

Based on the internationally acclaimed novel by

Agota Kristóf

# LE GRAND CAHIER

a film by János Szász

GRAND PRIX CRYSTAL GLOBE  
EUROPA CINEMA LABELS AWARD

KARLOVY VARY 2013



...k robbannak valahol. Egyre  
...allatszik a bombázás.  
...kevegőt. Kinyitjuk a pincést  
...ahogy szissalok szemünket  
...A szobában  
...még mindig megáll.



10000  
10000

ODIN MANTSCHEFF - UN MILLION  
ODIN MANTSCHEFF - UN MILLION

Photo: Tamás Dobos



BETA CINEMA PRESENTS A HUNNIA FILMSTÚDIÓ / INTUIT PICTURES PRODUCTION IN CO-PRODUCTION WITH AMOUR FOU VIENNA / DOLCE VITA FILMS

In association with Magyar Nemzeti Filmalap, Mitteldeutsche Medienförderung, Embein Eröffnungsak, Miniszterium, Eurimages, Deutscher Filmförderfonds, Medienboard Berlin-Brandenburg, Filmfund Wien, Filmstandort Austria, Piffi Medien, Dialog Filmstudios, Centre National du Cinéma et de l'Image Animée, MEDIA Programme of the European Union, Magyar Műzsgökép Képzési Intézet  
a film by JÁNOS SZÁSZ cast ANDRÁS GYÉMÁNT, LÁSZLÓ GYÉMÁNT, PIROSKA MOLNÁR, ULRICH THOMSEN, ULRICH MATTHES, GYÖNGYVÉR BOGNÁR casting VIKTOR OSZKÁR NAGY, HETA MANTSCHKEFF make-up ANNA KRISKÓ  
costume design JÁNOS BRECKL set design ISTVÁN GALAMBOS VFX supervisor JEAN-MICHEL BOUBLIL original sound ISTVÁN SIPOS sound design MANUEL LAVAL music JOHANN JOHANNSSON sound mix MATTHIAS SCHWAB  
editing SZILVIA RUSZEV director of photography CHRISTIAN BERGER line producer ERIKA TARR, MARCOS KANTIS, KARIN BERGHAMMER, ALFIE LANG-KRÁL executive producer ALBERT KITZLER, GYÖRGY SUCH, JÁNOS SZÁSZ  
co-producer ALEXANDER DUMREICHER-IVANCEANU, BADY MINCK, MARC IRMER screenplay by ANDRÁS SZEKÉR, JÁNOS SZÁSZ based on the novel Le grand cahier by AGOTA KRISTOF © Editions du Seuil, Paris, 1986  
produced by SANDOR SÓTH, PÁL SÁNDOR directed by JÁNOS SZÁSZ © 2013 Intuit Pictures - HUNNIA FILMSTÚDIÓ - AMOUR FOU VIENNA - DOLCE VITA FILMS



**Director** János Szász (WOYZECK)  
**DoP** Christian Berger (THE WHITE RIBBON)  
**Cast** Piroska Molnár  
László Gyémánt  
András Gyémánt  
Ulrich Thomsen (THE CELEBRATION)  
Ulrich Matthes (DOWNFALL)  
Orsolya Tóth (WOMEN WITHOUT MEN)  
Péter Andorai

**Genre** Drama  
**Language** Hungarian, German  
**Length** 110 min

**Produced by** Intuit Pictures in co-production with Hunnia Filmstudio, Amour Fou and Dolce Vita Films, financed by Magyar Filmalap Zrt., MDM, MBB, MEDIA, Eurimages, Wiener Filmfund, CNC, DFFF and FISA



## LE GRAND CAHIER

### SYNOPSIS

Towards the end of World War II, people in big cities are at the mercy of air raids and death by starvation. A desperate young mother leaves her 13-year-old twin sons at their grandmother's house in the country, despite the fact that this grandmother is a cruel and bestial alcoholic. The villagers call her "the Witch" because she is rumoured to have poisoned her husband long ago.

Previously pampered, the twins must learn how to survive alone in their new, rural surroundings. They realise that the only way to cope with the absurd and inhumane world of adults and war is to become completely unfeeling and merciless. By learning to free themselves from hunger, pain and emotion, they will be able to endure future hardships. So they begin their own series of studies: they fortify their spirits by reading the Bible and learning foreign languages. They practice every day to harden their bodies and minds. They hold their hands over flames, cut their legs, arms and chests with a knife and pour alcohol right on their wounds. They desensitize themselves to insults and learn to ignore the more insidious appeals of sentiment and love.

The twins keep a written record of all they have witnessed during the war, the Notebook. When they write, they follow their own strict code: The prose must be free from emotion, the notes precise and objective.

### THE DIRECTOR

János Szász was born in 1958. He is a tutor for the acting master class at the Academy of Theatre and Film Arts, Budapest. His films include Woyzeck, which won the European Film Award for Best New European Film, amongst others, and The Witman Boys (Un Certain Regard, Cannes 1997). He also won Best Director at the Moscow International Film Festival and a special commendation at the Sundance Festival and by Variety in 1998. His recent film Opium, with Ulrich Thomsen, was produced by Andras Hamori and sold by H2O.

