and radio. In June alone, he saw his latest film *ORPHEA IN LOVE* open in German cinemas, his staging of Handel's oratorio *SAUL* being the last production at Berlin's Komische Oper before its closure for renovation, the world premiere of two episodes from his first TV series *NAKED ABOVE BERLIN* in the New German TV Movies sidebar at the 40th edition of Filmfest München, and serving as one of the jury members for the Filmfest's CineRebels competition. But his journey to becoming a filmmaker was more by accident than a conscious plan. "As a young boy, I was more interested in going to the opera," the self-confessed classical nerd says. "And when I applied to take part in a theatre workshop in Brandenburg one summer, all the places were booked up, but there were some free in a video workshop."

"In the first week, I began to learn how to make films using a mini-DV camera and a simple editing system, and saw how I could bring all the disciplines together in one place: think up a story, put music on the soundtrack, act a role like in the theatre, and compose images." From that moment on, he was infected by the film bug and couldn't imagine doing anything else in the future other than making films. "Seeing Andreas Dresen's *GRILL POINT* was a real inspiration for me. It was so new and different, and so naturalistic and warm that I thought if I could be able to make films I would like to make them like that one," Ranisch recalls.

Initially, he trained as a media educator working on film projects with inmates in prisons or with school children. "It was like a film school in itself and the most influential period in my development as a filmmaker because it enabled me to improvise, and work with amateurs and not be afraid of doing this." His formal training as a director then came when he started studies at the Film University Babelsberg Konrad Wolf in 2004. "Within the first two weeks, I had gathered my own film family together and they are the ones I've made all films ever since - editor, DoP, sound mixer, sound designer, production designer and producer," Ranisch says.

His graduation film *DICKE MÄDCHEN* premiered at the Hof International Film Festival in October 2011 when he was hailed as a leading exponent of the German mumblecore subgenre along other filmmakers such as brothers Jakob and Tom Lass. A year later, he founded his own production company *Sehr gut Filme* with fellow students Dennis Pauls and Anne Banker and the actor Heiko Pinkowski, and followed his debut with such films as *ICH FÜHL MICH DISCO* (2013) and *ALKI ALKI* (2015) and *FAMILIE LOTZMANN AUF DEN BARRIKADEN* (2016) for television. "The joy of spontaneity and the enthusiasm for the moment always play a big role for me," he explains. "Another common trait in my films is that music plays a very important role - in fact, I always start them all with first having the music."

"I'm a student of Rosa von Praunheim and he drilled into us that we should tell stories about things we have a clue about, i.e. not that every film has to be autobiographical, but it makes sense to tell stories about things that come from our own world of experience," Ranisch continues. "So, that's my very first approach whenever I read a script is to see what my perspective would be and how to tell the story in an authentic way." Moreover, he isn't a filmmaker who likes working only in a particular genre: "I am not a fan of pigeonholes. I like to mix genres and you can see that especially in *ORPHEA IN LOVE* and my series *NAKED OVER BERLIN*. It's hard to categorise it because there's a bit of thriller here, then there's coming of age, a family story, and a musical strand, of course. And that's actually what I enjoy doing is having this mixture of genres."

Meanwhile, Ranisch has plenty on the boil in the coming months. This December will be the premiere at the Berliner Ensemble of the comedy *MUTTI, WAS MACHST DU DA?*, written with husband Paul Zacher, and they are currently developing their audio play *ANTON UND PEPE* for a TV series. In addition, June 2024 will see the premiere of his staging for the Komische Oper of Gerd Natschinski's "GDR operetta" *MESSESCHLAGER GISELA*, with Gisa Flake and Thorsten Merten, one of the leads in *NAKED OVER BERLIN*.

Martin Blaney

A close-up portrait of a woman with long, wavy brown hair, smiling slightly. She is wearing a dark brown blazer over a white top. The background is a dark, neutral color.

LOOKING BEYOND HORIZONS

A PORTRAIT OF PRODUCER SILVANA SANTAMARIA

What exactly makes a film into a German film? Silvana Santamaria, over coffee and croissants in Berlin-Kreuzberg, initially shrugs her shoulders over this question of definition. The filmmaker, born in 1978 in Marbach, Baden-Württemberg, is not a fan of narrow categories, anyway. Professionally, she has always looked well beyond her own horizons, as the director of films such as the documentary NOWHERE.KOSOVO, or the episodic family drama A PART OF ME (made together with her husband, Tunisian filmmaker Bilal Athimni), and as a producer with her own company, Soilfilms.

"I am interested primarily in personal destinies, not least in a social or political context, regardless of whether they are in the past, the present or even the future," Santamaria says succinctly, indicating the kind of stories that interest her. She realised that such stories do not necessarily have to be set in Germany during her studies at the Baden-Württemberg Film Academy, but mainly under the influence of her own experiences. As the daughter of an Italian who came to Germany as a guest worker, she grew up between different cultures: "Just because a project is set in another country or cultural sphere, that doesn't mean the issues it deals with are not relevant in Germany as well!"

Much as students were encouraged to follow their own interests during their academy training, there was little preparation for what later became Santamaria's speciality. "When a few fellow students and I started our own company after graduation, we realised at some point that we were shooting abroad most of the time, with German money," she recalls. "It was only then that we thought about possibly making these films as international co-productions." Collaboration with partners abroad has since become an integral feature of Soilfilms, where Santamaria is now the sole managing director – and with great success. Samir Nasr's SHARAF, a co-production with Tunisia, Luxembourg and France, was acclaimed at the Red Sea Film Festival, the JCC Carthage Film Festival in Tunis, and in Hof, among others, while PAMFIR by Ukrainian Dmytro Sucholytyk-Sobtschuk, which premiered at Cannes last year, was also shown in Karlovy Vary, Melbourne, Gothenburg and Warsaw, and received a nomination for the European Film Award.

Presenting herself and networking internationally was a process that took a lot of time and experience because clear guidelines are lacking, and not only because Santamaria did not study production. "Understanding how best to present such projects took a few years. And actually, I'm still learning," the Berliner-by-choice says, laughing. "Nothing is more important than building networks – at film markets, through mentoring projects or producer programmes." In 2023, for example, she was one of European Film Promotion's Producers on the Move in Cannes, which she describes as both a great honour and a confirmation of her work, as well as an ideal opportunity to make it more visible and establish contact with important industry representatives.

Santamaria does not believe that too many cooks spoil the broth when it comes to her co-productions: "As a rule, the experience of working together with different international partners is enormously enriching. When everyone knows where their place is within the project and how much they can or need to contribute, it actually works very well. Then, there is one main producer who leads the project; the others support that person because they are all pursuing the same vision."

This concept works very well for her, even if there is not usually as much funding and support for co-productions within the German film industry as there is available for purely German productions. This is also why Santamaria, who is currently preparing not only her next directorial work with Soilfilms but also several series (at least one of which has already won over a German broadcaster as partner), would like to see a little more progress in this country as far as the diversity of stories and the elimination of narrow mindsets is concerned: "There is more than one way a German production can be imagined, and made!"

Patrick Heidmann

A close-up portrait of actress Sandra Hüller. She has short, wavy, light brown hair and is looking directly at the camera with a neutral expression. She is wearing a white, button-down shirt with a fine grid pattern. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

A VERY PRIVILEGED, COMFORTABLE SITUATION

A PORTRAIT OF ACTOR SANDRA HÜLLER

In May, Sandra Hüller was crowned the “Queen of Cannes” by some German media – no doubt an inevitability when someone has the honour of playing two leading roles in the competition there. She has little time for such attributions herself, and equally, she does not care about accolades very much. But the fact that both of her new works were awarded the most important prizes in Cannes – ANATOMY OF A FALL with the Palme d’Or, and THE ZONE OF INTEREST with the Grand Prix du Jury – was rather special, the 45-year-old tells me on the phone.

“The fact that the award ceremony had this outcome not only makes me happy because I think both films are really exceptionally good,” she sums up. “I also liked the way that in both cases, the films were given awards per se – in other words, as collaborative works. Had I had been standing on stage alone for either of my roles, I would have found it just as strange as nothing happening at all.”

Hüller has experienced already how a much-fêted film can end up empty-handed at Cannes, with TONI ERDMANN in 2016. Nevertheless, Maren Ade’s film marked the international breakthrough for the Thuringian-born actress, who began her career in theatre after studying acting in Berlin. She went on to make a brilliant start in cinema with Hans-Christian Schmid’s REQUIEM and the Silver Bear at the Berlinale. “Suddenly, there was attention, and for me that was accompanied by a feeling of insecurity. I didn’t know what to make of it or what I was supposed to do now,” she recalls. “All those projections and expectations came from outside, but I was still sitting in the same kitchen at home in Leipzig, since nothing had changed in my real life, of course.”

So, what was Hüller’s immediate reaction after the moment of perplexity following TONI ERDMANN and its success? “Just to do something that I had never done before, and that I always thought I might be incapable of doing,” she states, alluding to her role in the popular mainstream comedy FACK JU GÖHTE 3. Nevertheless, her interest in unusual German debuts such as Michael Venus’s SCHLAF or DAS SCHWARZE QUADRAT by Peter Meister, as well as incisive

supporting roles (for example in Maria Schrader’s ICH BIN DEIN MENSCH and MÜNCHEN – IM ANGESICHT DES KRIEGES by Christian Schwochow) did not change. And the interest from abroad did not dwindle, either.

“I don’t find working on films a huge challenge. For me, it’s more of a very privileged, comfortable situation. At most, there was a minor linguistic difficulty in that case, because I had to improve my French a little, of course,” Hüller says with regard to ANATOMY OF A FALL, in which she faced Justine Triet’s camera for a second time. The French director had written the character of a German writer now living in France after spending time in London into her multilingual justice and relationship drama.

The difficulty lay elsewhere in Jonathan Glazer’s THE ZONE OF INTEREST, shot in German, in which she plays the wife of a concentration camp commander: “My approach to her was a purely technical one, because I didn’t want to empathise with her emotionally or psychologically. I approached the role from the outside and considered, for example, how a woman would move who has had so many children, or what marks physical work would have left on her. What I found more difficult was the fact that we had to constantly conceal where we were. After all, we were filming at original locations, in the immediate vicinity of the camp in Auschwitz.”

Meanwhile, Hüller, who discovered acting when she was still at school, will not be altering her family and work routine in Germany any time soon. “I live in Leipzig, I have a school-age child and I’m a German actress, it’s as simple as that,” she says, keeping any expectations in check even after her recent Cannes successes. “But I do find it incredibly exciting that doors have opened abroad, and not just for me. French or English colleagues are shooting with us or we are with them, and it’s no longer so important whether someone speaks another language without an accent. I think it’s amazing that there is more and more mixing, and I believe this development should go much further.”

Patrick Heidmann



Solveig Langeland, Johannes Busse © Samuel Ramm, 2022

TRANSPORTING VALUES WITHOUT MORALISING

A portrait of sales company SOLA MEDIA

"We are one of the few sales companies focusing on family entertainment and animation," says Norwegian-born Solveig Langeland whose company Stuttgart-based Sola Media will be celebrating its 20th anniversary in the business next year. "The first four years we also did arthouse and documentaries but then we switched to handling purely animation and family films," she recalls.

"Of course, we have competitors in our particular niche but those companies are also selling documentaries, arthouse and English-language films for adult audiences," Solveig says, pointing out "there's often a healthy competition for the same titles, but that makes you go the extra mile, it keeps you focused and maybe a little more hungry!"

"We feel very comfortable with the choice of our product focus because we think that kids are very important as the next generation of cinema-goers and we like to transport values without any kind of moralising," she continues. "What's unique about animation is that you can localise it for a particular market which is something you can't really do with any other genre," Solveig explains. "You can get some local stars for the voices, change a song or add a song with local artists, and that gives you lots of marketing possibilities in your local market that you wouldn't have with a live-action film." With five full-time staff and one part-timer, Sola Media only launches four to five films onto the market each year "which means that we can move very quickly to make changes to adapt to developments in the market."

The company normally comes onboard animation projects at the script stage because, as Solveig points out, "we can help in the creative process and give advice on the character designs and visuals." There isn't such a hard and fast rule when it comes to live-action, although Sola Media did board THE MAGIC FLUTE and THREE WISHES FOR CINDERELLA, and the company also considers pickups on completed films to complete its animation line-up.

At the same time, the company has been involved at different levels in the financing of

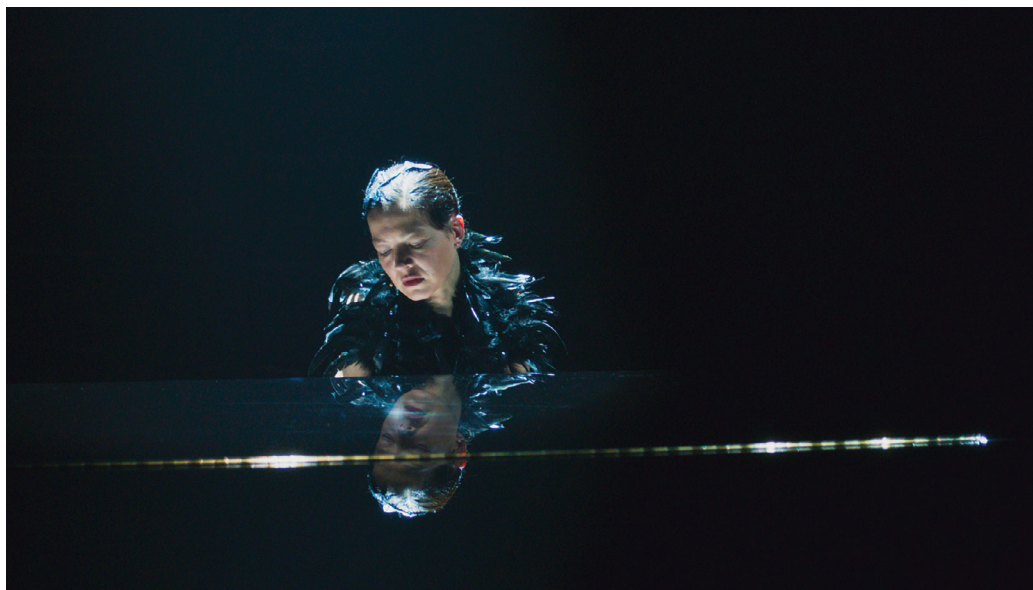
projects it has acquired for sales by helping the producers to find co-producers or tap into additional financing. Sola Media thus served, for example, as an executive producer on THREE WISHES FOR CINDERELLA and DREAM-BUILDERS as well as associate producer on such titles as MANOU THE SWIFT and LATTE AND THE MAGIC WATERSTONE.

Strong working relationships have been built up over the years with such animation industry players as Dirk Beinhold's Akkord Film (THE ELFKINS and RABBIT ACADEMY - MISSION: EGGPOSSIBLE) and the director Ali Samadi Ahadi with his animated feature film MOONBOUND and the live-action/animation THE MUCKLES - THE QUEST FOR A NEW HOME. "But obviously we are constantly on the lookout for new talents, so it's very important for us to be at places like Annecy's MIFA and Cartoon Movie," Solveig says. "Being in business now for 20 years means that we are on many people's radar, but we are still actively going out to look for business."

What's for certain is that the animation world holds Solveig and her team in high regard as shown by her peers voting for Sola Media to be honoured as Distributor of the Year at the Cartoon Movie market in Bordeaux in 2019. And films in Sola Media's line-up have gone on to make their mark at the box-office around the globe. In 2022, MOONBOUND and RABBIT ACADEMY - MISSION: EGGPOSSIBLE were the second and third most successful German films internationally only beaten to pole position in the Top 5 Films by Pablo Larrain's SPENCER. "MOONBOUND had a very successful release in France with 600,000-plus admissions, and also did well in territories like Turkey, Spain, Poland and Sweden," Solveig recalls. "We had received the selective scheme support from Creative Europe MEDIA which enabled us to produce many marketing assets like lots of little clips and elements for social media."

"Marketing assets are a key to our success," she concludes. "We spend a lot of time working with agencies to create material that people can use. Since we are in a visual business, it's important to have good, strong visual materials."

Martin Blaney



© DOR Film-West

15 JAHRE

15 YEARS

For 15 years, the former piano wunderkind Jenny was sentenced to prison for a murder she didn't commit. Since her release, she's been trying to numb her self-hatred with prayers at a Christian halfway house. When she meets the Syrian war refugee Omar who has a talent for singing, she agrees to play the piano for him on a TV music talent competition. However, by appearing on this show, Jenny also has to face the man who actually committed the crime for which she was convicted. During her 15 years in prison Fleischer, her first and only love, has become a pop star and judge of the music talent competition in which Jenny and Omar are one of the promising acts. After all these painful years in prison it is Jenny's moment to choose: Her desire for retribution, or a fragile happiness and future.

GENRE Drama **YEAR OF PRODUCTION** 2023 **DIRECTOR** Chris Kraus **SCREENPLAY** Chris Kraus
CINEMATOGRAPHY Daniela Knapp **CAST** Hannah Herzsprung, Albrecht Schuch, Hassan Akkouch,
 Christian Friedel, Adele Neuhauser, Desirée Nosbusch **PRODUCERS** Danny Krausz, Chris Kraus
PRODUCTION COMPANY Four Minutes Filmproduktion, DOR Film-West **RUNTIME** 143 min **LAN-
 GUAGE** German

WORLD SALES Picture Tree International
 pti@picturetree-international.com • www.picturetree-international.com



© LEONINE Studios/ UFA Fiction 2022/ Stephanie Külbach

DAS FLIEGENDE KLASSENZIMMER

THE FLYING CLASSROOM

Martina wins a scholarship to attend a prestigious boarding school in the Alps. Upon arrival, she instantly becomes embroiled in the bitter feud between the boarders and the "day pupils". Martina finds herself torn between academic aspirations, family responsibilities, and loyalty to newfound friends.

GENRE Children & Youth **YEAR OF PRODUCTION** 2022 **DIRECTOR** Carolina Hellsgård **SCREENPLAY** Gerrit Hermans **CINEMATOGRAPHY** Moritz Anton **CAST** Tom Schilling, Trystan Pütter, Hannah Herzsprung, Leni Deschner, Lovena Börschmann-Ziegler, Morten Völlger, Wanja Valentin Kube, Franka Roche, Holly Schiek, Leander Schumann, Aaron Sansi, Paul Lennard Sundheim **PRODUCERS** Sebastian Werninger, Benjamin Benedict **PRODUCTION COMPANY** UFA Fiction in coproduction with LEONINE Studios **RUNTIME** 90 min **LANGUAGE** German

WORLD SALES Global Screen - a Telepool brand
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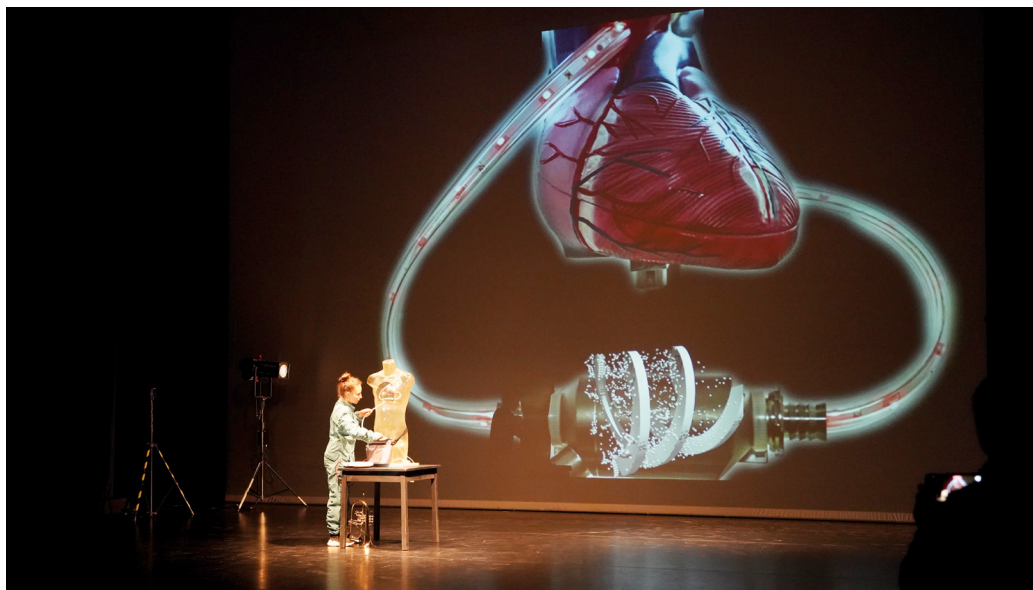
DIE THEORIE VON ALLEM

THE THEORY OF EVERYTHING

1962. Johannes Leinert (Jan Bülow), together with his doctoral advisor (Hanns Zischler), travels to a physics congress in the Swiss Alps, where an Iranian scientist is set to reveal a “groundbreaking theory of quantum mechanics”. But when the physicists arrive at the five star hotel, the Iranian guest is nowhere to be found. In the absence of a new theory to be discussed, Johannes remains at the hotel to work on his doctor’s thesis, but finds himself distracted, developing a special fascination with Karin, a young jazz pianist (Olivia Ross). Something about her seems strange, elusive. She seems to know things about him - things that he thought only he knew about. When one of the German physicists is found dead one morning, two inspectors arrive on the scene. Soon, Johannes finds himself dragged into a sinister story of false memories, real nightmares, and a dark, booming mystery hidden under the mountain.

GENRE Drama **YEAR OF PRODUCTION** 2023 **DIRECTOR** Timm Kröger **SCREENPLAY** Roderick Warich, Timm Kröger **CINEMATOGRAPHY** Roland Stuprich **CAST** Jan Bülow, Olivia Ross, Hanns Zischler, Gottfried Breitfuß, David Bennent, Philippe Graber **PRODUCERS** Heino Deckert, Viktoria Stolpe, Timm Kröger, Tina Börner, Lixi Frank, David Bohun, Sarah Born, Rajko Jazbec, Dario Schoch **PRODUCTION COMPANY** Ma.ja.de. Fiction GmbH in co-production with The Barricades, Panama Film KG, Catpics AG **RUNTIME** 118 min **LANGUAGES** German, French, Swiss-German **FESTIVALS** Venice International Film Festival 2023 (Venezia 80. Competition)

WORLD SALES Charades, Yohann Comte
sales@charades.eu • www.charades.eu



© Wolfgang Schmiedt

ECHO HOMO - THE EVOLUTION OF MANKIND, BETWEEN BREATHING, HEARTS AND ETERNITY (TOLD WITHOUT WORDS)

The trilogy ECHO HOMO depicts a tryptichon: In the beginning of everything was a breath, in the middle of everything is a heartbeat, and in the future is a prognosis of pain, redemption, and eternity. The film trilogy ECHO HOMO meditates on our humanity across diverse mediums, in music, in dance, in pantomime, in art. It tells a story of the struggle for growth and knowledge, of the struggle for intimacy and relationships, of the struggle for togetherness and unity, of progress and departure - all without a spoken word. Part 1 Homo Erectus - I can Breathe ... fragility and power Humanity connects with nature - breath as the origin of our being (15 minutes) Part 2 Homo Sapiens - The Beauty of the Heartbeat ... between autonomy and attachment Humanity connects with humanity - the heartbeat as the center of our being (30 minutes) Part 3 Homo Deus - Slave to the Rhythm of Medicine ... between fear and hope Humanity connects with technology - the beat of technology (15 minutes)

GENRE Art, Experimental, Music **YEAR OF PRODUCTION** 2023 **DIRECTOR** Wolfgang Schmiedt
CINEMATOGRAPHY Steffen Cieplik **PRODUCER** Wolfgang Schmiedt **PRODUCTION COMPANY**
 KlangRäume Musik & Medienproduktion **RUNTIME** 61 min **LANGUAGE** German

WORLD SALES KlangRäume Musik & Medienproduktion
 info@wolfgangschmiedt.de • www.wolfgangschmiedt.de



© Tobis

EIN GANZES LEBEN

A WHOLE LIFE

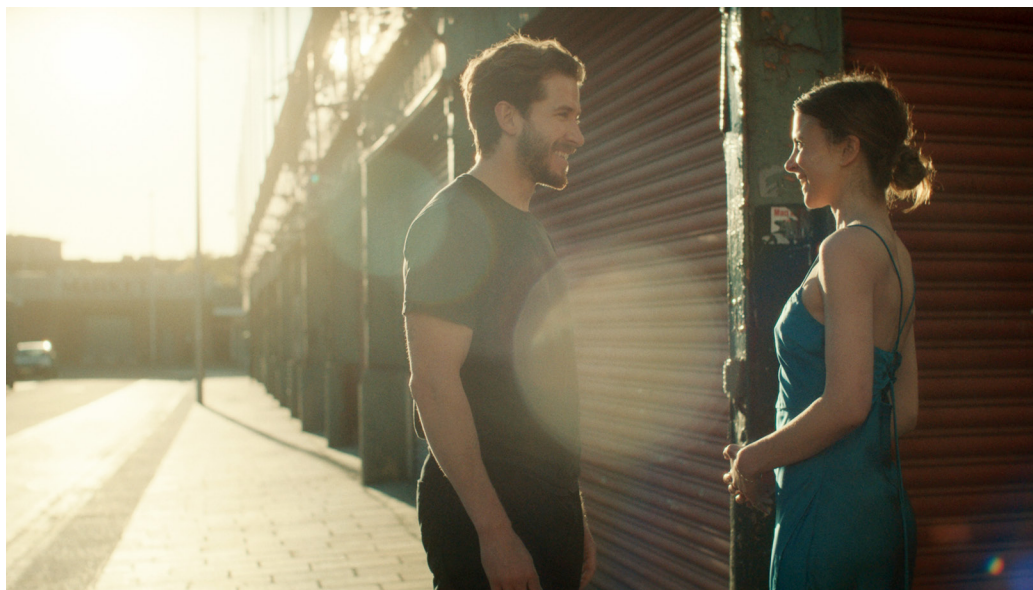
At the turn of the 20th century, the young orphan Andreas is sent to live with his ruthless uncle on a farm in a remote valley. Treated not as family but as a worker, Andreas endures a childhood without affection, full of brutality and hard labour. At the age of 18, Andreas has seen only hardship but finds the courage to leave his oppressor. Though partly crippled by his uncle, he has grown into a strong man and finds work as a woodsman. He works on the construction of an invention: the mountain ropeway, which marks the beginning of alpine tourism but is paid for with many lives. Andreas is now able to buy himself a small cabin in the mountains and finds love for the first time. Marie is the light of his life, but his dreams are shattered and Andreas enlists as a soldier in the German Wehrmacht on the Russian frontline with little hope left. He only thinks of Marie. When he returns returns from the madness of to his valley, the world has changed. Despite all his hardships and Marie always in his heart, Andreas accepts and cherishes the time that is left for him with humility.

Based on the world bestseller by Robert Seethaler, published in more than 40 languages.

GENRE Drama **YEAR OF PRODUCTION** 2023 **DIRECTOR** Hans Steinbichler **SCREENPLAY** Ulrich Limmer **CINEMATOGRAPHY** Armin Franzen **CAST** Stefan Gorski **PRODUCER** Timm Oberwelland **PRODUCTION COMPANY** epo-film/Vienna **RUNTIME** 108 min **LANGUAGE** German **GERMAN DISTRIBUTOR** TOBIS Film

WORLD SALES Picture Tree International

pti@picturetree-international.com • www.picturetree-international.com



© Weydemann Bros. GmbH, Julian Krubasik

FALLING INTO PLACE

Kira and Ian, two 30-somethings, meet all too briefly over a winter weekend on the Isle of Skye and form a sudden, deep, and surprising bond. Back in London, they try to move on with their separate lives - but both have to stop running from themselves before they are ready to truly meet.

GENRE Drama, Love Story / Romance **YEAR OF PRODUCTION** 2022 **DIRECTOR** Aylin Tezel
SCREENPLAY Aylin Tezel **CINEMATOGRAPHY** Julian Krubasik **CAST** Aylin Tezel, Chris Fulton, Alexandra Dowling, Rory Fleck Byrne **PRODUCERS** Jakob D. Weydemann, Jonas Weydemann, Yvonne McWellie, Milena Klemcke, John McKay **PRODUCTION COMPANIES** Weydemann Bros., Compact Pictures **RUNTIME** 113 min **LANGUAGE** English **GERMAN DISTRIBUTOR** Port au Prince Pictures

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© H&U Film

JOHNNY & ME - EINE ZEITREISE MIT JOHN HEARTFIELD

JOHNNY & ME - A JOURNEY THROUGH TIME WITH JOHN HEARTFIELD

Graphic designer Stefanie is having a creative crisis with boring advertising assignments and a boss who does not value her work. During a visit to a museum, she is magically attracted to the satirical photomontages of the world-famous colleague and Nazi opponent John Heartfield. Then a miracle happens, she suddenly turns up in his studio.

GENRE Art, Biopic, Coming-of-Age Story, Educational, History **CATEGORY** Documentary, Animation Feature **YEAR OF PRODUCTION** 2023 **DIRECTOR** Katrin Rothe **CINEMATOGRAPHY** Thomas Eirich-Schneider **PRODUCERS** Gunter Hanfgarn, Andrea Ufer **CO-PRODUCERS** Ralph Wieser, Sereina Gabathuler, Werner Schweizer **PRODUCTION COMPANIES** Hanfgarn & Ufer, Mischief Films, Dschoint Ventschr **RUNTIME** 104 min **LANGUAGE** German **FESTIVALS** Annecy International Animation Film Festival 2023 **GERMAN DISTRIBUTOR** RealFiction

WORLD SALES New Docs, Elina Kewitz
elina.kewitz@newdocs.de • www.newdocs.de



© Conny Klein

LASSIE - EIN NEUES ABENTEUER

LASSIE - A NEW ADVENTURE

Flo (Nico Marischka) is twelve years old and the Collie female dog Lassie, is his best friend. Since he can think, he and his faithful dog live in a quiet village in southern Germany. But one day Florian's father Andreas (Sebastian Bezzel) loses his job, which leads to the family having to move to a smaller apartment where Lassie can no longer live because no dogs are allowed there. It almost breaks Flo's heart. Lassie finds a new home with Graf von Sprengel, who immediately sets off on a holiday at the North Sea with Lassie and his granddaughter Priscilla. But there Lassie isn't treated well by the sneaky janitor. When the opportunity presents itself, Lassie tears herself apart and begins an adventurous journey across Germany, always in search of Flo. But Lassie is not the only one who sets off on a journey. Flo also can't stand it any longer and starts a search for his dog. It won't be easy to get the duo down!

GENRE Adventure, Children & Youth, Family Entertainment **YEAR OF PRODUCTION** 2023 **DIRECTOR** Hanno Olderdissen **SCREENPLAY** Andreas Cordes **CINEMATOGRAPHY** Carol Burandt von Kameke **CAST** Katharina Schüttler, Justus von Dohnányi, Annette Frier, Nico Marischka **PRODUCER** Henning Ferber **PRODUCTION COMPANY** LCH 2 Film UG in co-production with Leonine Studios **RUNTIME** 90 min **LANGUAGE** German **FESTIVALS** Goldener Spatz 2023 **AWARDS** Goldener Spatz - Best Feature 2023 **GERMAN DISTRIBUTOR** Global Screen - a Telepool brand

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MONSTER IM KOPF

MONSTER INSIDE

Heavily pregnant, Sandra has been sitting in prison for a few months, fiercely fighting to keep her child with her even after birth. However, the social worker and the youth welfare office are skeptical about her ability to handle it. They fear that if Sandra is put under pressure, she will revert to old patterns and lose control. In parallel, we witness Sandra in the time before her incarceration, as a strong woman who navigates through life with unyielding strength. She takes care of her elderly mother and has a passionate relationship. She is under tremendous pressure, driven, and sometimes, out of nowhere, reacts forcefully to whatever comes her way. Unstoppably, she is heading towards the moment that changes everything and for which she is being punished...

GENRE Drama **YEAR OF PRODUCTION** 2023 **DIRECTOR** Christina Ebelt **SCREENPLAY** Christina Ebelt **CINEMATOGRAPHY** Bernhard Keller **CAST** Franziska Hartmann, Slavko Popadić, Martina Eitner-Acheampong **PRODUCERS** Harry Flöter, Jörg Siepman, Regina Jorissen **PRODUCTION COMPANY** 2Pilots Filmproduction **RUNTIME** 99 min **LANGUAGE** German **FESTIVALS** Filmfest München 2023

WORLD SALES 2Pilots Filmproduction
regina@2pilots.de • www.2pilots.de



© Stephanie Kulbach - CCC Cinema und Television GmbH

MÜNTER & KANDINSKY

MUENTER & KANDINSKY - THE BLUE RIDER

June 3rd 2023, was the last shooting day where the final scenes of a very special arthouse movie, that has never been fictionalized before, took place: MUENTER & KANDINSKY. It shows how the pair Gabriele Münter and Wassily Kandinsky spent their years together, as extraordinary artists and passionate lovers. Both co-founders of "The Blaue Reiter", one of the most famous loose groups of artists of Classical Modernism at the beginning of the 20th century. But while he enjoys the fame, admiration, artistic and financial recognition, she struggles with her life by his side. The relationship becomes increasingly complicated, tiring and, above all, toxic.

GENRE Drama **YEAR OF PRODUCTION** 2023/2024 **DIRECTOR** Marcus O. Rosenmüller **SCREEN-PLAY** Alice Brauner **CINEMATOGRAPHY** Namche Okon **CAST** Vanessa Loibl, Vladimir Burlakov, Felix Klare, Monika Gossmann, Marianne Sägebrect **PRODUCER** Dr. Alice Brauner, Michael Zechbauer **PRODUCTION COMPANY** CCC Cinema und Television/Berlin in co-production with MZ-Film/Munich, Pamy/Arlesheim, Gretchenfilm/Hamburg **RUNTIME** 120 min **LANGUAGE** German **DUBBED VERSION** English **GERMAN DISTRIBUTOR** Camino Filmverleih/Stuttgart

WORLD SALES The Playmaker Munich
 worldsales@playmaker.de • www.playmaker.de



© NGF

NEUE GESCHICHTEN VOM FRANZ

NEW TALES OF FRANZ

Do you know what it's like when a big problem starts out small? Franz, a short kid from Vienna, certainly does. His best friends, Gabi and Eberhard, are always bickering. But Franz likes them both equally and is always caught in the middle. Friendship on separate schedules? That won't work: dividing up their vacation will just mean less vacation. If they want to catch their utterly strict and altogether suspicious neighbor, Mrs. Berger, in the act of stealing, they'll simply have to work together as detectives. Things do always turn out quite differently than expected but in the end friendship wins.

GENRE Children & Youth, Comedy, Family Entertainment **YEAR OF PRODUCTION** 2023 **DIRECTOR** Johannes Schmid **SCREENPLAY** Sarah Wassermair **CINEMATOGRAPHY** Matthias Grunsky **CAST** Jossi Jantschitsch, Nora Reidinger, Leo Wacha **PRODUCER** Katharina Posch, Ingo Fliess, Michael Kitzberger **PRODUCTION COMPANY** if... Productions, NGF **RUNTIME** 72 min **LANGUAGE** German **FESTIVALS** Filmfest München 2023

WORLD SALES atlas international film
sales@atlasfilm.com • www.atlasfilm.com



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NIKO 3 - BEYOND THE NORTHERN LIGHTS

In his third adventure, the flying reindeer boy Niko's biggest dream is to become a member of Santa's Flying Forces. But he gets challenged by the super talented reindeer girl Stella who shatters that dream. Niko has to decide between trust and loyalty.

GENRE Children & Youth, Family **YEAR OF PRODUCTION** 2023 **DIRECTOR** Kari Juusonen
SCREENPLAY Kari Juusonen **PRODUCERS** Hannu Tuomainen in co-production with Emely Christians **PRODUCTION COMPANY** A. Film A/S (Kopenhagen), Ulysses Filmproduktion GmbH (Hamburg), Animaker Oy (Helsinki), Moetion Films (Galway) **RUNTIME** 85 min **LANGUAGE** English

WORLD SALES Global Screen - a Telepool brand
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© Christine Schroeder

PONYHERZ - WILD UND FREI

WILD HEART - RIDE TO FREEDOM

Moving from the city to the countryside, 11-year-old Anni has a tough time settling in - until she encounters Wild Heart, an untamed horse, to whom she feels an almost magical connection. But soon after, their bond is put at risk, as some ruthless horse thieves are targeting Wild Heart's herd. Struggling in getting along with her classmates, Anni initially sets out to rescue the horses on her own - just to realize that she already has some real friends by her side...

GENRE Children & Youth **YEAR OF PRODUCTION** 2023 **DIRECTOR** Markus Dietrich **SCREEN-PLAY** Peter Freund **CINEMATOGRAPHY** Leah Striker **CAST** Martha Haberland, Franz Krause, Sophie Lutz, Dieter Hallervorden, Nilam Farooq, Peter Lohmeyer **PRODUCER** Lennart Lenzing **PRODUCTION COMPANY** Riva Filmproduktion GmbH **RUNTIME** 100 min **LANGUAGE** German **GERMAN DISTRIBUTOR** Plaion Pictures & Studiocanal

WORLD SALES Sola Media
 johannes@sola-media.com • www.sola-media.com



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THABO - DAS NASHORNABENTEUER

THABO AND THE RHINO CASE

Eleven-year-old Thabo wants to become a private detective like in the movies. If only his home, the small African village of Hlatikulu, was not the most peaceful savannah paradise. But things take a sudden turn when a rhino is murdered in the neighboring safari park because of its precious horn. Thabo's uncle Vusi, of all people, is under suspicion. Now it is up to Thabo and his new friend Emma from Germany to not only take care of the abandoned baby rhino but also investigate and capture the culprits.

GENRE Adventure, Children & Youth **YEAR OF PRODUCTION** 2023 **DIRECTOR** Mara Eibl-Eibesfeldt **SCREENPLAY** Martin Gypkens, Ursula Gruber **CINEMATOGRAPHY** Britta Mangold **CAST** Andrea Sawatzki, Litlhakayane Litlhonefatso, Ava Skuratowski **PRODUCER** Peter Herrmann **PRODUCTION COMPANY** Desert Flower Filmproduktion/Munich **RUNTIME** 96 min **LANGUAGE** German **DISTRIBUTOR** Wild Bunch Germany

WORLD SALES Sola Media
 johannes@sola-media.com • www.sola-media.com



© Katharina Poblitzki

TOUCHED

Maria's work as a caregiver at a residential facility for people with disabilities takes a thrilling turn when she meets Alex, a paraplegic resident. Despite the challenges of their situation, they embark on a forbidden and unconventional romantic relationship, fueled by their inexperience with sex and the intensity of their connection. As their relationship deepens, Alex's demands become increasingly overwhelming, leaving Maria feeling conflicted and torn. When Alex humiliates her, Maria's desperation reaches a boiling point. The story explores the complexities of love amidst dependencies, showing how the very factors that brought them together make it almost impossible for them to truly connect. This powerful and thought-provoking story delves into the nature of love, power, and desire, and the struggles that arise when these forces collide in the context of an unconventional relationship.

GENRE Drama **YEAR OF PRODUCTION** 2023 **DIRECTOR** Claudia Rorarius **SCREENPLAY** Claudia Rorarius **CAST** Isold Halldóruðóttir, Stavros Zafeiris, Angeliki Papoulia, Yousef Sweid **PRODUCERS** Harry Flöter, Jörg Siepmann in co-production with Claudia Rorarius **PRODUCTION COMPANY** 2Pilots Filmproduction in co-production with Soquiet Filmproduktion **RUNTIME** 133 min **LANGUAGES** German, English, Greek, Icelandic **FESTIVALS** Locarno International Filmfestival 2023

WORLD SALES 2Pilots Filmproduction
joerg@2pilots.de • www.2pilots.de



© Erik Molberg/Rohfilm Production

WAS VON DER LIEBE BLEIBT BETWEEN US

After 15 years living together and a daughter, Ilyas and Yasemin are still lovers. They run a café together. Out of the blue, Yasemin is shot there by strangers. Ilyas' world collapses. As if that were not enough, the investigation revolves around him, their family and friends instead of trying to track down the killers.

GENRE Drama **YEAR OF PRODUCTION** 2023 **DIRECTOR** Kanwal Sethi **SCREENPLAY** Kanwal Sethi
CINEMATOGRAPHY Erik Molberg Hansen **CAST** Serkan Kaya, Seyneb Saleh **PRODUCER** Benny Drechsel
PRODUCTION COMPANY Rohfilm Productions **RUNTIME** 95 min **LANGUAGE** German
GERMAN DISTRIBUTOR: Filmwelt Verleihagentur

CONTACT Rohfilm Productions
contact@rohfilm-productions • www.rohfilm-productions.com



© Madonnenwerk

ZONE

A young woman sets out in search of counter-places and a life that feels like her own. Together with a goddess, she creates the Harz Mountains. She wanders the lowlands and finds a disturbing world. She lives in the walls and abandoned places. She wants to believe, hope, and love and experiences compulsion, tyranny and order. She dances in a train station hall, watches drinking games with Nordhäuser Doppelkorn and eats the director's birthday cake. The war returns to their dreams and she hears great symphony orchestras playing just for her. On her beautiful and terrible journey she meets people with whom she breaks the silence. It is a visually epochal exploration and confronts the question of identity and its location in space and history.

GENRE Drama **YEAR OF PRODUCTION** 2023 **DIRECTOR** Christina Friedrich **SCREENPLAY** Christina Friedrich **CINEMATOGRAPHY** Katharina Mänz, Felix Müller, Katja Rivas Pinzón, Emma Lena Weber **CAST** Kea Krassau, Rosa Wassermann, Julischka Eichel, Alois Reinhardt, Gina Haller, Franz Liebig, Heiner Take, Hagen Ritschel **PRODUCERS** Christina Friedrich, Franz Liebig **PRODUCTION COMPANY** Madonnenwerk **RUNTIME** 131 min **LANGUAGE** German **GERMAN DISTRIBUTOR** eksystemt Filmverleih

WORLD SALES Madonnenwerk
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GERMAN FILMS PODCASTS



published every third Thursday



published every second Tuesday



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RADICAL HOPE

Capitalism, globalisation, industrialisation – our systems are broken. Who dares to change them? In early 2018, Katherine Trebeck and Lorenzo Fioramonti embark on two ambitious projects to move our societies away from their self-destructive path. They struggle, fail, pick themselves up again – and forge a path that may change our future.

Katherine Trebeck initiates the ‘Wellbeing Economy Governments’, an international alliance opposed to the mighty G7: countries that pursue ‘wellbeing for people and planet’ and not GDP growth. While she works tirelessly to make it happen, the project flounders, gets revived and evolves. Eventually, it unites five countries: Scotland, New Zealand, Iceland, Wales, and Finland. But they have a long way to go to make a global impact.

Lorenzo Fioramonti helped start the alliance; suddenly he is invited to run for office in his home country Italy. He wins a parliamentary seat in the 2018 election and hopes to create a wellbeing economy as a minister. Yet he gets sidelined in a troubled coalition. When it falls apart and a new government forms, he can implement some of his bold ideas. However, the backlash is so strong that he resigns in the end.

GENRE Politics/Society **YEAR OF PRODUCTION** 2023 **DIRECTOR** Martin Oetting **SCREENPLAY** Martin Oetting **PRODUCERS** Lars Jessen, Jan-Peter Heusermann, in co-production with Martin Oetting **PRODUCTION COMPANY** Florida Film, Berlin **RUNTIME** 96 min **LANGUAGE** English

WORLD SALES Florida Film GmbH
 jp.heusermann@floridafilm.de • www.floridafilm.de



© Andrea Rütthlein

SILVER HAIR STILL ROCKS

In the 70s, freethinkers, artists and dropouts from the commercialized world discovered the idyllic beaches of Goa. These 'hippie freaks' spent every winter there, like-minded in the love of Goa. In 'Silver Hair Still Rocks', shot on original locations in India, long-time friends and contemporary witnesses including Goan locals trace a world of awakening, a world full of freedom, lust and spirituality. Especially by the pandemic now Goa has fundamentally changed. But the remaining 'hippie freaks' still party and dance. Embedded in atmospheric pictures their memories revive the magic of Goa.

GENRE Family Entertainment **YEAR OF PRODUCTION** 2022 **DIRECTORS** Andrea Rütthlein, Matthias Lukoschek **SCREENPLAY** Andrea Rütthlein **PRODUCERS** Matthias Lukoschek in Coproduction with Andrea Rütthleins **PRODUCTION COMPANY** Rütthlein & Lukoschek Film & TV Produktion **RUN-TIME** 96 min **LANGUAGE** English **FESTIVALS** Cinemaking IFF Dhaka, Bangladesh 2022, Section: Documentary Film/European; 8th Rajasthan IFF Jaipur, Indien 2022, Section: International Documentary Film; 56 IFF Hof 2022, Section: Feature Length Documentary Film "Granit"; Global Taj IFF Agra, Indien 2022, Section: Best Documentary **AWARDS** Best Director Award, Documentary Film/European Section, at the 2022 Cinemaking International Film Festival, Best Director Award, International Documentary Film at the 8th Rajasthan International Film Festival 2022, Finalist in Documentary Film Competition at the 56th Hof International Film Festival, Best Documentary Award at the Global Taj International Film Festival 2022, Semi-Finalist at the Dumbo International Film Festival 2023

WORLD SALES Rütthlein & Lukoschek Film & TV Produktion
andrearuetthlein@aol.com



© Filmperspektive

WAR AND JUSTICE

In this groundbreaking documentary, through unprecedented access WAR AND JUSTICE captures the riveting 20 year journey of legendary prosecutor Luis Moreno-Ocampo – and the International Criminal Court (ICC) at its inception, on their controversial mission to end crimes against humanity. Today, in 2022, the ICC is more in demand than ever. Russia decided to militarily occupy part of Ukraine, and 43 states responded by asking the ICC to intervene. Ukraine accepted the court's jurisdiction to investigate possible war crimes and crimes against humanity, Karim Kahn, the ICC's current prosecutor, is active but cannot prosecute the crime of aggression because an amendment to the law adopted in 2017 requires the consent of the aggressor, in this case Russia. Ten years after Luis Moreno Ocampo handed over his post as prosecutor to Fatou Bensouda, he is returning to Europe for the first time. Ocampo addresses the world community in a keynote speech about being at a crossroad.

GENRE Documentary Films **YEAR OF PRODUCTION** 2023 **DIRECTORS** Marcus Vetter, Michele Gentile **SCREENPLAY** Marcus Vetter **CINEMATOGRAPHY** Christian Haardt **CAST** Luis Moreno-Ocampo, Benjamin Ferencz, Karim Khan, Angelina Jolie **PRODUCERS** Marcus Vetter, Anita Elsani, Ulf Meyer, Derek Britt **PRODUCTION COMPANIES** Filmperspektive GmbH, Elsani & Neary Media GmbH, Derek Britt Films **RUNTIME** 93 min **LANGUAGE** German **FESTIVALS** Filmfest München 2023

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7+1 FRAGMENTE

7+1 FRAMGMENTS

An anthology of diverse women's narrative in different worlds with different colors, as well as their remarkable experiences in the process of women's empowerment. Self-reflection and re-reflection, feeling of the moment, broken lines, unclosed and resumed forms, this is the different situations in 7+1 fragments that appear next to each other - even inside each other. The film is a free adaptation from "Haft Peykar" an epic by Nizami.

GENRE Short Films, Art, Drama, Experimental, Fantasy, Theater, Literature, Music, Tragicomedy, Biopic **YEAR OF PRODUCTION** 2022 **DIRECTORS** Atefeh Kheirabadi, Mehrad Sepahnia **SCREEN-PLAY** Atefeh Kheirabadi, Mehrad Sepahnia **PRODUCERS** Atefeh Kheirabadi, Mehrad Sepahnia **PRODUCTION COMPANY** Realillusion **RUNTIME** 30 min **LANGUAGE** German

WORLD SALES Realillusion

info@mehratefe.com • www.mehratefe.com



© Atefeh Kheirabadi and Mehrad Sepahnia

BLICK GAZE

A new encounter of a couple confronted with emotional situation after the brutal murder of Jina Mahsa Amini. A look into the question: how to go on with the break between everyday life and life in their minds. They are confronted with the issues like execution, murder, although everything is normal and comfortable in Berlin. They try to resist in your everyday life.

GENRE Culture, Drama, Art, Experimental, Literature, Love Story / Romance, Melodrama **YEAR OF PRODUCTION** 2023 **DIRECTORS** Mehrad Sepahnia, Atefeh Kheirabadi **SCREENPLAY** Mehrad Sepahnia **PRODUCER** Atefeh Kheirabadi **PRODUCTION COMPANY** Realillusion **RUNTIME** 14 min **LANGUAGE** German and Farsi

WORLD SALES Realillusion
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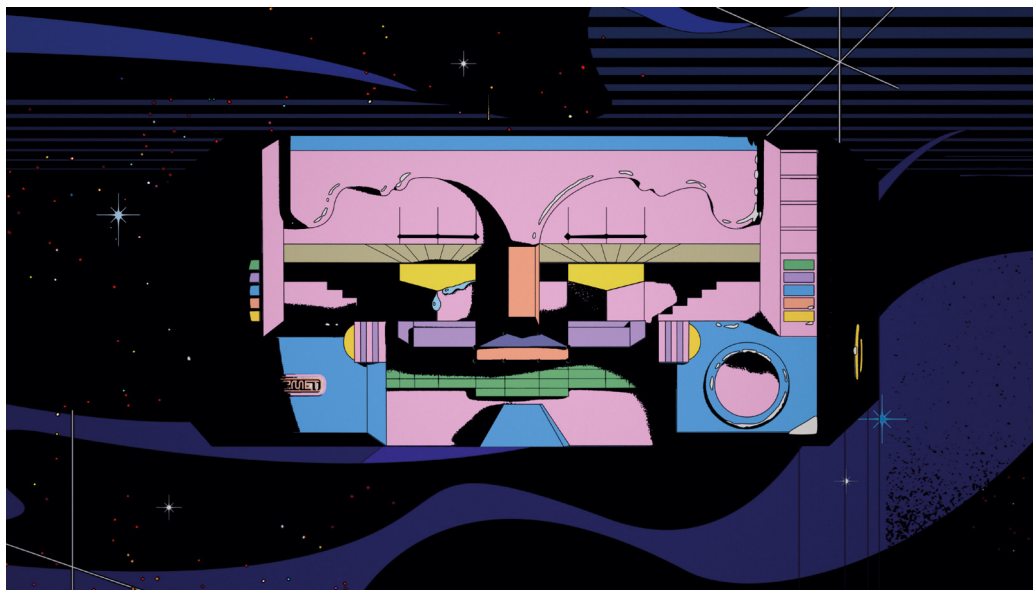


SLIMANE

In a near future Germany, queer people become, even more, marginalized and under threat. On the last day of winter, Omar is released from prison. As a first stop he visits Ava, his best friend, who didn't expect to see him. The world keeps falling apart and fear seems to defeat hope.

GENRE Drama **YEAR OF PRODUCTION** 2023 **DIRECTOR** Carlos Pereira **SCREENPLAY** Carlos Pereira **CINEMATOGRAPHY** Karim Marold **EDITOR** Vanessa Heeger **CAST** Akin Victor, Banafshe Hourmazdi **PRODUCERS** Clara Puhlmann, Carlotta Cornehl **PRODUCTION COMPANY** Deutsche Film- und Fernsehakademie Berlin (DFFB) **RUNTIME** 19 min **LANGUAGE** German **FESTIVALS** Locarno 2023

WORLD SALES Deutsche Film- und Fernsehakademie Berlin (DFFB)
a.wenzel@dffb.de • www.dffb.de



© Fairy Bot Productions

ZOOPTICON – SONGS FROM A POSTHUMAN ARK

The Zopticon, a spaceship filled with cultural artifacts, is floating through outer space. Five mutated singing animals are its inhabitants. When they finally encounter each other and realize that they all are living souvenirs shot into space as part of a Theme Park from a mysterious planet called Earth, they decide to emancipate themselves.

GENRE Drama-Comedy, Sci-Fi-Musical **YEAR OF PRODUCTION** 2023 **DIRECTORS** Jon Frickey, Thies Mynter, Sandra Trostel **VOICE CAST** Achan Malonda, Sarah Thom, Alex Murray-Leslie, Dong Zhou, Amanda Romero, Veit Sprenger, Roos Voima **PRODUCER** Sandra Trostel **PRODUCTION COMPANY** Fairy Bot Productions **RUNTIME** 29 min **LANGUAGE** English **FESTIVALS** Curtas Vila do Conde 2023 **FESTIVAL DISTRIBUTION** Square Eyes Films

WORLD SALES Fairy Bot Productions
mail@fairybot.net • www.fairybot.net



© PANTALEON Films Producers United Film

791 KM

791 kilometres: that's the distance between Munich and Hamburg you can easily cover by train or plane - unless a storm paralyses all of the connections. This is what happens on this particular evening when Marianne, Tiana, Susi and Philipp end up sharing a ride in Josef's taxi. All are complete strangers, but they just have to get to Hamburg - whatever it takes. The journey through the night sees the most diverse personalities, life stories and views clashing in the smallest of spaces. But as they near their destination, it becomes clear that there is no such thing as that one single truth and things are sometimes different from what would seem to be the case at first glance.

GENRE Comedy, Drama, Road Movie **CATEGORY** Feature **DIRECTOR** Tobi Baumann **SCREENPLAY** Gernot Gricksch **CINEMATOGRAPHY** Philipp Kirsamer **CAST** Iris Berben, Joachim Król, Nilam Farooq, Ben Münchow, Lena Urzendowsky **PRODUCERS** Dan Maag, Patrick Zorer, Marco Beckmann, Kristina Löbber, Willi Geike **PRODUCTION COMPANIES** Pantaleon Films GmbH and ProU Producers United Film GmbH in co-production with SevenPictures Film GmbH, Brainpool TV, B.A. Produktion GmbH, and WS Filmproduktion **LANGUAGE** German **GERMAN DISTRIBUTOR** ProU Producers United Film GmbH

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 www.pantaflixgroup.com/de/



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A BODY LIKE MINE

A BODY LIKE MINE is an intimate documentary delving into the relationship between an artist and her creation, Puck, exploring their journey as queer, non-white beings navigating a world that often fails to fully embrace their existence.

At the core of the film lies an exploration of the fluid boundaries between art, identity, and sexual presentation, with Puck's work in porn, performance and other creative expressions becoming a conduit for both self-preservation and empowerment.

Through interviews, performances and tender observational moments, the film captures Puck's struggles, triumphs, and moments of self-acceptance, celebrating their authenticity and challenging societal norms.

GENRE Experimental, LGBTQIA+ **CATEGORY** Documentary Short **DIRECTOR** Maja Classen **SCREENPLAY** Maja Classen **CINEMATOGRAPHY** Alina Albrecht **CAST** Puck **PRODUCER** Saralisa Volm **PRODUCTION COMPANY** Poison GmbH **LANGUAGE** English **GERMAN DISTRIBUTOR** Poison Film Distributio

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DAS MEER IST DER HIMMEL THE SEA IS HEAVEN

Enkelejd Lluca's debut feature follows 35-year-old Leon on a road trip through Albania encountering surreal situations and fascinating characters on a mission to fulfil his late grandfather's last wish to take his ashes through the country and scatter them into the sea. Leon had never wanted to see his family again after they sent him to Germany as a small child, and he is initially reluctant to return back home. However, during his journey, he learns more than he could have ever imagined about himself, his home country and life itself. What's more, he discovers a family secret that leaves everyone speechless.

GENRE Road Movie **CATEGORY** Feature
DIRECTOR Enkelejd Lluca **SCREENPLAY**
 Enkelejd Lluca **CINEMATOGRAPHY** Dennis
 Mill **CAST** Blerim Destani, Ariana Gansuh, Murat
 Seven, Edon Rizvanolli, Gezim Rudi, Ndrim
 Xhepa **PRODUCERS** Sebastian Sgodzai,
 Enkelejd Lluca, Dominik Utz, Martin Schwimmer
PRODUCTION COMPANIES Park Eleven UG
 and Domar Film GmbH in co-production with
 Saarländischer Rundfunk **LANGUAGE** German,
 Albanian

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© Filmfaust

HYSTERIA

When a Quran is accidentally burned on a film set and crucial footage mysteriously disappears, assistant director Elif is drawn into a whirlwind of shame and suspicion.

HYSTERIA is Büyükcatalay's second feature film as a writer-director following his debut ORAY, which received the Best First Feature Award at the Berlinale in 2019 when it premiered in the Perspektive Deutsches Kino section.

Another feature-length production of Cologne-based filmfaust GmbH - Cem Kaya's LOVE, DEUTSCHMARKS AND DEATH - won the Audience Award of the Berlinale's Panorama section in 2022 and was nominated in the Best Documentary category for this year's German Film Awards.

GENRE Drama, Thriller, Crime **CATEGORY**
 Feature **DIRECTOR** Mehmet Akif Büyükcatalay
SCREENPLAY Mehmet Akif Büyükcatalay
CINEMATOGRAPHY Christian Kochmann **CAST**
 Devrim Lingnau, Mehdi Meskar, Nicolette
 Krebitz, Serkan Kaya, Nazmi Kırık, Aziz Çapkurt
PRODUCERS Claus Reichel, Mehmet Akif Büyü-
 kcatalay **CO-PRODUCER** Christian Cloos **PRO-**
DUCTION COMPANY filmfaust GmbH in co-
 production with ZDF Das kleine Fernsehspiel
LANGUAGE German, English, Arabic, Turkish,
 Kurdish **GERMAN DISTRIBUTOR** RFF - Real
 Fiction Filmverleih

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JENSEITS VON SCHULD BEYOND GUILT

BEYOND GUILT accompanies Ulla and Didi who loved their child and made every effort to raise him to become a mature person. Nothing in their lives could have indicated that he would one day become a serial killer.

From one day to the next, they are confronted with the question of whether the most natural thing in the world, parental love, is still possible since their son's guilt descends on them as if it were their own and their lives are now irrevocably linked with these murders.

Ulla and Didi learn to cope with their everyday lives in this extreme area of tension. And they try to reclaim their lives, to be a couple, to laugh together, and to enjoy and define themselves again.

GENRE Society **CATEGORY** Documentary
DIRECTORS Katrin Nemec, Katharina Köster
SCREENPLAY Katharina Köster, Katrin Nemec
CINEMATOGRAPHY Tobias Tempel **EDITOR**
 Miriam Märk **COMPOSER** Cico Beck **SOUND**
 Björn Rothe **PRODUCERS** Isabelle Bertolone,
 David Armati Lechner, Trini Götze **PRODUCTION COMPANY** TrimaFilm in co-production
 with ZDF Das kleine Fernsehspiel **LANGUAGE**
 German **GERMAN DISTRIBUTOR** Real Fiction
 Filmverleih

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© Mennekes-Roloff

KRANKE WELT

Schiller, an author, is working in an abandoned, post-apocalyptic city during a heatwave. A businessman interrupts him via Zoom, wanting access to his water. At night, on his way to the spring, Schiller passes through areas that are possibly inhabited by cannibals. A man demands water, provoking him until a fight ensues. He turns out to be Schiller's doppelgänger and dissolves into thin air. At home, Schiller receives a pre-recorded video message from the businessman who has fallen victim to the cannibals, and realises that the people he encountered were apparitions. Ignoring the possibility that he might well be the last person alive on Earth, he dives back into his work.

GENRE environMENTAL Thriller **CATEGORY**
 Short **DIRECTOR** Stefan Roloff **SCREENPLAY**
 Steffen Mennekes, Stefan Roloff **CINEMATOGRAPHY**
 Birgit Gudjonsdottir **CAST**
 Steffen Mennekes **PRODUCERS** Steffen
 Mennekes, Stefan Roloff **PRODUCTION COMPANY**
 Néstler Products **LANGUAGE** German
 with English subtitles

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© ROSENPICTURES / Stefanie Schroeder, Emerson Culurgioni

LA DUNA

Based on the legend about a power-mad ex-prime minister who stole a sand dune on the south coast of Sardinia, LA DUNA revolves around the question of who actually owns the land. A collection of fairytale, absurd and true stories about ownership, migration and resistance, ranging from an expropriated farmer scaring off Nato with goat skulls and a fictitious warfare scenario containing the invention of Africa through a housewife disguised as a psychologist and a scattered Sardinian family preparing a large pile of couscous, to populist environmentalists, tons of sand in plastic bottles and an enduring battle for the narrative.

GENRE Biopic, Ecology, Experimental **CATEGORY** Documentary **DIRECTORS** Emerson Culurgioni, Stefanie Schroeder **SCREENPLAY** Emerson Culurgioni, Stefanie Schroeder **CINEMATOGRAPHY** Joanna Piechotta **CAST** Deborah Bernardino, Federica Pilla, Yvonne Campus-Culurgioni, Virgilio Serra, Sambiry Fofana, Rainer Frank, Errol Trotman-Harewood, Franz Rampelmann **PRODUCERS** Stephan Helmut Beier, Ray Peter Maletzki **CO-PRODUCERS** Emerson Culurgioni and Stefanie Schroeder **PRODUCTION COMPANY** Rosenpictures Filmproduktion **LANGUAGE** Sardinian, Italian, German, English

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© Stephan Burchardt / DCM

SIEGER SEIN (WORKING TITLE)

WINNERS (working title)

Eleven-year-old Mona and her family flee Syria and end up in Berlin. In Wedding, of all places. Chaos is the order of the day at her new school, most of the teachers are worn to a frazzle, and the students' frustration is escalating by the day. Mona is no exception here, but she's a whiz at football. Her unusual talent is recognised by one of the teachers, Herr Che, who puts her on the girl's football team. Mona then finds her niche - in front of the net, in Berlin, and in life. In the end, Mona saves the day for her team and they go down in history as the winners of Wedding's school district.

GENRE Children's Film **CATEGORY** Feature **DIRECTOR** Soleen Yusef **SCREENPLAY** Soleen Yusef **CINEMATOGRAPHY** Stephan Burchardt **CAST** Dileyla Agirman, Andreas Döhler, Sherine Merai, Fatima Hamieh, Samira Hamieh, Tamira Bwibo, Halima Ilter and others **PRODUCERS** Sonja Schmitt, Christoph Daniel, Marc Schmidheiny **CO-PRODUCERS** Dario Suter, Joel Brandeis, Detlev Buck, Claus Boje **PRODUCTION COMPANY** DCM Pictures GmbH in co-production with MDR, WDR, SWR and Boje Buck GmbH **LANGUAGE** German

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© Oskar Muecke

WIE SCHMECKT DIE WASSERMELONE WHAT DOES WATERMELON TASTE LIKE

Emigrant Jin's journey home is derailed by a cancelled flight and increasing loneliness, while an unexpected connection with a mysterious wolf-dog takes him into a surreal experience.

WHAT DOES WATERMELON TASTE LIKE is the third short film Shanghai-born Yao has made while studying Directing at the University of Television and Film Munich after **WHITE ISLAND** and **HOW COAL SMELLS**.

The film was produced by fellow HFF student Seren Sahin, who is currently in his final year of studies at the Production and Media Business department. His production of Muschirf Shekh Zeyn's **KILLING BAGHEERA** was one of the films in German Films' Next Generation selection for 2023.

GENRE Art, Coming-of-Age-Story, Experimental, Drama, Fantasy/Science Fiction, Love Story **CATEGORY** Short **DIRECTOR** Zhongzixia Yao **SCREENPLAY** Zhongzixia Yao, Katharina Imscher **CINEMATOGRAPHY** Oskar Muecke **CAST** Jiro Yoshioka, Jorid Lukaczik, Tadashi Endo **PRODUCER** Seren Sahin **PRODUCTION COMPANY** University of Television and Film Munich (HFF) **LANGUAGE** German, Japanese

CONTACT

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© Jonathan Thomas

WIESENWOOD (WORKING TITLE)

As the first female mayor of Wiesenwalde, Susanne Pauli does everything she can to revive the gradually dying village in the sticks of former East Germany. The community is beside itself with excitement when an American film crew comes to produce a new Hollywood series about German history. However, strange events start occurring, with fiction and reality, history and the present, lies and legends all becoming inextricably linked and the villagers having to make a decision about whether to continue living inside or outside of Wiesenwalde. **WIESENWOOD** is Kiefer's debut feature as well as his graduation film.

GENRE Tragicomedy **CATEGORY** Feature **DIRECTOR** Jannis Alexander Kiefer **SCREENPLAY** Jannis Alexander Kiefer, Theresa Weininger **CINEMATOGRAPHY** Adam Graf **CAST** Meike Droste, Monika Lennartz, Johannes Scheidweiler, Roland Bonjour, Alexander Schuster, Gisa Flake **PRODUCERS** Lotte Ruf, Frithjof Stückemann, Christoph Degenhart, Philipp Kreuzer, Katja Kuhlmann **CO-PRODUCER** Jannis Alexander Kiefer **PRODUCTION COMPANY** Maze Pictures GmbH in co-production with Film University Babelsberg Konrad Wolf and RBB **LANGUAGE** German, English

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www.agdok.de



www.ag-kurzfilm.de



www.deutsche-kinemathek.de



www.ffa.de



www.fff-bayern.de



www.filmstiftung.de



www.medienboard.de



www.produzentenallianz.de

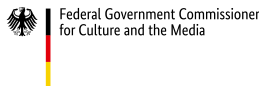


www.produzentenverband.de



www.vdfe.de

SUPPORTERS



www.kulturstaatsministerin.de



www.ffa.de



www.fff-bayern.de



www.filmstiftung.de



www.hessenfilm.de



www.medienboard.de



www.film.mfg.de



Mitteldeutsche Medienförderung

www.mdm-online.de



www.moin-filmfoerderung.de



www.mv-filmfoerderung.de



www.nordmedia.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, 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 German Kinemathek Museum for Film and TV, the German Documentary Association, Bavarian Film Fund, Film Fund North Rhine-Westphalia, Berlin-Brandenburg Film Fund, 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, MOIN Filmförderung Hamburg Schleswig-Holstein, Film- und Medienstiftung NRW, HessenFilm, Medienboard Berlin-Brandenburg, MFG Baden-Württemberg, Mitteldeutsche Medienförderung, MV Filmförderung, 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, 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 FACETOFACE 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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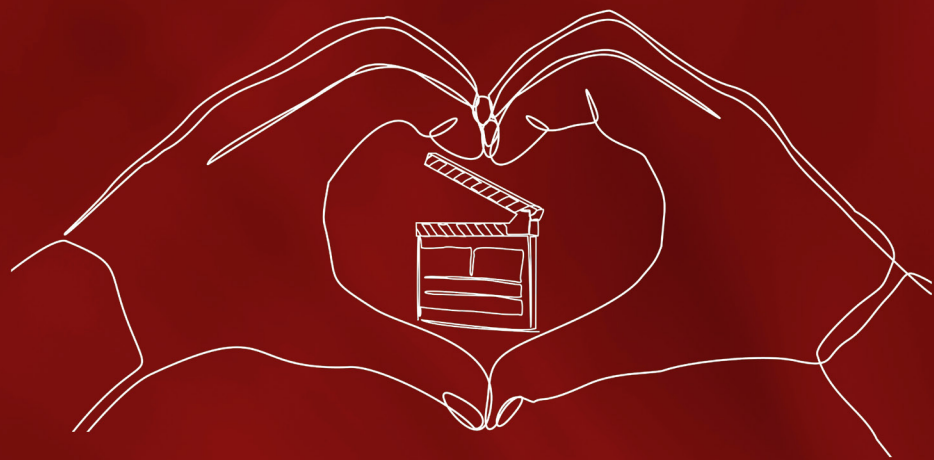
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