

**BETA CINEMA**

presents

a film by **Asli Özge**

# BLACK BOX

with

**Luise Heyer, Felix Kramer, Christian Berkel, Timur Magomedgadzhev, Manal Issa, André Szymanski,  
Sascha Alexander Geršak, Jonathan Berlin, Anne Ratte-Polle and many more.**

a production of

**Zeitsprung Pictures and Les Films du Fleuve  
in cooperation with Gilles Mann Filmproduktion and ZDF,  
in co-production with Port au Prince Film & Kultur Produktion and VOO - BeTV**

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## CAST

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Henrike Koch	Luise Heyer
Johannes Horn	Felix Kramer
Erik Behr	Christian Berkel
Ismail Sultanov	Timur Magomedgadzhiev
Madonna	Manal Issa
Karsten Jung	André Szymanski
Daniel Koch	Sascha Alexander Geršak
Elias Levy	Jonathan Berlin
Carolin Hahn	Anne Ratte-Polle
Nikol Lang	Inka Friedrich
Karin Jung	Anna Brüggemann
Thibaut Monier	Marc Zinga

## CREW

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Written and directed by	Asli Özge
DoP	Emre Erkmen
Editor	Patricia Rommel
Sound	Paul Heymans, Thomas Gauder
Production design	Pierre Pfundt
Casting	Kristin Diehle
Producers	Daniel Mann, Till Derenbach, Michael Souvignier
Co-producers	Jean-Pierre & Luc Dardenne, Delphine Tomso Nadir Öperli, Alexandra Staib, Jan Krüger
Distribution GEST	Port au Prince Filmverleih
World Sales	Beta Cinema

## FUNDINGS

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Medienboard Berlin-Brandenburg  
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Wallimage (La Wallonie)

Tax Shelter du Gouvernement fédéral belge

Casa Kafka Pictures – Belfius

Eurimages

## TECHNICAL DETAILS

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Production	Germany, Belgium
Duration	120 minutes
Aspect Ratio	1:2,39
Frame rate	24 fps
Sound format	Dolby Digital 5.1
Original language	German, English, French, Andi, Arabic, Turkish, Russian

## SHORT SYNOPSIS

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The exits of a Berlin courtyard are blocked by the police due to an unclear event. Without information, uncertainties fuel the fear of the residents. Who knows what and who is exploiting it? Distrust triggers prejudice and another question emerges.... Is the real danger coming from inside or outside?

## SYNOPSIS

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Among the residents of a Berlin apartment house, Henrike finds herself stopped by the police at the courtyard exit. While she was heading to a job interview, she finds the entire street is closed off. Mr. Horn, an investor who recently acquired the majority of the flats, passes on the police's order: no one can enter or leave, and no further information is provided for security reasons. Forced to remain at home and wait, the cautious and quick-tempered teacher Erik seizes the opportunity to incite the neighbors against Mr. Horn. From the locked little café that leads to the street, Henrike observes a blue car being towed away, apparently owned by a young Iranian woman residing above her. Is she involved in illegal activities? As Henrike's thoughts spin, pondering the possibility of a terrorist cell, simmering conflicts between neighbors and Mr. Horn escalate. In this tense moment, the investor fuels the flames by discussing the building's lack of security and urging tenants to report any "dubious activities." As suspicion and panic take hold, prejudice deepens the rifts, and Henrike struggles to make sense of it all: Is the real danger coming from inside or outside?

*A pot-boiler about gentrification, prejudices and power play set in the microcosm of a Berlin apartment building. Directed by the multiple award-winning director of MEN ON THE BRIDGE, co-produced by Jean-Pierre and Luc Dardenne.*

## LONG SYNOPSIS

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In the backyard of a large German city, trouble is brewing: A glass office container is carefully lowered by crane under the supervision of Johannes Horn (Felix Kramer). The inscription: EAST WEST MANAGEMENT.

A raw egg hits Johannes in the back - no one is to be seen. The trash containers have to find a new place, which does not please the tenant on the first floor, Erik Behr (Christian Berkel) at all. In the evening, Erik Behr meets his neighbors Thibaut Monier (Marc Zinga) and Karsten Jung (André Szymanski) in the courtyard. While smoking weed together, they gossip about the new situation and burn a flyer from EAST WEST. They are loudly interrupted by a helicopter flying over the yard with bright spotlights, startling the neighborhood.

Henrike Koch (Luise Heyer) and her husband Daniel (Sascha Alexander Geršak) are lying in bed, talking about their financial problems and Henrike's job interview the next day. They are desperate to tell Horn about their interest in buying the apartment, which, like all the other apartments, is to be sold. With a

new job, this would be much easier, especially since Daniel has speculated in windy stock market transactions.

In the courtyard, Elias Levy (Jonathan Berlin), the operator of the café in the front building, rolls the garbage cans under Behr's window. Behr complains loudly to Horn and is supported by Karsten Jung (André Szymanski). Horn accuses Behr of throwing raw eggs at him, which the latter rejects and threatens to sue - the atmosphere is tense. Behr and Jung, together with Jung's wife Karin (Anna Brüggemann), draw up a complaint including a list of signatures.

After a passionate night of love watched from Henrike's window, Ismail Sultanov (Timur Mogomedgadzhev) and Madonna (Manal Issa) get up and say goodbye. Ismail goes to the café and talks on his cell phone. Suddenly a police SEK shows up and seals off the entire house. Henrike leaves, is asked for a light by a young man in the courtyard, and gives him her lighter. When she arrives at the courtyard exit, she sees the police cordon and asks her neighbor Carolin Hahn (Anne Ratte-Polle) what's going on, but she doesn't know anything either. Elias and Nikol (Inka Friedrich) arrive with the information that the entire side of the street and the bakery are blocked off. Horn tells them that no one is allowed to leave the house at the moment and that an information blackout has been agreed. Rumors spread about a new quarantine, disinfectants are passed around, uncertainty everywhere. A policeman asks for the owner of a blue VW, Horn leads the policemen to the 4th floor, where he suspects the owner of the car, but nobody opens the door.

Meanwhile, Henrike is getting more and more nervous - she has her job interview and is afraid of missing the appointment. She tries to arrange a digital meeting - without success. To get a better overview, she rings the doorbell of Mr. Böhm (Hanns Zischler) in the front building, who has just had a visit from Behr. The latter is in the house with the signature list to protest against the new garbage dump. He accuses Henrike's son Leo of having peed in front of his front door, which Henrike rejects. Despite everything, Behr tries to convince Henrike to give her signature, among other things with the info that Horn is co-owner of the house. As a "peace offering" he apologizes for his suspicions against Leo - Henrike accepts and signs.

In the meantime, the blue VW is towed away, Horn informs those present in the café that there is "a suspicion" against the owner of the car, an Iranian woman from the 4th floor. Elias knows her, her name is Madonna and she is a frequent guest in the café. Horn calls the apartment a "problem apartment" that belongs to a Turk, various people go in and out of there, he also does not want to sell. Behr takes Madonna's side. He has met her several times, he says, and she is a very nice woman.

Horn has flyers distributed: "Gatherings in the courtyard are forbidden after 10:00 p.m. - Be vigilant and report suspicious activities to the property management". Behr demonstratively tears up a flyer in front of Horn, a new argument ensues. Horn again accuses Behr of throwing an egg at him, whereupon the latter slaps him.

Horn gives the neighbors a tour of the house and points out defects that still need to be remedied. At the same time, bollards are being installed so that no one can drive into the courtyard. According to Horn, barbed wire would also be a way to reduce the theft rate - one has to protect oneself.

The police begin to search the house and finally find a male corpse in the attic. Horn informs some of the residents about the discovery of the body. Henrike suspects that she saw the dead man that morning and gave him her lighter.

Nikol tells them that the café will soon become a gallery and that some apartments have already been

sold. Henrike and Elias are worried. Henrike observes that Karin and Karsten Jung are talking to Horn in the container - distrust is growing.

In the meantime, Behr is with Daniel, who tells him that he and Henrike are thinking of buying the apartment and that they have to come to terms with Horn. When he is interrupted by a phone call and leaves the room, Behr observes Leo peeing in the houseplant - so he does! Daniel crosses out Henrik's signature and kicks Behr out of the apartment, annoyed.

At the gate entrance, some residents again try to argue with the police. Elias has a panic attack, spits at a policeman and is taken away. Henrike collapses and is taken care of by Carolin.

Meanwhile, Ismail tries to soften protest posters in the bathtub and destroy them in the toilet, which fails. Horn spreads the rumor that the corpse has something to do with the Iranian woman on the 4th floor, that more must be done for security in the house, and that some of the apartments must be vacated.

When Henrike returns to her apartment, Madonna is sitting at the kitchen table with Daniel. She wanted to ask what was going on in the house; she had been sitting in Zoom meetings all day and hadn't noticed anything. Henrike becomes suspicious and asks Daniel to send Madonna away.

Behr observes Horn as he walks through the basement rooms with the janitor, follows them and secretly takes photos. Apparently, the electrical system is being manipulated and a power failure is being simulated.

Henrike watches Ismail as he stows the protest posters in garbage bags and films him doing so. She suspects him of having something to do with the dead man. Daniel wants to stay out of it, watching television, which is showing a report about an anti-Putin demonstration. Henrike is surprised that the eggs in the fridge are out again...

Meanwhile, Madonna and Ismail are thinking about how to deal with the situation, they are getting more and more suspicious of being connected to the dead man. Garbage has already been dumped in front of Madonna's apartment.

Horn talks to Jung in the café about what future use might look like - and is watched suspiciously by Elias.

Behr rounds up the house community and organizes a meeting in the basement. He suspects that the house is to be de-rented in order to renovate it luxuriously and get rid of unwelcome tenants. A supporting pillar was apparently simply torn down. Jung is rebuffed and - not disinterestedly - wants to focus on dialog. Elias reveals that Jung has a deal with Horn, whereupon Behr becomes increasingly suspicious.

Thibaut finds a cat in the yard that hurts him. The owner does not know whether it has been vaccinated against rabies, saying it has just come from Turkey. Thibaut panics, storms out of the house, but is brutally driven back by the police.

The police knock on Ismail's door, accompanied by Horn. Garbage bags with political slogans were found on the dead man. The apartment is searched, and he is assumed to be Afghan. He comes from Dagestan, Russia, Ismail replies. At the same time, another police officer is at Madonna's door with Henrike. Since she only speaks English, Henrike has to interpret. The policeman insists on seeing Madonna's passport, saying that someone has filed a complaint against her. Madonna says she didn't open the door in the morning because she was in a Zoom call with Hong Kong. Ismail, meanwhile, is

asked what his relationship is with Madonna. He answers, none. Horn says in Russian "we don't negotiate with terrorists." Ismail calls him an "asshole" and is arrested. Madonna is also to be arrested after she admits to knowing Ismail - but she defends herself and accuses Henrike of having blackened her, which the latter denies. In the courtyard, Horn thanks Henrike, who slowly realizes that apparently he is behind the threats against Madonna. Ismail and Madonna are taken away by the police with great resistance.

Meanwhile, Horn has gathered the house community to announce new precautions. The house would have to be evacuated for security reasons. He tries to calm down the tenants, but deliberately sows more and more discord between the parties, all of whom are only concerned with their own advantage. Behr has a hysterical fit of laughter, which also infects the others. His friend Jung then snaps and almost bites off one of his ears, causing Behr to faint. When the emergency doctor arrives, no one wants to accompany Behr to the hospital - until Henrike comes forward, who has just been able to hold her job interview digitally in the courtyard. Daniel wants to stop her, but she leaves him standing there - she has noticed that he has crossed her off the signature list without asking her. Outside the door, the police operation is over, no SEK in sight.

In the ambulance, Henrike is in shock - Behr is fighting for his life - reanimation is underway. But a police operation prevents further travel - a bridge is closed - a new state of emergency announces itself...

## **DIRECTOR'S NOTE**

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Under the influence of one of the greatest plagues of our time - fear - and the resulting insecurity, our societies are becoming more and more frightened, and everyone distrusts everyone. We have the feeling that anything can happen at any time, anywhere in the world. This leads to an increasing polarization of societies and to a strengthening nationalism. In *BLACK BOX*, this tension manifests itself in a Berlin backyard. A group of people with different nationalities, languages and religions are forced to spend an entire day locked up together in the backyard because the "outside" is not safe. I imagined the backyard as a reflection of a country. I wanted to make a film where rulers and subordinates, the powerful and the weak clash, where disintegration into small interest groups leads to separatism, and where people use their position of power to their own advantage. Contrary to what governments would have us believe, the danger in this film, just as in real life, may not come from the outside, but from within, from ourselves.

*ASLI ÖZGE*



## **BIOGRAPHIES**

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### **ASLI ÖZGE (Director)**

Asli Özge was born in Istanbul and has lived in Berlin since 2000. After graduating from Marmara University Film & TV Academy, she made her feature film debut *MEN ON THE BRIDGE* (2009), which had its international premiere at the Locarno and Toronto Film Festivals and was screened at over forty festivals. *MEN ON THE BRIDGE* has won numerous awards, including Best Turkish Film.

Özge's second feature film *LIFELONG* (2013) celebrated its world premiere at the 2013 Berlinale in the Panorama Special section was awarded the Best Director prize at the International Istanbul Film Festival. *ALL OF A SUDDEN* (2016), her third but first German-language feature film, also premiered at the Berlinale Panorama Special section, where it received an honorable mention from the Europe Cinemas label. At the International Istanbul Film Festival, *ALL OF A SUDDEN* was awarded the Fipresci Prize and, after an extensive festival tour, was released in cinemas across Europe.

In 2020, Özge directed the miniseries "Dunkelstadt" for ZDF-Neo in Belgium. Asli Özge's second German-language film *BLACK BOX* opened the New German Cinema section at the Filmfest Munich and makes its international premiere in Competition at the Warsaw Film Festival 2023. At the moment Asli Özge is in post-production of her new film *FARUK*.

### **Awards**

*BLACK BOX* (2023)

One Future Prize, Interfilm Academy – Honorary Mention

*ALL OF A SUDDEN* (2016)

Berlin IFF, Europe Cinemas Label - Honorable Mention

International Istanbul Film Festival - Fipresci Prize

*LIFELONG* (2013)

Festival del Cinema Europe Lecce - Jury Prize

Festival del Cinema Europe Lecce - Best Actress

International Istanbul Film Festival - Best Director

International Istanbul Film Festival - Best Cinematography

International Women's Film Festival of Salé – Best Actress

MEN ON THE BRIDGE (2009)

International Istanbul Film Festival - Best Turkish Film

International Adana Film Festival - Best Film

International Ankara Film Festival - Best Film

International Ankara Film Festival - Best Ensemble

International Ankara Film Festival - Best Editing

ASPHYXIA (2005)

Thessaloniki Film Festival - Balkan Fund Script Development Award

### **LUISE HEYER (as Henrike Koch)**

Luise Heyer from Berlin studied acting at the Academy of Music and Theater in Rostock from 2006 to 2010. She made her cinema debut in 2011 in the leading role in the film WESTWIND by Robert Thalheim.

In 2019, Luise Heyer was nominated for the German Film Awards in both the Best Lead Actress category in Sven Taddicken's THE MOST BEAUTIFUL COUPLE and the Best Supporting Actress category in ALL ABOUT ME by Academy Award winner Caroline Link, in which she was awarded the Lola. Luise Heyer played leading roles among others in feature films such as Oscar winner Edward Berger's JACK (2014), which premiered at the Berlinale, Rosa von Praunheim's TOUGH LOVE (2015), Jonas Rothlaender's FADO (2016), Jens Wischnewski's WHATS LEFT OF MY LIFE (2016), Franziska Stünkel's POT SHOT (2021), Helena Hufnagel's COMMITMENT PHOBIA, with which she already made her debut film PRETTY FAR FROM OKAY (2017), Laís Bodanzky's A VIAGEM DE PEDRO (2022), Alireza Golafshan's JGA (2022) and Asli Özge's **BLACK BOX**. In addition to feature films, Luise Heyer has appeared in numerous high-quality television films, including the title role of "Sabine" in Stefan Schaller's critically acclaimed and Grimme Award-winning Rostock-based "Polizeiruf 110 - Sabine" (2020). In the first German Netflix series "Dark", Luise took on an ensemble role (2017-2019). From 2010 to 2012, Luise Heyer was a permanent ensemble member of Schauspiel Dortmund, where her roles included Margarita in *Der Meister und Margarita*. In 2012, Luise Heyer was awarded the Critics' Prize for Best Actress of the Season.

### **FELIX KRAMER (as Johannes Horn)**

When the series "Dogs of Berlin" with Felix Kramer as Inspector Kurt Grimmer appeared on Netflix at the end of 2018, his likeness was omnipresent in the capital: on suburban trains, buses and even on construction fences. Since then, there's been no getting around actor Felix Kramer.

After his Ernst Busch training, theater engagements followed, including at the Staatstheater Stuttgart, where he remained until 2005, before moving to the Deutsches Schauspielhaus in Hamburg. Here he took part in numerous productions (Goethe, Dumas, Brecht(s), Shakespeare) and also appeared on stage for *Dorfpunks* based on Rocko Schamoni's novel of the same name (directed by Studio Braun). From 2008 Felix Kramer worked as a freelance actor at the Munich Volkstheater, the Maxim Gorki Theater Berlin and Schauspiel Leipzig, among others. Since the mid-noughties, the East Berlin native has played variable TV roles, including various crime stories. In 2014, he was seen together with Ronald Zehrfeld in Feo Aladag's war drama *INBETWEEN WORLDS* about German soldiers deployed in Afghanistan. The film had its world premiere in competition at the Berlin International Film Festival. In 2016, he appeared in six episodes of the crime series "Der Zürich Krimi" as Police Captain Furrer. In 2017, Felix Kramer's career took off further with a leading role in Urs Eggers' TV crime thriller "Ein Kind wird gesucht". In the same year, the multi-award-winning Netflix series "Dark" was broadcast, in which he has since played the time traveler Tronte Nielsen. In 2018, the actor embodied the role of East Berlin police officer Kurt Grimmer in Christian Alvar's Netflix series "Dogs of Berlin." Also directed by Alvar, he starred in the 2020 theatrical thriller *FREIES LAND* - a remake of Alberto Rodriguez's 2014 Spanish thriller *LA ISLA MINIMA* relocated to Mecklenburg-Vorpommern - as the washed-up commissioner Markus Bach, who investigates the gray East of Germany in 1992. For this role, the versatile actor put on around 20 kilograms. In the same year, he was seen again together with Roland Zehrfeld in the highly acclaimed sitcom "Warten Auf'n Bus," written by Oliver Bukowski - a series about "people on hold, put off, full of longing and emotions," in which the two character mimes portray two unemployed people. In 2023, Emily Atef's film *ONE DAY WE'LL TELL EACH OTHER EVERYTHING* premiered at the Berlinale. In the film, Felix Kramer embodies a farmer who begins an amour fou with a young woman.

### **CHRISTIAN BERKEL (as Erik Behr)**

Raised in Paris, Berlin-born Christian Berkel (\*1957) took acting lessons in France before completing his training at the German Film and Television Academy. He took his first roles in *DAS SCHLANGENEI* (1977) by Swedish director Ingmar Bergman and in Douglas Sirk's *SYLVERSTERNACHT - EIN DIALOG* (1978). Numerous cinema and television productions followed, such as Helmut Dietl's *ROSSINI, ODER DIE MÖRDERISCHE FRAGE*, *WER MIT WEM SCHLIEF* (1997), the psychological thriller *THE EXPERIMENT* (2001) directed by Oliver Hirschbiegel, *MOGADISCHU* (2008) directed by Roland Suso Richter, in 2018 the miniseries *Beat* (director: Marco Kreuzpaintner) and the feature film *WHAT DOESN'T KILL US* (director: Sandra Nettelbeck) or the TV series "Der Kriminalist" (2006-2020), in which he investigated as Chief Inspector Bruno Schumann in the title role. He is best known to an international audience for his roles in Bertrand Tavernier's *LAISSEZ-PASSER* (2001), the Oscar®-nominated historical drama *DOWNFALL* (2004, directed by Oliver Hirschbiegel), *BLACK BOOK* (2006, directed by Paul Verhoeven), which was also nominated for an Oscar® and was part of the official selection of the Venice International Film Festival and the Toronto International Film Festival, 2008's *MIRACLE AT ST. ANNA* (directed by Spike Lee) and *VALKYRIE* (directed by Bryan Singer) with Tom Cruise, in Quentin Tarantino's *INGLOURIOUS BASTARDS* (2009), in which he starred alongside Brad Pitt and Christoph Waltz, among others, in 2015 in Guy Ritchie's spy thriller *THE MAN FROM U.N.C.L.E* and the biopic *TRUMBO* (directed by Jay Roach) or alongside Isabelle Huppert in *ELLE* by Paul Verhoeven, which celebrated its world premiere in Cannes in 2016 and entered the Oscar® race for France.

His highly acclaimed authorial debut *The Apple Tree* was published in 2018, followed by *Ada* in 2020. Both novels became bestsellers.

### **TIMUR MAGOMEDGADZHIEV (as Ismail Sultanov)**

Timur Magomedgadzhiev was born in Makhachkala, the capital of the Russian republic of Dagestan. After completing his acting studies at the Russian Academy of Theatre Arts (GITIS) in Moscow, Timur Magomedgadzhiev emigrated to Belgium. After considering joining the French Foreign Legion due to initial failures in Europe, choreographer Alain Platel discovered him on the street and recruited him to join his theater company Les Ballets C de la B. Through his theater engagements, Timur Magomedgadzhiev was soon discovered for film as well - by the Dardenne brothers, among others, who cast him in their multi-award-winning feature films *DEUX JOURS, UN NUIT, LE JEUNE AHMED* and *LA FILLE INCONNU*.

Timur Magomedgadzhiev lives in Brussels.

### **MANAL ISSA (as Madonna)**

Manal Issa was born in Neuilly-sur-Seine in 1992. She moved back to Lebanon with her family at the age of three and returned to study engineering in Angers in 2006 against the backdrop of the Israeli-Lebanese conflict. After graduating, she was discovered by director Danielle Arbid through social media and cast in the lead role of her film *PEUR DE RIEN* (2015). For her performance, she is awarded Best Actress at the Les Arcs European Film Festival the same year.

Since then she has appeared in numerous films and worked with directors such as Bertrand Bonello (*NOCTURAMA*) and Veit Helmer (*THE BRA*). In 2022 she portrayed Sarah Mardini in Sally El Hosaini's *THE SWIMMERS*, which was nominated for a BAFTA for Best British Film in 2023.

She lives between Paris and Beirut.

### **SASCHA ALEXANDER GERŠAK (as Daniel Koch)**

Sascha Geršak began his acting career predominantly as a theater actor on Zurich stages. The actor first received honorable mention from professional critics for his repeated collaborations with director and video artist David Hera, who cast him, among others, as Pete in Harold Pinter's "Dwarfs" at Zurich's Bunkr! stage (2003), as well as in the title role of "Howie the Rookie" at Schauspielhaus Zurich's Exil stage.

Parallel to his work at the theater, Sascha Geršak took on roles in various short films and made his feature film debut in 2007 in Simon Keller's tragicomedy *SONNTAG*. He became known to a large television audience in 2013 through Stefan Schaller's feature film *FIVE YEARS*. His portrayal of Murat Kurnaz, a German Turk imprisoned in Guantanamo, was followed by a nomination for the German Film

Award for Best Leading Actor. In the same year, Sascha Geršak received the German Film Critics Award for both his portrayal of Murat Kurnaz and his performance in Katrin Gebbe's feature film debut NOTHING BAD CAN HAPPEN, which praised him for his physical acting, in which he showed full physical commitment as victim and perpetrator, respectively. In 2018, he appeared in the ARD two-parter "Gladbeck" as hostage-taker Hans-Jürgen Rösner. For his performances in "Gladbeck" and "Somewhere in Tonga" he received the Metropolis Award BVR as "Best Leading Actor" and for the latter also the actor award of the International Film Festival Milano. Further film and television productions followed, including Detlef Buck's "Wir können nicht anders", David and Saša Vajda's "Lost Dreams" and the event series "Die Toten von Marnow", in which Sascha Geršak took on the leading role. In 2021 he was awarded the "German Television Crime Award" as "Best Actor" and the "German Television Award". In 2022 he was seen in the six-part ARD thriller series "Euer Ehren".

### **ANNE RATTE-POLLE (as Caroline Hahn)**

Anne Ratte-Polle studied at the HMT Rostock until 2000. An award-winning theater career at various major theaters in German-speaking countries followed. Her work at the Volksbühne under the directorship of Frank Castorf continues to this day, for example in collaboration with Herbert Fritsch and Constanza Macras.

Her equally award-winning film career began in parallel with theater, finding audiences at the Berlinale in leading roles in films such as DIE NACHT SINGT IHRE LIEDER (2004), WILLENBROCK (2005), EVERYDAY OBJECTS (2014), WANJA (2015) and SYBILLE (2015). For the lead role in Ilker Çatak's highly acclaimed love story I WAS; I AM; I WILL BE (2019), which was awarded the Bronze Lola at the German Film Awards, Anne Ratte-Polle was honored as "Best Actress" at the Bavarian Film Awards as well as nominated for the German Film Awards. She is known to a larger international audience from the Netflix series "Dark" by Baran bo Odar/Jantje Friese, "Shadowplay - Im Schatten der Mörder" (The Defeated/Netflix) by Måns Mårilind/ Björn Stein and "Funeral for a dog" (Sky), directed by Barbara Albert/David Dietl, among others.

Anne Ratte-Polle was once again seen at the Berlinale 2022 in one of the three leading roles in the Canadian documentary-style drama UN ÉTÉ COMME ÇA by Denis Côté. The film screened in competition for the Golden and Silver Bears. The comedy EVERYBODY WANTS TO BE LOVED by Katharina Woll, starring a critically acclaimed Anne as a therapist, premiered at the Munich Film Festival (2022) and has been in theaters since spring 2023. Since May 2023, the thriller series "Two Sides of the Abyss" has been shown simultaneously on RTL+, Warner TV Series and HBO Max, starring Anne Ratte-Polle. The series was first screened at the Berlinale Series Market in the Selected (2023) category. In the series "German Genius" by and with Kida Khodr Ramadan, Anne Ratte-Polle can be seen as Marlene Dietrich, also on Warner TV.

### **JONATHAN BERLIN (as Elias Levy)**

After first working in theater, Jonathan Berlin completed his acting training at the Otto Falckenberg School in Munich. Since then, he has appeared in numerous film and television productions. In the

feature film ZURICH he embodied Benji, who suffers from cystic fibrosis, in the ZDF three-parter "Tannbach - Schicksal eines Dorfes und dessen Fortsetzung" (Tannbach - The Fate of a Village and its Sequel) he plays the border police officer Walter Imhoff and in the coming-of-age film DIE FRIBADCLIQUE he plays the clique member Uncle. For the latter role he received the New Faces Award and the German Acting Award. This was followed by leading TV roles in "Kruso", "Preis der Freiheit", "Martha & Tommy" and the feature film THE FORGER, among others. In 2022, his short feature AUGUST, which he directed and wrote the screenplay for, premiered at the Manchester Film Festival.

## **PRODUCTION COMPANIES**

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### **ZEITSPRUNG PICTURES**

Zeitsprung Pictures was founded in 1985 by producer Michael Souvignier and is firmly established in the national and international film business as a specialist for award-winning films, series and documentaries. Souvignier's partner Till Derenbach has been working at Zeitsprung Pictures since 2008 and is responsible for all Zeitsprung productions as managing director, producer and together with Michael Souvignier. Daniel Mann, managing partner and producer of gilles mann filmproduktion, has been working as a freelance producer, producer and executive producer for Zeitsprung Pictures since 2014.

Zeitsprung Pictures has produced several award-winning feature films (DEAR THOMAS, MACK THE KNIFE – BRECHT'S THREEPENNY FILM, THE DIARY OF ANNE FRANK) as well as over 100 other fictional productions. Among them are, in addition to feature films, TV movies, series and mini-series for all major broadcasters, such as ARD, ZDF, arte, RTL and Sat1 and streamers, such as Netflix. The productions of Zeitsprung Pictures often deal with contemporary historical and socio-critical topics.

Countless awards such as nine German Film Awards (Lolas) in 2022, including for Best Film in Gold, Best Director, Best Screenplay, Best Leading Actor for DEAR THOMAS, the Grimme Award in 2023 for the globally successful Netflix series KLEO, as well as the German Television Award in 2021 for the ARD series "Oktoberfest 1900" bear witness to the success of Zeitsprung Pictures.

Currently the 2nd season of the Netflix series KLEO is shooting and two feature films are finalizing post-production with screenwriter and director Joachim A. Lang.

### **LES FILMS DU FLEUVE**

Les Films du Fleuve is the production company of the award-winning and globally successful Belgian screenwriters and directors Jean-Pierre and Luc Dardenne.

Jean-Pierre and Luc Dardenne are two-time winners of the Palme d'Or at the Cannes Film Festival (for ROSETTA and THE CHILD), as well as countless nominations and awards, at the Cannes Film Festival, as well as numerous other international festivals. Her most recent award-winning directorial works include TORI AND LOKITA, THE YOUNG AHMED, THE UNKNOWN GIRL and TWO DAYS, ONE NIGHT.

Les Films du Fleuve is also firmly established in the international cinema landscape, not only thanks to the films of the Dardenne brothers, but also because of the co-produced films of other renowned directors such as Ken Loach, Jacques Audiard, Cristian Mungiu, Mohamed Ben Attia, Costa-Gavras, but also emerging young directors such as Rebecca Zlotowski, Ascanio Celestini, Amélie van Elmbt, Kamir Aïnouz and Aslı Özge. Les Film du Fleuve has also recently started to produce films by young emerging Belgian directorial talents, such as Laura Wandel, Christophe Hermans and Mathieu Volpe.

Delphine Tomson serves as producer of Dardenne films at Les Films du Fleuve, as well as co-producer on all of the production company's co-productions.

**WORLD SALES**



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