



presents



LOOK WHO'S BACK

Constantin Film

BETA CINEMA PRESENTS A MYTHOS FILM PRODUCTION IN CO-PRODUCTION WITH CONSTANTIN FILM "LOOK WHO'S BACK" BASED ON THE NOVEL BY TIMAUR VERMES
OLIVER MASUPCE FABIAN BUSCH CHRISTOPH MARIA HERBST KATJA RIEMANN FRANZISKA WULF LARS RUDOLPH MICHAEL KESSLER THOMAS THIEME
CASTING ULRICH MÜLLER MAKE-UP JEANETTE LATZELBERGER COSTUME DESIGNER ELKE VON SIVERS SET DESIGN JENNY ROESLER SOUND & SOUNDDESIGN PAUL RISCHEW WITH STEFAN KORTE
MUSIC ENIS RÜTTHOFF EDITING ANDREAS WODRASCHKE DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY HANNO LENTZ LINE PRODUCER KLAUS SPINNLER ASSISTANT PRODUCER SERGEJ RUBINSTEIN
EXECUTIVE PRODUCER OLIVER BERGEN MARTIN MOSZKOWITZ PRODUCED BY CHRISTOPH MÜLLER LARS DITTRICH WRITTEN BY DAVID WINENDT MIZZI MEYER DIRECTED BY DAVID WINENDT
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MYTHOS FILM Constantin Film medienboard FSK 12

LOOK WHO'S BACK

a **Mythos Film Production**
a co-production with **Constantin Film**

Directed by
David Wnendt

Starring
**Oliver Masucci, Fabian Busch, Christoph Maria Herbst,
Katja Riemann, Franziska Wulf**

Screenplay by
David Wnendt, Mizzi Meyer

Based on the novel of the same name by
Timur Vermes

Produced by
Christoph Müller, Lars Dittrich

Executive producers
Oliver Berben, Martin Moszkowicz

Supported by
**Medienboard Berlin Brandenburg (MBB),
Filmförderungsanstalt (FFA), Film- und Medienstiftung NRW, DFFF**

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CAST

Oliver Masucci
Fabian Busch
Christoph Maria Herbst
Katja Riemann
Franziska Wulf
Lars Rudolph
Michael Kessler
Michael Ostrowski
Gudrun Ritter
Christoph Zrenner
Ramona Kunze Libnow
Thomas Thieme
Frank Plasberg
Roberto Blanco
Jörg Thadeusz

Adolf Hitler
Fabian Sawatzki
Christoph Sensenbrink
Katja Bellini
Franziska Krömeier
kiosk owner
Michael Witzigmann
Rico Mancello
Grandmother Krömeier
Gerhard Lummlich
Mrs. Sawatzki
Mr. Kärrner, head of the television broadcaster
Frank Plasberg
Roberto Blanco
Jörg Thadeusz

CREW

Directed by
Screenplay by
Based on the novel of the same name by
Published by
Producers
Executive producers
Associate producer
Director of photography
Casting by
Line producer
Set designer
Costume designer
Make-up artists
Editor
Music supervision
Production
Co-production
With funding provided by

David Wnendt
David Wnendt and Mizzi Meyer
Timur Vermes
Eichborn Verlag
Christoph Müller and Lars Dittrich
Oliver Berben and Martin Moszkowicz
Sergej Rubinstein
Hanno Lentz
Ulrike Müller
Klaus Spinnler
Jenny Roesler
Elke von Sivers
Jeanette Latzelsberger and Gregor Eckstein
Andreas Wodraschke
Enis Rotthoff
Mythos Film Produktions GmbH & Co. KG
Constantin Film Produktion GmbH
Medienboard Berlin Brandenburg (MBB)
Filmförderungsanstalt (FFA)
Film- und Medienstiftung NRW
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TECHNICAL DETAILS

Locations	Berlin, Munich, Sylt, Gelsenkirchen, among others
Shooting time	2014
Running time	110 minutes
Screen Ratio	1:1.85
Format	2K and HD/5.1

SYNOPSIS

**Based on Timur Vermes' bestselling novel, published in more than 40 countries.
#1 on The Times bestseller list.**

Der Führer is back. It is present day summer and Adolf Hitler suddenly wakes up on the site of his former bunker, now a residential area of Berlin, 70 years after his presumed demise. The war is over, his party is no more, his beloved Eva is not there to console him and the present German society is so multicultural he does not recognize it. But, against all the odds, Adolf Hitler begins a new career on television because he is universally mistaken for a brilliant comedian – even though he is indeed the genuine article and his intentions have not changed...

PRESS NOTES

In his bestseller "Look who's back" Timur Vermes posed the provocative question in the year 2012, "What would be, if ...?" and caused a sensation worldwide. The book was Number 1 on the magazine SPIEGEL's bestseller list for 20 weeks, over 2 million copies have been sold in Germany, and the translation rights have been licensed in 41 territories, including the U.S., England, France, Russia, Japan, and China. LOOK WHO'S BACK! isn't a film adaptation of a novel in the usual sense. Because the lead actor Oliver Masucci playing Adolf Hitler not only has first-class colleagues at his side such as Fabian Busch, Christoph Maria Herbst, and Katja Riemann – in scenes shot in a documentary-film style, he also encounters the average person on the streets, as well as small animal breeders, entrepreneurs, celebrities, young politicians, journalists, nippers, and neo-Nazis.

In Germany, LOOK WHO'S BACK scored 500.000 admissions and 5 \$ million box-office in the first week alone and jumped on #1 after three weeks, overtaking Pixar's *Inside Out*.

LOOK WHO'S BACK is a Mythos Film production in co-production with Constantin Film. Producers are Christoph Müller and Lars Dittrich, the executive producers are Martin Moszkowicz, chairman of the board of Constantin Film AG, and Oliver Berben, managing director of Constantin Film Produktion.

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PRODUCTION NOTES

From the book to the film

While on vacation in Turkey Timur Vermes was strolling through a market when he suddenly discovered a copy of Hitler's "Zweites Buch" ("Second Book") at a booth. That is the title of the sequel to "Mein Kampf," written in 1928 and never published during Adolf Hitler's lifetime – it was initially not published because sales of "Mein Kampf" were very sluggish, and then later on because Hitler feared he could give away too many of his intentions regarding foreign policy. After 1935 the manuscript lay hidden in a bomb shelter, where an American officer discovered it in 1945. Not until 1961, after its authenticity had been established, did it appear on the market; the authorized English translation wasn't published until 2003.

"I didn't know anything about Hitler's second book," Timur Vermes admits. "And while I was standing at that market looking at the thing I thought, 'Good, then I can write the third book.' "He chose an unusual approach for this: Adolf Hitler, who put a bullet through his head on April 30, 1945, wakes up out of the blue in present-day Berlin, writes down his views on the new Germany, becomes a television star, and gathers new followers. The journalist Timur Vermes made a conscious decision to write his debut novel "Look who's back" from Hitler's perspective, in the first person: "That's the more appealing perspective, because it takes away any chance for the reader to evade anything. The reader's not only an observer, the reader's also part of it. The reader sits inside a head where the reader never wanted to sit and realizes he or she can bear it surprisingly well."

The Eichborn Verlag publishing house presented "Look who's back" in October 2012 at the Frankfurt Book Fair. The novel quickly climbed to the Number 1 spot on the German weekly magazine "Spiegel's" bestseller list and stayed there for 20 weeks. The audio book also shot to the Number 1 position. Up until now more than two million books have been sold.

Immediately after the book trade fair, late one evening the telephone of producer Christoph Müller, founder of Mythos Film, rang. His production partner Lars Dittrich was on the other end of the line: "Forget everything we're planning! Now we're filming LOOK WHO'S BACK. The book is a hit." Christoph Müller, who produced among other, films Marc Rothemund's drama about the resistance movement in Nazi Germany SOPHIE SCHOLL (2005), had to put a slight damper on his colleague's euphoria: "I saw the book at the book fair and I think the film rights were purchased a long time ago by other film production companies."

But Lars Dittrich wouldn't give up. The next day Christoph Müller called the Eichborn Verlag publishing house. "The word was the film rights had already been sold, but we should simply hand in our ideas," remembers Müller. "More or less overnight we developed a concept and a marketing strategy. A few weeks later – after discussions with Timur Vermes and the management of the publishing house – we won the bid. We were happy to be able to film such a successful, spectacular and anarchistic book. But that was just the beginning of an adventurous journey."

The biggest challenge was how to bring the 400 pages of the book, written in the first person, to the big screen with an actor playing Hitler and other actors? "We knew that in any case we didn't want to just use the unbelievable premise of this material – Hitler wakes up in the present, people think he's a

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comedian, and he uses the power of the media to spread his ideals – just as a platform for comedy," says Lars Dittrich. Constantin-producer Oliver Berben is of the same opinion: "We wanted to make a film that holds a mirror up to our society in an entertaining way."

The portrayal of the character Adolf Hitler had a special significance: "We promised Timur Vermes to transfer the spirit of the novel and the lead character to the film," says Christoph Müller. Timur Vermes had made it clear in interviews already at the book fair that he wanted to show the "genuine" Adolf Hitler in the novel, who on the one hand was "megalomaniac and disturbed," but on the other hand could be "charming, polite, and flexible." "Naturally a lot of people would rather see Hitler portrayed as a monster and the incarnation of evil, who hypnotizes everyone and casts a spell on them," says Timur Vermes. "That way you make him alone guilty of the crimes. But this demonization conceals that his rise in politics and the Holocaust were only possible because he was also an attractive and serious mass phenomenon. After all, the people who voted for him weren't idiots. They were taken in by him back then because Hitler apparently could also seem friendly, smart, and charming – even if today we have trouble accepting this viewpoint."

Reality meets fiction

The producers started searching for a director who would be involved at an early stage in the screenplay development. Oliver Berben's favorite candidate was David Wnendt: "In his feature film debut, *COMBAT GIRLS*, he cast a light on the neo-Nazi scene from a different perspective, and with the film *WETLANDS*, based on a novel that was also thought to be not filmable, he proved he could also be humorous and direct his films with very special visuals and narrative form." Christoph Müller adds, "We conducted a type of casting for a director, because we wanted to know which director has which vision."

It quickly became apparent that David Wnendt had the most interesting vision for bringing the book to the screen: "He suggested sending Hitler out into the streets and to fuse these documentary elements with the fictional story," says Oliver Berben. "I thought that was exciting, not to just show Hitler in an artificial situation with actors, but rather to let him loose on real people," explains David Wnendt. "That's the only way you can get reliable answers to the questions: 'What would happen if Hitler were back again today? Would he really stand a chance?'"

Casting the lead role was similar to looking for the famous needle in the haystack: "It's not easy to find an actor in this age range who's an excellent actor but is completely unknown to the normal movie and television audience," says Christoph Müller. The producers looked at theater productions and in the end they found what they were looking for at Burgtheater in Vienna: Oliver Masucci received an invitation to the casting. "I was surprised when the call came," says Masucci. "I had my agency tell them I didn't see myself as Hitler and with my height, 6-foot-4, I'm much too tall for the role. But they absolutely wanted to see me, so I watched several speeches by Hitler on YouTube and rehearsed his manner of speaking." At the first casting the director David Wnendt didn't just want to hear rehearsed texts, but rather he also wanted to test Masucci's talent for improvising. "I called, for example, dog breeders and ordered a new German Shepherd, because I had poisoned my old one by mistake with potassium cyanide," says the actor. David Wnendt says, "I wanted to see through such actions how Oliver Masucci reacts in real situations. He gave a very special interpretation of Hitler. I could laugh at him, but at the same time he

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was uncanny to me. I thought this richness in facets was very important for the role." The next step was to give Oliver Masucci the proper appearance, and during a two-hour procedure the make-up artist Gregor Eckstein also gave him an artificial nose and that distinctive moustache. "He looked impressively realistic," praises producer Lars Dittrich. "When I spoke with Oliver Masucci I was thinking nonstop, 'Oh my God, I'm talking to Adolf Hitler right now!' "

There followed test shootings with two real female psychologists, who were told beforehand that they were to treat a man with a deranged personality. "There were two sittings of two-and-a-half hours each," says Oliver Masucci. "The situation was completely absurd and strenuous, but I enjoyed it." For the next step Masucci, as Hitler, mingled with the crowds during the World Cup in the summer of 2014 at the fan fest in Berlin. "We had three bodyguards with him just in case, who really looked daunting," Christoph Müller says. "But the cameras provided the biggest element of protection, because if somebody had attacked us they could have been identified on film." Their worries proved to be unnecessary. "A lot of people cheered the fake Hitler, they wanted to take selfies with him, they cursed democracy and wished someone would finally take drastic measures in Germany again," Christoph Müller says and adds, "that was during the day, before the soccer match, no one was too drunk or too intoxicated from the success of Germany's national team. We were so very astounded by these reactions that we decided we would now go through with this principle for the film."

A journey through Germany

Fabian Busch acted alongside Oliver Masucci since the very first castings. He took the role of the luckless filmmaker Fabian Sawatzki, who runs into Adolf Hitler by accident, thinks he's a comedian, and sees in this character his big chance to advance his own career at the television broadcaster my tv. "He gets sucked into a maelstrom and can't get out anymore," says Fabian Busch. He describes Fabian Sawatzki as a "loveable, somewhat naïve contemporary guy who goes along with everything – just like many Germans went along with everything back then because they hoped Hitler would provide them with a rosy future."

Together with Oliver Masucci in full Hitler make-up, director David Wnendt, and director of photography Hanno Lentz, Fabian Busch went on an extended journey across Germany in the role of the filmmaker Fabian Sawatzki. "We shot the documentary part first, so we could align the fictional scenes with it later on," says Oliver Berben. In the film Fabian Sawatzki shows his boss Christoph Sensenbrink, played by Christoph Maria Herbst, a montage of these encounters of Adolf Hitler with very normal people. "We not only shot in big cities such as Berlin and Munich, we drove through all of Germany, we had appointments with politicians, dog breeders, etiquette coaches, and conspiracy theorists, we approached people on the street or let people approach us," says Oliver Masucci and confesses, "In the beginning I was afraid of the situations David Wnendt got me into. I had to overcome an extremely high inhibition threshold before I could do several of these things."

The director was just as surprised by the reactions of the common people as his lead actor: "Lots of people were really happy to see Hitler," says David Wnendt. "It was as if they were encountering a pop star. And although they knew exactly that this couldn't be the genuine Hitler, they accepted him and opened up to him." Only the participants in a demonstration by the neo-Nazi organization NPD

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(National Democratic Party of Germany), in the city of Brandenburg an der Havel, appeared to be confused and overtaxed when Oliver Masucci, as Hitler, stood on the balcony of a hotel and waved to them with a serious expression.

Christoph Müller recalls an especially bizarre exchange of words: "Someone from the NPD was conversing with Hitler and said, 'My understanding of democracy is that one person has to lay down the law and really get rough.' The Führer then said to the man, 'That's exactly my understanding of democracy!' You notice there isn't much substance to what neo-Nazis think." David Wnendt is amazed at how many citizens freely expressed their right-wing attitudes: "I didn't reckon that we would find so many people who are openly against foreigners and rant against democracy. Many of those who participated in the Pegida demonstrations are, after all, notoriously anti-media. But they suddenly poured out their hearts to Hitler and it didn't bother them at all that the camera was filming everything."

Hitler and the media

David Wnendt brought back over 380 hours of film material from this unusual trip across Germany. Only a small documentary section can be seen in the film. "I wouldn't necessarily want to work under David Wnendt as a film editor – but as an actor I would," says Christoph Maria Herbst, who plays the role of the producer, Christoph Sensenbrink. "He's a career-driven media suit who wants to become the boss of the television broadcaster my tv and uses the hype about this Hitler guy to knock all of his competitors out of the way." The producers thought it was important from the beginning that Christoph Maria Herbst should play a role in LOOK WHO'S BACK "With the success of the audio book the fans expected something," says Oliver Berben. "For that reason we let him know early on we would really like to expand his role to become a sort of adversary to Hitler."

Christoph Maria Herbst liked the idea: "My therapists were delighted that I had already worked off a lot of things playing the role of Adolf Hitler. I recorded the audio book by Timur Vermes and played a comparable character by the name of Alfons Hatler in the films DER WIXXER and NEUES VOM WIXXER. That was a parody approach and therefore an entirely different gig than what Oliver Masucci did for LOOK WHO'S BACK. He had to go out in public and say he's actually Adolf Hitler. I tip my hat to his accomplishment and I'm happy I didn't have to do that!"

The female lead role of the television producer Katja Bellini went to Katja Riemann: "It was already clear when the screenplay was being written that we needed a strong woman with a lot of humor and charm who shows men who's in charge," Oliver Berben says. "On top of it, Katja Riemann is a full-blooded actress who thinks a courageous director like David Wnendt is good and wants to be involved in an exciting experiment like our film," Christoph Müller adds.

Franziska Wulf plays the role of Fabian Sawatzki's colleague Franziska Krömeier, Lars Rudolph the role of the kiosk owner in Berlin where in the beginning Adolf Hitler finds shelter, and Michael Kessler plays the role of the television presenter Michael Witzigmann in whose television show "Kraß Alter" Hitler makes his first television appearance. "We shot in the real television studio where the talk show 'Anne Will' is shot, which was redecorated into the studio for 'Kraß Alter' with 100 extras as the audience," says Michael Kessler, who over the course of his career has never been afraid to get close to Adolf Hitler: "In Helmut Dietl's film SCHTONK! I played one of the SS soldiers who was supposed to burn Hitler's

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corpse and say the famous sentence, 'He isn't burning!' Afterwards I played Hitler on the television shows 'Wochenshow' and 'Switch', and also in the 'Obersalzberg' scenes in 'Switch Reloaded'."

In addition to the fictional show "Kraass Alter", in the film Hitler is also a guest on the television shows "Frank Plasberg" and "Circus HalliGalli" with their actual presenters." It makes the whole environment even more believable when Oliver Masucci's persona shows up in real, existing media and is interviewed by television presenters the audience knows well," says Oliver Berben. This is also meant to emphasize that immediately after it was published Timur Vermes' book "Look who's back" was a much-discussed subject on talk shows, in newspapers and magazines, and on the Internet.

"In the last third of the film we clearly move away from the original book by saying Hitler wrote this book," says David Wnendt. In the opinion of the director, a film adaptation faithful to the novel wasn't possible: "In the book Hitler shows up and has a successful career at the television station, but starting at a certain point there isn't any more development. With a novel that you read chapter after chapter that can function, but a film needs an arc of tension. That's the reason why in the film Hitler writes the book himself and later on he also participates in the film adaptation of the book. In this way the fictional story merges even stronger with the real world."

International anticipation

Oliver Berben thinks they have achieved their goal: "Like already with the novel, the film LOOK WHO'S BACK will also entertain the audience and at the same time make sure that their laughter gets stuck in their throat over and over again. Producer Christoph Müller also sees the film as a successful balancing act: "There's this beautiful saying: If you want to overcome Hitler you have to have the courage to laugh at him. Up until now the funniest, most anarchistic and polarizing satires about Hitler only came from abroad. But our generation is now ready to show Europe and the world that such films can also be made in Germany." The filmmakers are aware that LOOK WHO'S BACK is eagerly anticipated internationally as well. "The novel has been on sale in more than 40 territories and a lot of foreign producers wanted to film the material," says Lars Dittrich. Christoph Müller adds, "They all are looking very closely at how we succeeded to infuse this serious subject with humor."

The attention the world is paying to the film has also fired up Christoph Maria Herbst's imagination: "I think it would be interesting to send Oliver Masucci as Adolf Hitler out beyond the borders of Germany as well: What happens when he shows up in Luxemburg, Belgium, the Netherlands, or Italy? That almost cries out for a sequel ... look who's back again."

HITLER SIGHTINGS: WAS HE EVER GONE?

Today, in the year 2015, Adolf Hitler would be 126 years old. Even if he hadn't shot himself on April 30, 1945, it therefore wouldn't be possible to encounter him alive in Berlin. "Transporting Hitler into the present is a fantastic element, which I allowed myself to use," says the author, Timur Vermes. His Hitler in the book and now in the film LOOK WHO'S BACK is younger than the Hitler who put a bullet through his head exactly 10 days after his 56th birthday and ordered his corpse to be incinerated so it couldn't fall into the hands of the enemies.

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It wasn't until October 25, 1956 that Adolf Hitler was legally declared dead. Before that more than 40 witnesses were questioned under oath, including Hitler's confidants such as his personal servant Heinz Linge and Hitler's adjutant Otto Günsche. They said they had seen Adolf Hitler's and Eva Braun's corpses and had witnessed the burning of the corpses. However, Linge and Günsche couldn't give their testimony until the mid-1950s after they had returned home from a Soviet prisoner-of-war camp.

The circumstance that the Soviet Union did not reveal Hitler's suicide for a long time also caused confusion, although in May 1945 a special unit of the Soviet intelligence service had already found and identified the remains of Hitler and Braun: one section of a jawbone and two dental bridges. However, at the Potsdam Conference in the summer of 1945 Joseph Stalin announced that Hitler had survived, had fled either to Spain or Argentina and was being held in captivity by the Western Allies.

The Western intelligence services reacted in an irritated manner to Stalin's statement and from then on started looking for clues themselves. The F.B.I. received letters from alert citizens. And so, for example, the F.B.I. office in Los Angeles noted on September 21, 1945: "Hitler and 50 of his closest confidants landed in southern Argentina on board two submarines approximately ten days after Berlin surrendered. Hitler is hiding on a ranch. He has shaven off his moustache, and suffers from asthma and ulcers."

There are many books that have tried to prove this theory with dubious arguments and interviews with contemporary witnesses. In 2011 the latest and most comprehensive book of this kind was published. The German conspiracy theorist Jan van Helsing, whose real name is Jan Udo Holey, and the Argentine journalist Abel Basti let nineteen contemporary witnesses have their say in the document "Hitler survived in Argentine," of which seven maintain they personally encountered Adolf Hitler in South America.

Such as Reinhard Schabelmann, for example, who supposedly was present when the U-boat with Adolf Hitler and Eva Braun landed. And Catalina Gamero, the adopted daughter of the German husband and wife Ida and Walter Eichhorn, followers of Hitler, was interviewed for the book. Gamero says she took care of Hitler in 1949 for three days in the Eichhorns' house in the La Falda region in Argentina. Ida Eichhorn, a fervid follower of the Führer, supposedly conversed non-stop the entire three days with her idol before Hitler was taken to another private property of the Eichhorns.

A scene in the animated series "The Simpsons" deals with Hitler's twilight years in Argentina: In the episode "Bart against Australia" Bart Simpson arbitrarily dials telephone numbers in the southern hemisphere. At one point a man who looks like an aged Hitler answers the telephone. At the same time someone calls out "buenas noches, mein Führer" and stretches out the right hand as a salute.

The Argentina rumor lingered in such an ironclad manner – despite all of the evidence **against** it – not least because several leading Nazis after the war actually did seek exile in South America and were granted it. For example, Adolf Eichmann escaped to Argentina with the aid of the Catholic Church before he was kidnapped, taken to Israel, sentenced, and executed in the early 1960s. The concentration camp physician Josef Mengele also lived unchallenged until his death in 1979 in Argentina, Paraguay, and Brazil.

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While Mengele was still alive the feature film *THE BOYS FROM BRAZIL* (1978) was shown in cinemas. In this film adaptation of the novel by Ira Levin, Gregory Peck plays the role of Josef Mengele, who clones a total of 94 Adolf Hitlers with Hitler's DNA in his South American exile, who then grow up all over the world. Alongside Laurence Olivier, James Mason, and Lilli Palmer, Bruno Ganz was also in the cast of stars in *THE BOYS FROM BRAZIL*; Bruno Ganz would go down in cinematic history a quarter of a century later for his performance in the role of Adolf Hitler in *DOWNFALL* (2004).

In F.B.I. files that were only published a few years ago one can read that witnesses allegedly also saw Hitler after the Second World War in Denmark – and also in Tibet. Parallel to this was the theory Hitler and many other Nazis fled with part of the Wehrmacht to Antarctica, where they prepared in the area called New Swabia a second attempt to conquer the world.

Financed through crowd funding, the science fiction film *IRON SKY* (2012) by the Finnish director Timo Vuorensola goes one step farther: In the film the Nazis have retreated to the dark side of the moon, which is not visible from Earth, in order for their descendants to conquer Earth in the year 2018. The trailer to this feature film's sequel, *IRON SKY – THE COMING RACE*, scheduled for release in 2016 even shows Adolf Hitler in a secret underworld where he rides a dinosaur...

ONE HITLER – MANY FACES

The Internet Movie Data Base (imdb.com) lists more than 120 actors who have taken on the role of Adolf Hitler. The following overview lists a selection of 25 actors – and contains a few surprises.

Charlie Chaplin in *THE GREAT DICTATOR* (U.S., 1940)

The leader in Charlie Chaplin's successful satire may have the name Anton Hynkel and rules over Tomanien, but the similarities to the great dictator Adolf Hitler are so obvious that Chaplin can count as one of the actors who played Hitler. Chaplin's first sound film uses a satirical, fictional language whenever Hynkel makes one of his aggressive speeches. In Germany *THE GREAT DICTATOR* wasn't shown in cinemas until 1958, in other words, 18 years after its premiere in New York. The Americans didn't release the film in Germany before that because they thought the Germans in the years immediately after the war weren't ready yet for a satire about Hitler. Chaplin said after the Second World War he would not have shot the film if he had suspected what was happening in the concentration camps during the Hitler regime.

Bobby Watson in *HITLER – DEAD OR ALIVE* (U.S., 1942)

If one includes short films, then the American Bobby Watson played Adolf Hitler nine times in 1941. The humorously told story *HITLER – DEAD OR ALIVE* (directed by Nick Grinde) is based on an actual event: An American businessman offered one million dollars at the beginning of the Second World War to whoever kills Adolf Hitler. Three men join the Royal Canadian Air Force and travel to Germany where, disguised as musicians, they manage to get to Hitler. They shave off his moustache and cut his hair, which is why the S.S. soldiers who rush in to help him don't recognize him anymore and shoot the Führer along

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with his tormentors. In an interview in 2012 Quentin Tarantino called HITLER – DEAD OR ALIVE one of the important inspirations for his ballad about Nazi hunters INGLOURIOUS BASTERDS.

Albin Skoda in THE LAST ACT (Germany/Austria, 1955)

As the very first German-Austrian film where Adolf Hitler is played by an actor, THE LAST ACT takes place during the last days of war in Berlin. Director Georg Wilhelm Pabst concentrated on the situation in the Führer's bunker in particular. It was based on the book "Ten days to die" by Michael A. Musmanno. Many critics complained that the Viennese actor Albin Skoda interpreted Hitler as if he were out of touch with reality and a psychopath.

Richard Basehart in HITLER (U.S., 1961)

Western specialist Stuart Heisler filmed the main events in Adolf Hitler's life between the years 1923 (the march to the Feldherrenhalle in Munich) and 1945 (his suicide in the Führer's bunker). In this extremely blatant Hollywood biography, which was never shown in German cinemas and of which there still isn't a version dubbed into German, Hitler suffers from an Oedipus complex, and has sexual problems and even an affair with the leader of the SA, the *Sturmabteilung*, Ernst Röhm. Eight years later, lead actor Richard Basehart once again glued a Hitler moustache under his nose for the Soviet five-part feature film LIBERATION.

Alec Guinness in HITLER – THE LAST TEN DAYS (Great Britain/Ireland, 1973)

Ennio De Concini's extravagant historical film was the second attempt to re-enact the last days in the Führer's bunker in Berlin. The lead role was played by the Englishman Alec Guinness, who, thanks to LADYKILLERS, THE BRIDGE ON THE RIVER KWAI, LAWRENCE OF ARABIA, and DOCTOR ZHIVAGO was already a huge film star before he played the Jedi knight Obi-Wan Kenobi in STAR WARS in 1977 and fought against the dark side of the Force.

Anthony Hopkins in THE BUNKER (Great Britain, 1981)

Based on the book "The Bunker," for which the authors James P. O'Donnell and Uwe Bahnsen interviewed several contemporary witnesses, George Schaefer also made a film about the last days in the Führer's bunker. The role of Adolf Hitler was performed by the Englishman Anthony Hopkins, who later would win an Oscar for his performance as the murderer and cannibal Hannibal Lector in THE SILENCE OF THE LAMBS.

Günter Meisner in ACE OF ACES (France/Germany, 1982)

In Gérard Oury's comedy France's action star Jean-Paul Belmondo plays the trainer of the French national boxing team. During the Olympics in 1936 in Berlin he witnesses the inhumanity of the Nazi regime and wants to help a Jewish bookseller and his family to flee to Austria. But they land by mistake at Obersalzberg. In this comedy the German actor Günter Meisner cannot only be seen playing Adolf Hitler

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but also his supposed sister Angela. In the U.S. television mini-series "The winds of war" (1984), featuring the stars Robert Mitchum and Ali MacGraw, Meisner plays the Führer once again.

Ian McKellen in COUNTDOWN TO WAR (Great Britain, 1989)

The Gandalf actor Ian McKellen in Peter Jackson's trilogies LORD OF THE RINGS and THE HOBBIT has also worn at one time Adolf Hitler's costume: In Patrick Lau's docudrama COUNTDOWN TO WAR the award-winning theater star recited exclusively texts that were allegedly spoken or written by Adolf Hitler himself.

Armin Mueller-Stahl in CONVERSATION WITH THE BEAST (Germany, 1996)

In his provocative debut as a director, Armin Mueller-Stahl plays Adolf Hitler when he is 103 years old, who never killed himself and has survived in a bunker. An American journalist manages to gain access to his hiding place, which is stuffed full of Nazi devotional objects; he interviews the elderly man, who he thinks is a con man. When after several meetings he's positive the man really is Hitler after all, the interviewer grabs a gun and shoots and kills the old man.

Bruno Ganz in DOWNFALL (Germany, 2004)

Bernd Eichinger wrote the screenplay and produced, and Oliver Hirschbiegel directed the film – and the Swiss Bruno Ganz set the standard with his outstanding acting performance as an aged and ill Adolf Hitler. This Constantin film production, based on Joachim Fest's book "Der Untergang" and the recollections of Hitler's personal secretary Traudl Junge, was nominated for an Oscar in the category Best Foreign Language Film in 2005.

Christoph Maria Herbst in THE VEXXER (Germany, 2004)

The butler of Earl of Cockwood may be named Alfons Hatler, but he's the spitting image of his almost-namesake and he also talks like him: Tobi Baumann's parody of the Edgar Wallace blockbusters, based on a screenplay by Oliver Kalkofe, Bastian Pastewka, and Oliver Welke, was the ideal platform for Christoph Maria Herbst to give his best as the Führer. In THE VEXXER (2007, directed by Cyrill Boss and Philipp Stennert) Alfons Hatler works his way up to become the head of a psychiatric clinic. While recording the audio book "Look who's back" in the autumn of 2012 Christoph Maria Herbst could fall back on his ingenious, tried-and-tested Führer intonation.

Tobias Moretti in "Speer and Hitler: The Devil's Architect" (TV-docudrama, Germany, 2005)

Heinrich Breloer's three-part docudrama illuminates the respectful relationship between the architect Albert Speer (Sebastian Koch) and Adolf Hitler, who was played by the Austrian Tobias Moretti.

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Ken Stott in UNCLE ADOLF (Great Britain, 2005)

Nicholas Renton's television film concentrates on Adolf Hitler's personal life, especially his unrequited love for his niece Geli Raubal, who committed suicide in September 1931 in Hitler's apartment in Munich. The Scot Ken Stott, known to cinema audiences as the dwarf Balin in Peter Jackson's HOBBIT trilogy, called the Hitler role a special challenge for him, because he comes from a Jewish family.

Helge Schneider in MY FUEHRER (Germany, 2007)

In Dani Levy's parody the Jewish actor Adolf Grünbaum (Ulrich Mühe) has to rhetorically prepare the Führer for a big New Year's Day speech in the Lustgarten park in Berlin. No one suspects that Joseph Goebbels wants to use this opportunity to blow up Adolf Hitler with a bomb under the lectern. Grünbaum is supposed to be blamed for the crime in order to increase the German people's hatred of the Jews and get them committed to the final victory. Before the film was even released the lead actor and comedian Helge Schneider criticized the final cut.

David Bamber in OPERATION VALKYRIE (U.S., 2008)

David Bamber, known for his portrayal of Cicero in the television series "Rome," took on the supporting role of Hitler alongside Hollywood star Tom Cruise. The biographical but not quite factually accurate feature film drama about Count von Stauffenberg, who carried out an attempt on Hitler's life, caused a sensation even before shooting began in Berlin and Brandenburg, because director Bryan Singer was allowed to film at original locations, such as the Bendlerblock building complex where Count von Stauffenberg and three of his co-conspirators were executed by firing squad.

Martin Wuttke in INGLOURIOUS BASTERDS (U.S./Germany, 2009)

Quentin Tarantino made Christoph Waltz a global star and Oscar winner with his bloody ballad about Nazi hunters, but he also brought a few other German-speaking actors to the attention of the international audience: Martin Wuttke, theater star and police inspector in the German crime television series "Tatort" (2008-2015), had already turned down the offer to play the role of Hitler and be shot and killed. But because his life partner desperately wanted to see him in a Tarantino film he accepted the role in the end.

Tom Schilling in MEIN KAMPF (Germany, 2009)

The Swiss director Urs Odermatt filmed the theater piece of the same name written by George Tabori, which takes place in 1910: In a shelter for homeless men in a street called *Blood Street* in Vienna, the elderly Jewish bookseller Schlomo Herzl (Götz George) prepares the young sketch artist Adolf Hitler (Tom Schilling) for his political career and his effect on the masses.

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INTERVIEWS

Interview with lead actor **Oliver Masucci**

Mr. Masucci, how did you react when you were offered the role of Hitler, and how did you approach the role?

Oliver Masucci: I was surprised and had my agency tell them I didn't see myself as Hitler. With my height, 6-foot-4, I'm actually too tall for the role and I also don't have his physiognomy at all. But the producers insisted on seeing me, so I watched several speeches by Hitler on YouTube and rehearsed his manner of speaking.

I've had to live with Hitler since I became aware when I was younger that I'm a German. When I drove to Spain with friends of mine a few Austrians yelled at us "Heil Hitler!" Even then I thought that was terrible. So that I could now slip into the role of Hitler, however, still required a certain preparation. At one point I informed my neighbor she shouldn't be surprised if I constantly screamed like Hitler at home. Later on I locked myself in a hotel room at Hotel Savoy in Berlin with a pile of Nazi films and rehearsed the correct dialect and inflection with a language coach, and one time even with recipes for German stews.

Were you familiar with the book "Look who's back"?

Oliver Masucci: I hadn't read it yet before the castings. I preferred to concentrate on the texts I had been given. I belong to those actors who like to wait and see what the script triggers in them. I read the novel later, but at one point I put it down because the film doesn't adhere one-to-one with the book. (...) I also never could have been able to imagine that the book would be filmed one-to-one. But the idea to send Hitler out among people and see how people react to him is great. On the one hand, I had a lot of respect for disguising me as Hitler and going out into the streets like that. You never know, after all, what you have to reckon with in such improvised scenes. There is a certain fear factor. On the other hand, experiencing and also overcoming extreme anxieties are part of an actor's handicraft and personally, for me it was a huge enrichment to transform this negative anxiety into something positive and creative.

How important was the work done by make-up artist Gregor Eckstein for your acting?

Oliver Masucci: Very important. The entire procedure lasted about two hours. Because I often was picked up at the hotel in the morning as early as 3:30, in the beginning I liked to fall asleep in the make-up trailer. Then when I woke up and looked in the mirror I thought, Oh God, not this guy again! *(he laughs)* Gregor Eckstein is a master of his craft. The artificial nose, the bags under the eyes, the wrinkles around the mouth: Everything looks deceptively genuine. And the moustache on an artificial upper lip, because that results in a different tension than when it's glued to your own skin. I can only recommend that to every make-up artist.

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How did people react to you as Hitler?

Oliver Masucci: That was unbelievable. I immediately became an attraction - like a pop star. Groups of people formed and people wanted to take selfies with me. Apparently Hitler also made an impression on women. Several of them said to me, "I love you," and wanted me to hug them. But there was also a woman who clobbered me. I thought that was good. And a black woman said, "I'm afraid." I was always in my role and had to react to these situations as Hitler. Some people completely forgot I'm only an actor in make-up and costume. They conversed with me in a really serious manner. During these conversations it quickly became obvious how naïve they are and that they hadn't learned much from history.

Which film can the audience look forward to seeing?

Oliver Masucci: To seeing a good film that perhaps will have a disturbing effect in a certain way, because you can laugh, but there are also many times when the laughter gets stuck in your throat.

Interview with the director David Wnendt

Are we allowed to laugh at Hitler?

Yes. But in a film that makes fun of Hitler it depends entirely on the "how." It's walking a tightrope. Not every comedy about Hitler automatically has an entitlement. There are successful examples such as THE GREAT DICTATOR, but not every film succeeds in keeping the balance or hitting the right note.

It's important in film that you don't make fun of Hitler's deeds or his victims. But in principle I think laughing at the person Adolf Hitler is correct.

If you always portray Hitler as a monster and the incarnation of evil, that distracts from the actual crimes and responsibility for the Holocaust. When you depict Hitler as a demon that people are powerless against, then you relieve these people of their responsibility. The German people made the persecution of the Jews possible in the first place. Without the people and those who voluntarily voted for him Hitler never could have risen to power.

You can cut Hitler down to size with the aid of a film in a humorous way: Hitler was also human and not a monster. That opens up the perspective for the actual causes of the Third Reich.

Why was the choice made for Oliver Masucci as Adolf Hitler?

He was convincing at the casting with his very special interpretation of Hitler. He managed to get you laughing at Hitler over and over again and then a few seconds later to have Hitler give you the creeps.

Oliver Masucci didn't interpret Hitler as pure parody. He often gave Hitler a saintly seriousness and pathos, which brought its own comical aspect with it, without shooting for slapstick.

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The vast range of facets and multiple levels in his performance was exactly what we needed for our film. The audience is supposed to laugh at Hitler so that in the next moment the laughter gets stuck in their throat again.

You integrate documentary scenes into the fictional film. How did this idea come about?

I thought it was tantalizing to let Hitler loose on real people and not just show him in a fictional film plot with actors. Only in this way do you get answers to the questions, what would actually happen if Hitler was here again? Would he stand a chance again?

It was important to me to have reality in the film in order to say something about our society today.

What reactions from the general public did you experience when you traveled across Germany with Hitler?

I was surprised how positive people reacted to Hitler. Many of them were really happy, as if he were a pop star. And although they knew exactly that this can't be the genuine Hitler they accepted him and had serious conversations with him. I didn't reckon that we would find so many people who openly rant against foreigners and democracy. They had someone in Hitler who shared their opinion in public, who really listened to them and whose views and ideas they thought deserved support.

All in all, this journey across Germany was very frightening. It strengthened the feeling in me that the semi-documentary approach for the film is exactly right.

How close does the film adhere to the book?

Every film adaptation of a novel is an interpretation. The film has to stand on its own feet and the medium of film follows different rules than a book does. Precisely in order to do justice to a book you have to free yourself from it. It has to do with being faithful to the spirit of the book but not, however, being faithful to every letter written in it.

We kept the basic idea that Hitler suddenly shows up in present-day Berlin and everybody thinks he's a comedian and he enjoys a career in television. But in the film we develop the plot further.

What would you like to achieve with LOOK WHO'S BACK?

A single film can't change politics or society, but it can get people to think about a subject or talk about it. In the ideal case the film starts a discussion among the audience: Why are we Germans so dissatisfied with our democracy? Why are there so many angry citizens? I was surprised at how many people we filmed in all of Germany who had the same opinion as Hitler – that Germany needs a strong guiding hand again rather than a democracy where everything is just discussed all the time. This longing is not a fringe phenomenon. The center of our society is moving to the right. If people start to deal with this subject, or talk about it, because of the film, then from my viewpoint the film has accomplished a lot.

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BIOGRAPHIES OF THE CAST

Oliver Masucci (*Adolf Hitler*)

Oliver Masucci was born in 1968 in Stuttgart. This son of an Italian and a German grew up in Bonn. His German teacher at his secondary school, Ernst Moritz Arndt Gymnasium, introduced him to theater while she rehearsed *"Three Penny Opera"* with the pupils. After studying at the Berlin University of the Arts (UdK) his career as a theater actor took him to Basel (1995); Schauspielhaus Hamburg (1996–2002); Münchener Kammerspiele (2001); Schauspiel Hannover (2000–2005); Schauspielhaus Bochum (2003–2005); Schauspielhaus Zürich (2005–2009); and the Salzburg Festival (1999 and 2007).

Oliver Masucci has been a permanent member of the ensemble at Burgtheater in Vienna since 2009. In view of the large range of lead roles he has performed, in April 2013 the Austrian daily newspaper "Der Standard" called him "the workaholic in the Burgtheater era of Matthias Hartmann." Oliver Masucci performed in acclaimed productions such as *"War and Peace"*; *"Solaris"*; and *"Die Ahnfrau."*

Oliver Masucci played a Bavarian soldier in Florian Baxmeyer's short film *THE RED JACKET* (2002), which received a *Student Oscar* and was nominated for a real Oscar. In Baxmeyer's two-part television film *BLOOD OF THE TEMPLARS* (2004) he played the role of the Knight Templar Ares de Saintclair. In addition, he was in Heinrich Breloer's *"Die Manns – Ein Jahrhundertroman"* (2000) and in Uwe Janson's two-part catastrophe television film *VULKAN* (2009).

Fabian Busch (*Fabian Sawatzki*)

Fabian Busch was born in 1975 in Berlin-Treptow, and he grew up in East Berlin. His parents were cabaret artists and brought him to the stage at an early age. In 1993 he had his film debut in Wolfgang Kohlhase's *INGE, APRIL AND MAY*, and he played his first lead role in Matthias X. Oberg's *UNDER THE MILKY WAY*. One year later followed Tom Toelle's television series *"Deutschlandlied"*. Fabian Busch became known to a wider German audience with his roles in Andreas Dresen's *RAUS AUS DER HAUT* (1997); Hans Christian Schmid's thriller *23* (1998); followed by Rainer Kaufmann's film adaptation of a novel, *COLD IS THE BREATH OF EVENING* (2000); Hendrik Handloegten's comedy *LEARNING TO LIE* (2002); the Bernd Eichinger production *DOWNFALL* (directed by Oliver Hirschbiegel, 2003); and Michael Klier's *FARLAND* (2004).

In Hans-Christoph Blumenberg's docudrama *THE BUNKER* (2005) Fabian Busch played Eugen Hermann-Friede, who went underground in 1943. In 2006 he played Heinrich Heine, the poet who died 150 years before, in *HEINRICH HEINE – ICH NARR DES GLÜCKS*. In Stephen Daldry's star-studded drama *THE READER* (2008) Fabian Busch played the role of a defense lawyer; in *FINNISH TANGO* (2008) he played a man with multiple sclerosis who's tired of living, resides in a shared apartment for physically challenged persons, and is roughed up by a musician. The broadcaster RTL's event film *THE CHARLEMAGNE CODE* took him in 2008 all across Germany, followed by the event films *SPEAR OF DESTINY* (2010) and *THE HUNT FOR THE AMBER ROOM* (2012).

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Christoph Maria Herbst (*Christoph Sensenbrink*)

Christoph Maria Herbst, born in 1966 in Wuppertal, won the following awards, among many others, for the role he became famous for as the unbearable departmental head at Capitol Insurance in the television series *Stromberg*: the German Television Award; the Bavarian Television Award; the Adolf Grimme Award; and four German Comedy Awards. In 2014 the series also made the leap to the cinema with the feature film *STROMBERG*.

He performed lead roles and striking supporting roles in, among other productions, Michael Bully Herbig's *DREAMSHIP SURPRISE - PERIOD 1* (2004); Doris Dörrie's *THE FISHERMAN AND HIS WIFE* (2004); Helmut Dietl's *ABOUT THE LOOKING FOR AND THE FINDING OF LOVE* (2005); and Detlev Buck's *HANDS OF MISSISSIPPI* (2007). Under the direction of Tobi Baumann he played the role of Alfons Hatler in *DER TRIXXER* (2004) and also in its sequel *THEVEXXER* (2007).

In addition, he was in Daniel Walta's family drama *JAKOBS BRUDER* and in Michael Bully Herbig's *VICKY THEVIKING*. In 2011 this talented actor gave a brilliant performance in Christian Ditter's *VICKY AND THE TREASURE OF THE GODS*, the first German 3-D non-animation feature film.

Katja Riemann (*Katja Bellini*)

Katja Riemann grew up close to Bremen, Germany. After she finished her Abitur, she started studying she studied acting at the University of Music, Drama and Media Hannover and the Otto Falckenberg Schule in Munich. While she was still studying she had her debut in front of the camera in Peter Beauvais' television mini-series "Sommer in Lesmona," for which she received the Grimme Award in gold.

In the new millennium Katja Riemann started working with Margarethe von Trotta. Their first film together, *ROSENSTRASSE*, was shown in competition at the film festival in Venice and earned her the "Coppa Volpi" award for Best Actress. One year later there followed another German Film Award for Roehler's *AGNES AND HIS BROTHERS*; a Bambi Award for *RUNAWAY HORSE* by Rainer Kaufmann (2007); and a Grimme Award for the television film *LIFE ACTUALLY* (2009).

In 2011 she once again caused an international sensation with her performance in the role of a Swiss farmer in Markus Imboden's drama *THE FOSTER BOY*.

She has also worked continuously with Bora Dagtekin in recent years in the films *SUCK ME SHAKESPEER* (2013); and *SUCK ME SHAKESPEER 2*, which is currently enjoying a very successful run in German cinemas.

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BIOGRAPHIES OF THE FILMMAKERS

David Wnendt (*director and screenwriter*)

David Wnendt, born in 1977 in Gelsenkirchen, grew up in a family of diplomats in Islamabad; Miami; Brussels; and Meckenheim, Germany. He had his first work experiences in theater and television productions as, among other positions, an electrician; editor; assistant director; and production assistant. After receiving his degree in business and journalism from the Freie Universität Berlin, and following a one-year film course at the Film and TV School of Academy of Performing Arts in Prague, he was accepted in 2004 to the renowned Film University Babelsberg Konrad Wolf in Potsdam-Babelsberg.

With his sensational thesis film *COMBAT GIRLS* (2012), which he wrote the screenplay to as well as directing it, David Wnendt won numerous awards. After its release, the drama set in the radical right-wing scene won three German Film Awards: one in bronze as Best Feature Film, one as Best Screenplay, and one for Alina Levshin as Best Actress. In addition, David Wnendt won the Bavarian Film Award for Best Newcomer Director; the German Film Sponsorship Award; the Prix Genève-Europe for Best Screenplay; and the First Steps Award for the Best Full-length Feature Film. In 2013 David Wnendt caused a sensation once again with his film *WETLANDS*, the film adaptation of Charlotte Roche's bestseller of the same name.

Christoph Müller (*producer*)

Christoph Müller, born in 1964, studied production at the University of Television and Film Munich and at the National Film and Television School in England. In 2005 he produced Marc Rothemund's biographical drama *SOPHIE SCHOLL – THE LAST DAYS*, which won, among other awards, the Silver Bear; the Bavarian Film Award; the German Film Award; and the European Film Award, and it was nominated for an Oscar as Best Foreign Language Film.

From 2007 to 2010 Christoph Müller was managing director of Senator Film Produktion. There he produced, among other productions, the successful comedy *COMPLETE IDIOT* (2007); the mystery thriller *THE DOOR* (2008); and the comedy *WHISKEY WITH VODKA* (2009). Christoph Müller was a producer and co-author of Philipp Stölzl's *GOETHE!* (2010), which was nominated for, among other awards, the German Film Award in the categories Best Film and Best Actor.

Christoph Müller was an associate producer and co-author of UFA-Cinema's film adaptation of the bestseller by Noah Gordon, *THE PHYSICIAN* (2013), featuring Tom Payne and Ben Kingsley in the lead roles. In January 2013 Christoph Müller founded with the media entrepreneur Lars Dittrich Mythos Film Produktion in Berlin; with their company they are producing television films such as "Winnetou" (2015), a three-part television film for broadcaster RTL with main producer Christian Becker (Rat Pack Filmproduktion).

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Lars Dittrich (*producer*)

After studying business economics, the media entrepreneur Lars Dittrich from Berlin (born in 1974) was and is actively involved as a founder and supporter in successful start-up companies. In 1997 he founded dug telecom AG (today a part of freenet AG), where he was chairman of the board. Lars Dittrich was chief sales officer of debitel AG until 2009. He has been managing the consulting agency Gauly/Dittrich/Van de Weyer AG with two partners since 2010. Together with Christoph Müller he founded Mythos Film Produktion in 2013. LOOK WHO'S BACK is their first mutual feature film project.

Martin Moszkowicz (*executive producer*)

Martin Moszkowicz is chairman of the board of Constantin Film AG and responsible for company management and business strategy, including the areas of film and television production, film purchasing, marketing and press, and company communication and rights.

As producer, executive producer, and co-producer Martin Moszkowicz has been responsible for numerous nationally and internationally successful feature films and has participated in over 150 productions. Among his more recent projects are LOVE, ROSIE (2014); FRAU MÜLLER MUSS WEG! (2015); OSTWIND 2 (2015); SUCK ME SHAKESPEER 2 (2015); SHADOWHUNTERS (2015); and RESIDENT EVIL: THE FINAL CHAPTER (2016).

Oliver Berben (*executive producer*)

Oliver Berben, born in Munich in 1971, studied Electronic Engineering and Aerospace Engineering, Astronautics and Space Technology at the Berlin Technical University. After gathering experience in advertising, he founded MOOVIE – the art of entertainment GmbH in 1996, which has been a subsidiary of Constantin Film AG since 1999. In January 2009 Oliver Berben also assumed the position of CEO of Constantin Film Produktion GmbH.

Oliver Berben has produced more than 100 films for television and cinema. These include films such as ATOMISED (2006), WHY MEN DON'T LISTEN AND WOMEN CAN'T READ MAPS (2007), MÄNNERSACHE (2008) and POPE JOAN (2009). In 2011 he was involved in Roman Polanski's CARNAGE as co-producer. At the same time Berben made his debut as scriptwriter for the adaptation of Charlotte Roche's bestseller WRECKED (2013). His current projects include MÄNNERHORT (2013), FRAU MÜLLER MUSS WEG (2014) and LOOK WHO'S BACK (2015).

Oliver Berben has produced a multitude of films for television, including "Africa, Mon Amour" (2006), "Krupp: A Family Between War and Peace" (2008), the six-part TV series MIDLIFE CRISIS (2009 / directed by Doris Dörrie), Ferdinand von Schirach's "Crime and Guilt" (2011), the three-part event "Hotel Adlon – A Family Saga" (2012 / directed by Uli Edel), the highly-rated ensemble film "The Witness House" (2014 / directed by Matti Geschonneck) and the two-part "Alles muss raus. Eine Familie rechnet ab" (2014). His current TV projects include "Shades of Guilt" and "The Ethiopien", which are based on the successful works of Ferdinand von Schirach.

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Oliver Berben was awarded the 2014 ROMY "Best TV Film Producer" for his mini-series "Crime and Guilt" and the 2009 Bernd Burgemeister Television Award for "My Son's Jihad". His films have also received numerous awards, including the Grimme Award, the Bambi, the Golden Camera, the German Television Award, the Bavarian Television Award, the DIVA and also the Silver Bear. "Hotel Adlon – A Family Saga" received the Silver World Medal at the New York Festival in the "TV Movie/Drama Special" category in 2014 and was honoured with a special screening as part of the Pyongyang International Film Festival.

Hanno Lentz (*director of photography*)

Hanno Lentz was born in 1965 in Berlin. After studying German and theater studies he started studying cinematography in 1991 at the German Film and Television Academy Berlin (dffb). At the same time he worked on feature films and short films as an assistant cameraman, and right after he graduated he shot his first big television film, "Sperling and der brennende Arm" with the director Dominik Graf. The mystery received the Best Television Film Award at Filmfest München in 1998. Dominik Graf and Hanno Lentz continued their successful collaboration with BITTERE UNSCHULD (1999); DIE FREUNDE DER FREUNDE (2001); HOTTE IM PARADIES (2002); and KALTER FRÜHLING (2003).

Hanno Lentz has also worked together with the director Sherry Horman on mutual projects for the cinema and television, including the mini-series "Klimawechsel" (2009); BLISS (2012); and THE WHOLE SEHBANG (2014); AGHET (2010); "Hotel Adlon: A Family Saga" (2013); and the mini-series "Shades Of Guilt" (2015).

Timur Vermes (*author of the novel*)

Timur Vermes was born in 1967 in Nuremberg. His mother is German; his father fled from Hungary in 1956. After graduating from school Vermes studied history and political science in Erlangen. He became a journalist and wrote for, among other publications, the daily newspapers "Abendzeitung" in Munich and "Express" in Cologne, as well as for several magazines. Starting in 2007 he wrote books as a ghostwriter. In 2012 his debut novel was published, "Look who's back!"; two millions copies have been sold so far. The book and the audio book, read by Christoph Maria Herbst, received extensive acclaim in the media and from literary critics. Timur Vermes is currently working on more books.

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