



43. FILMFEST
MÜNCHEN 26

MEMORIES OF A FOREST

A FILM BY KATHARINA RABL

PRESS KIT



*One winter long before my time
my mother watches her mother
writing "father is a dreamer"
on the steamed-up windowpane with her fingertip.*

*A large farm,
a wide field.
A fast-growing spruce forest.*

*My grandfather used to be
gone away most of the time
and when he was no longer gone away
his strength was.*

*My grandmother was mostly alone,
but never away.
And when I was born,
life finally began.*

Things should finally get better with me.

LOGLINE



The death of her grandmother brings Frieda back to her home village – where she not only inherits an area of forest but is also confronted with unspoken expectations. Torn between a sense of duty and the dream of a life of freedom and independence, she has to make a decision.





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SYNOPSIS

Frieda is just about to make her dream come true: if she completes her doctoral dissertation by the end of the summer, she'll be offered a position at the University of Vienna. But then her grandmother dies. Frieda goes back to the village in Lower Austria where she grew up. Here she is confronted with the past – and with the present expectations her parents have of her.

For years there has been a powerful, underlying tension in Frieda's relationship with her mother Johanna, who subordinated her own needs to the farm and the family; her life has been marked by hard physical work, sacrifice and the feeling that she never really had a choice. Frieda's grandmother is also remembered as a taciturn, selfless woman who always did what was expected of her. Frieda hopes that an academic career will give her a life away from this grueling cycle.

It emerges that her grandmother left her fifteen hectares of forest; in the light of her parents' financial difficulties, selling the land seems the logical step. But Frieda's mother vehemently rejects this idea, for unexpectedly emotional reasons. Her grandmother apparently viewed it as an investment in the future of her descendants, and the forest itself bears witness to sacrifices and hopes for a better life. So, what should Frieda do with this bequest? A sense of duty prompts her to stay longer

in the place where she grew up than originally planned. Together with her childhood friend Friedrich, she begins to cut and sell wood, to support her parents. But the bark beetle wreaks havoc with this plan; the forest is infested, the wood of little value.

Frieda comes to acknowledge that she is battling not only to survive economic decline but also to prevent the annihilation of her family's legacy, the memories and dreams shared by her mother and grandmother. She ends up in a conflict between loyalty and her longing for independence, between her origins and a possible future. When she finds herself neglecting her thesis due to the demands placed upon her by the forest and the family, Frieda realizes that she must make a choice: should she carry on her family's legacy or break away to forge her own path in life?



INTERVIEW

KATHARINA RABL

It's apparent from your biography and filmography that you have made a number of short documentaries, and you studied Directing Documentary Films at the University of Television and Film, Munich (HFF). What prompted you to expand your spectrum into fictional storytelling for your first feature film?

It wasn't a spontaneous decision; I've always been interested in fictional storytelling. I wanted to attend the class in Documentary Film with Heiner Stadler at the HFF because I felt it explored all the possibilities of the cinematic form. In the first semesters, the main aim was to study the narrative aspect of film and to explore fundamental issues: What is documentary storytelling? What is a feature film? Is it meaningful to adhere to these distinctions? That's how I approach my work: I consider what it is that interests me about the material and what means I want to use in depicting it. In retrospect, the fact that there are more documentary or essayistic films in my filmography is partly connected with the requirements of my courses. But I had a free hand with my graduation film, *Meomries of a Forest*. I had the idea for this material and started writing the screenplay; during the course of that process, I was joined by my co-writer, Karla Cristóbal.

Are you familiar from your own experience with the dilemma of your main character, Frieda, being torn between the forces that connect

"I find this ambivalence interesting: wanting to be as far away as possible but at the same time longing to stick to a template."

you to the place where you grew up – thus holding you back – and those that lead you away, towards far horizons?

I grew up in the area of dense forests where we filmed, the Waldviertel, and I do have a rural background, though not through my parents; both sets of my grandparents had farms. The way of life I chose didn't give me the feeling that I was continuing a tradition, more that I was starting something "of my own". But despite the distance I have established, now and then I still see in myself the longing to fulfill a well-established role, to "return". I find this ambivalence interesting: wanting to be as far away as possible but at the same time longing to stick to a template. Of course, the desire for security and control is behind this, too. I believe it is also connected with female socialization. My aim in the film was to understand how role models, which have especially affected the women in my family, continue to have an influence. I didn't want to create a black & white image, with the country as the home of the precariat and a refuge for people who can't handle life in the city. I wanted to pose the question: what do you discover in yourself when you return after a long absence, happiness is within your grasp, but then you conform – albeit unconsciously – to precisely the template you believed you had to distance yourself from most completely?

Did the forest have a significance for you as the site of childhood, peace, freedom, rural nature?



The place where I grew up is surrounded by forests, and it was very much a refuge for me during my childhood. Timber is an important raw material for economic activity in this region; that had been decided several generations earlier. There is a tension in the film deriving from the fact that the forest was the setting of my childhood, and I could perceive it as wild and untamable. But my naïve, childlike view of that situation has changed over time. The bark beetle crisis made me aware that the forest is much more like a plantation established for commercial exploitation. There's nothing wild about it; it's primarily a piece of land with an economic function. My main character also changes her perspective, and that makes her realize something which then affects the other members of her family.

The central theme of the film is heritage – both immaterial and material. Frieda inherits a forest, but she also comes to realize that she is falling into a pattern that her grandmother also experienced, which is to abandon something just before you reach your goal; for her grandmother, it was studying – for Frieda, it's completing her doctorate. Perhaps due to a deep-seated fear of achieving something that takes them too far away from their roots. Are you interested in the way family patterns reproduce themselves?

I have been focusing on this material for so long, at some point I realized that the theme of transgenerational transmission is swirling around me, and it's likely that it engages my generation in many ways. This is probably partly due to the fact that, for the first time, my generation can allow itself the luxury of indulging in (psychological) reflection and reappraisal of the past. I know from my own experience that, just like the main character, I don't have a role model or a narrative in my ancestry featuring someone who chose a path like mine. I'm afraid that the more choices I make that take me away from this ancestry, the more I will be denying or

“Often, happiness or prosperity meant something different in previous generations than today. [...] It turns out that this narrative, of sacrifice for the next generations, is outdated.”

losing my identity. Which also means giving something up. Frieda is about to hand in her doctoral thesis, and I don't think she wants to go back to a dollhouse romance, complete with a heteronormative relationship that rescues everything. But she does fear losing part of her identity and discarding something that shaped her for so long. That must have been on her grandmother's mind, too. The family didn't talk about it for a long time, but Frieda can now go one step further – because she learns about her grandmother's story, and what she gave up, and thus realizes that it's structural: that a system with certain forces is at work behind it.

The material legacy that comes to Frieda is a forest. Frieda's grandmother planted it in order that her grandchildren, if not her children, could reap the commercial benefit. However, ecological changes mean that this calculation on the part of the grandparents' generation no longer functions. To what extent does the forest in your film, a symbol of former wealth, also become the bearer of profound ecological and economic change?

First and foremost, I wanted to tell the story of a generation that must deal very directly with the question of what happens when an inheritance becomes a burden. Often, happiness or prosperity meant so-



something different in previous generations than today. At first, inheriting a forest sounds great, but it soon turns into a problem when you have to address the question of how to manage it. Do you have the means to do that, and the knowledge? And there's another aspect to it of course, as in the film; unfortunately, passing on an inheritance often expresses the importance of the relationship of the deceased to the heir. This causes endless conflicts. Today there are very efficient machines for managing forests and the soil, but the way Frieda manages the forest is actually very old-fashioned. I also felt it was important to show that a sort of fairy tale is told within the family, which is no longer sustainable because they haven't adapted to changing times, and they've never talked openly about its commercial viability. It was a decent idea on the part of the grandmother to plant trees for her descendants, but it would have been good to initiate structural change in her own time, because Frieda's mother already suffered from the failure to do that. It turns out that this narrative, of sacrifice for the next generations, is outdated.

The scenes in the sawmill show quite clearly how the capitalist approach is applied to the countryside. And footage of the wood processing machines – which also bears witness to your documentary perspective – makes this process very tangible, with the forest, nature, the organic being transformed into monetizable material. Is there also an interface between fictional and documentary storytelling here?

I wanted to set the story in a real arena, shooting as far as possible at original locations with natural light, using non-professional actors from the region. We put the story of the Wallner family in this setting, giving the narrative "my children should be better off" an almost parable feeling. By featuring the wood processing, I was able to show very clearly in the film how the tree trunk – the plant I had simply remembered as growing free when I was a child – is suddenly measured very precisely and inserted

"By featuring the wood processing, I was able to show very clearly in the film how the tree trunk – the plant I had simply remembered as growing free when I was a child – is suddenly measured very precisely and inserted into a capitalist mechanism."

into a capitalist mechanism. If wood is infested by the bark beetle, it is X-rayed in great detail in the sawmill, using a laser, and the infested wood is processed, placed on pallets and exported, often to China. Anything that can't be used as building material is processed into wood chips or sawdust. The only thing that isn't monetized is the dust that's left over. And like the forest, the women and the other people in this patriarchal family system are trimmed for performance; they all take on a role and function which has been precisely planned and calculated. Even though they do have affection for each other, they all must play their parts in order to keep this system running.

You concentrate your narrative on the main character, Frieda, who is played by Julia Windischbauer. Did you have her in mind while you were writing the screenplay? How did you choose her as the leading actress?

I already knew Julia Windischbauer from other film work. I'd followed her work for a long time, she knew about my screenplay, and over the years a friendship developed outside of filmmaking. I'd always



Julia Windischbauer, Linde Prelog and Johanna Orsini:
three generations within a filming break

had Julia in mind for this role, but I had to do some audition work with her after all, to give us both the opportunity of finding out whether we could work well on this level – as director and leading actress. We did two casting rounds, and it was clear at a very early stage that Julia was the right choice for the character of Frieda. I very much value Julia's ability to approach the role with such incredible strength, courage and curiosity; she enriched the film enormously on all levels.

Another interesting character is Frieda's mother, who still bears the burden of being "to blame" for her mother abandoning her studies, and yet she avoids falling into a cliché of being bitter. How did you define this role with Johanna Orsini, and how did you work with the cast overall on this, your first feature film?

We did a lot of constellation auditions, and it quickly became apparent that considerable energy had developed between Johanna and Julia, and that the audition scenes also raised questions between the two of them that I wanted us to discuss. I was aiming for an ensemble where you could really take the material in your hands and let it "shine through". It also seemed important to me to work with people who are used to a lot of text work, from the theatre or wherever. Johanna really wanted to avoid any clichés in her interpretation of the mother: not to be the "evil" older woman but to portray a woman who is trapped in her ambivalence between the appropriate closeness and distance to her daughter. Maybe a mother who is still very busy being a daughter herself has a hard time to be a mother at all. While filming, we both noticed that it comes down to nuances in the gaze or blanks that are filled in by everything that remains unsaid. We rehearsed a lot; we talked a lot about the characters. I also realized how important it is to provide a safe framework where the story can be rediscovered together. And there was room to try different approaches during the filming itself. Some nuances only became more tangible in the editing.

Was there enough time for that?

Not during the filming, unfortunately. It was a small-budget graduation film; we only had limited days of shooting, and there was a high workload. I was aware from the start that I had to adopt a pretty lively pace. That made the rehearsal week and all the one-on-one discussions beforehand all the more important. The aim of the rehearsal week was to awaken everyone's desire to improvise and fail. The screenplay was written in Standard German, and a version in dialect only emerged after that week. Everyone has their own approach to that, and it was up to me to bring them together.

"I'm glad that I started as a documentarist and went into fiction later on."

The film is marked by a very strong sense of authenticity. You augment your professional cast with a range of non-professional actors in small roles. Was this also an opportunity to establish a solid connection to the filming location?

The casting process developed over months. For some characters, I felt it made sense to use people from the region who could perform their real-life scenario. It was a setting that pulled us all along. For the location search, we had incredible support from the whole region and from the community. As a teacher at agricultural college, my father knew how to cut down trees like a professional, and he became a coach for Julia Windischbauer and Lukas Walcher. We briefly considered having the tree felling done by stunt people, but then we concluded that the hard physical work

should also be portrayed. Julia and Lukas were willing to learn. My father planned a workshop, and within four days they had both learned to drive a tractor, operate a chainsaw and cut down trees, and that helped them understand how hard the work is and what it means to be so closely connected to nature.

How did it come about that the whole region and its community was so strongly behind the project?

That was largely thanks to my father and the rest of my family, who are closely connected to the community and networked with a lot of people. The Waldviertel hadn't been the center of my life for a very long time, so it was nice for me to meet a lot of people again. I didn't want to film in my village, because I didn't want the place where I grew up to be overlaid with "film images". In the end, since we didn't have any alternatives, we filmed the solstice celebration in my village and everything else in the surrounding villages. The house was a real lucky find after a long, exhausting search; we were able to shoot everything in our film house in one building. I wanted to use the old and new buildings to depict a farm that was getting on in years, where you can tell from the façade that money is tight. However, farms in the Waldviertel are either fully operational or they're for sale, in which case they're usually snapped up very fast – unless they're in too bad a condition. Basically, filming there was so great because someone always had the number of someone else who could help us out, even in the most difficult situations. We even had a grave dug, with a new gravestone, tractors were borrowed. One farmer from a nearby village stayed on the set for days, taking a siesta in his tractor during breaks, so he could bring the tractor "back to the beginning" again and again, and connect the trailer professionally. I don't want to go overboard with anecdotes, but the film was mainly carried off and made possible by people who only appear briefly in the credits. It was a team effort.

What did this first feature film experience bring you, in terms of learning processes, that you didn't know from documentary work?

On this project, almost every step was a "first time", which always feels strange and uncomfortable. In documentary films, you constantly deal with exceptional situations; it never turns out the way you'd imagined it. That was the best preparation, because we were faced with extreme challenges. I'm glad that I started as a documentarist and went into fiction later on. In terms of directing, it didn't make that much difference to me, I was observing closely and trying to continue the story based on that observation. The screenplay was the foundation, but the film materialized with the help of all the participants.

What considerations underpinned Peter Kutin's film music?

It was a joint search for musical themes and levels. I wanted the repetitive cycle, which Frieda and the family experience again and again, to be told musically as a loop. It should also reflect the forces of coming and going, of being pulled forward and backward. That gave rise to a formal concept for the film: that we wouldn't work with flashbacks but instead make the past tangible through the present. That meant establishing a different, strange, past, even nostalgic level beyond the visual layer. Peter created these loops musically, and he also incorporated moments of manipulation and irritation into the composition. It was important to me that he should add a little distortion to the film, so it wouldn't come across too romanticized.

Interview held by film journalist Karin Schiefer



WHAT HOME LEAVES BEHIND, OR WHY IT'S SOMETIMES WORTH STAYING LONGER

DIRECTOR'S NOTE

Everyone has a place they come from, and they invariably think they'll go back there at some point. For many people, that place was never a home – or it slowly evolved in a different direction. Sometimes the place fades and miraculously reappears much later in life. Sometimes it disappears completely.

I often return to the place I come from, and I was absolutely convinced it would never change. No matter how much went on in my life, I was sure time would stand still in that place. That I would always be able to go back – and everything would be exactly the same as when I left.

A few years ago – it was the beginning of the process that gave rise to *Memories of a Forest* – I found myself facing a forest I knew from childhood, which had been a place like that for me. And I could hardly recognize it. The ground was crisscrossed by deep, brown furrows after the devastating efforts of a harvester. And in between there were just a few parched tree trunks, rising up like undernourished toothpicks, bare and without any needles. Suddenly, I could see through the forest and remember mutually with it what it had once experienced.

There was a horde of bark beetles behind the slow decimation of the forest; the insects ate their way through the wood and declared war

on the spruce monocultures. At that time, though the bark beetle wasn't a new "problem", it came as a surprise to people in this region. While I was filled with mourning for the old landscape, it was a financial disaster for the owners of the land.

"If this forest was intended for the future but was not made for it, what form of forest will follow in its footsteps?"

It's a strange feeling when the topography of your own childhood slowly dissolves – in my case, because a beetle was inexorably chewing its way through a spruce forest, one square meter at a time. I realized that the forest I grew up with is in fact a commercial enterprise, designed for growth to maintain a system that isn't sustainable. That it actually is a plantation, not a forest.

If this forest was intended for the future but was not made for it, what form of forest will follow in its footsteps? And is there any way of preventing these mistakes being made again?

At its core, *Memories of a Forest* is precisely about how insights resulting from the decisions of earlier generations demand a response from subsequent generations. At the same time, the film addresses the ambivalence between the desire to preserve what has been handed down and the need to free oneself from it – since it can, after all, easily become a burden. Dealing with this tension is a great responsibility, and this is at the core of the conflict which the main character, Frieda, comes to experience.

We have always told ourselves the fairy tale of growth: that it must continue forever, thrusting ever higher, ever faster. That each generation has to make even more effort, so the next one will be better off. But what if this promise has started to crumble?

“Perhaps what we read as decay can also be perceived as an act of resistance.”

Placing the Wallner family at the center of my film gave me the opportunity to translate these issues into a concrete family dynamic. The stories of these individuals show how deeply the idea of growth is engraved in our relationships. How it is passed on, often out of a sense of duty and often unquestioned... thus reducing people and nature to their function.

A family can quickly become a network based on exploitation, both of nature and of people. This applies especially to women, whose work, bodies and very existence have been functionalized over generati-

“Especially women, whose work, bodies and very existence have been functionalized over generations. They transport, they receive, they pass on – and in the process they themselves increasingly become an exhaustible resource.”

ons. They transport, they receive, they pass on – and in the process they themselves increasingly become an exhaustible resource.

Over time, my view of the forest has changed. Maybe it's not actually sick. Perhaps what we read as decay can also be perceived as an act of resistance. Withdrawal from being subjugated. Growth according to its own laws.

This film is an attempt to make these interdependencies visible. Between landscape and memory, between growth and violence, between what we inherit and what we have to question.

Katharina Rabl



CAST

JULIA WINDISCHBAUER

LEADING ROLL FRIEDA WALLNER

Born in 1996 in Linz, lives and works in Vienna and Berlin.
Actress, director, film producer, film editor

Julia Windischbauer grew up in Upper Austria, and received artistic training at the *Musical Theatre Academy* Puchenau alongside her secondary school education. Whilst studying English and Theatre Studies, she performed in young talent projects at the *Landestheater Linz* and the *Junge Burg* in Vienna. From 2016 to 2020, she studied at the *Otto Falckenberg School* in Munich. She has held permanent engagements at the *Münchner Kammerspiele*, the *Deutsches Theater* in Berlin and the *Burgtheater* in Vienna.

She began working as a film in projects at the *Filmakademie Vienna*, *HFF Munich* and the *Akademie der bildenden Künste* Munich, while still being a student. The short film *Gör*, in which she played the lead role, was awarded the *German Short Film Award* in 2021. The following year, she took on one of the lead roles in Elena Wolff's relationship drama *Para:dies*, which she also produced and edited.



Stage awards: O.E. Hasse Prize 2019; five nominations for Young Actress of the Year 2020, Theater heute, for *The Vacuum Cleaner* (Berliner Theatertreffen 2020)

Film awards

Best Young Actor Award at Max Ophüls Prize Film Festival 2022 and
Diagonale Acting Award 2022 for *Para:dies*

Götz George Young Talent Award, First Steps Awards 2024 for *Sonnenplätze*

Local Artist Award Crossing Europe 2025 for *Callas, Darling* (director)

Filmography

Etty

6-piece TV Series for Arte. Directed by: Hagai Levi 2026

Callas, Darling

Feature film. Author, director, leading role, editor and production 2025

Tatort – Wir sind nicht zu fassen!

TV movie. Directed by: Rupert Henning 2025

Unterwegs im Namen der Kaiserin

Feature film. Directed by Jovana Reisinger 2025

Das Zittern der Aale

Short film. Directed by: Maximilian Weigl 2024

Ciao, Czerny, Ciao

Short film. Directed by: Max Conway, Elisabeth Jakobi 2023

Sonnenplätze

Feature film. Directed by: Aaron Arens 2024

Götz-George-Nachwuchspreis – First Steps Awards

Zitterinchen

TV movie. Directed by: Luise Brinkmann 2022

Para:Dies

Feature film. Directed by: Elena Wolff, Hauptrolle, Schnitt, Produktion 2022

Diagonale Schauspielpreis 2022, Max Ophüls Nachwuchspreis 2022

Gör

Short film. Directed by: Anna Roller 2021

Deutscher Kurzfilmpreis 2021

JOHANNA ORSINI AS JOHANNA WALLNER

Born in 1968 in Klagenfurt
trained at the Mozarteum in Salzburg

Theatre engagements at various venues in Germany and Austria, as well as numerous productions of her own. First film role in *Mahler auf der Couch* in 2010, first leading role in *Soldate Jeanette* in 2013

Awards: Ensemble Award 2019 German Film Award for *Murer – Anatomy of a Trial*, Ensemble Award Diagonale 2018 for *L'Animale*, Acting Award Diagonale 2012 for *Soldate Jeanette*

Selected Films: *Mit einem Tiger schlafen* (2024), *What a feeling* (2024), *Veni, Vidi, Vici* (2024), *Alma und Oskar* (2022)

Television Works: *Alpentod – Ein Bergland-Krimi: Im ewigen Eis*, *Drunter & Drüber – Chaos auf dem Friedhof*, *Der Alte*, *Maloney*; *Drunter und Drüber*, *Dave*, *Tatort* and many more



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DOMINIK WARTA AS ALEXANDER WALLNER

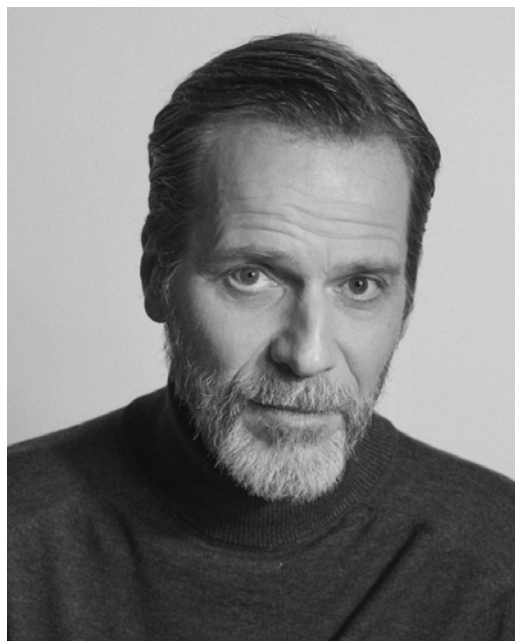
Born in 1969 in Vienna
trained at the Volkstheater drama school

Twenty years of theatre work with companies in Germany (Heidelberg and Darmstadt) and Austria (Graz and Vienna). First film role in 2012 in *Move On*

Awards: Diagonale 2018 Ensemble Award for *L'Animale*, Diagonale 2020 Acting Award for *The Trouble With Being Born*

Selected Films: *Das Geheime Stockwerk* (2025), *Andrea lässt sich scheiden* (2024), *Meerjungfrauen weinen nicht* (2022), *Schächten* (2022)

Television Works: *Braunschlag* 1986, *SOKO Donau*, *Tatort*, *Trost & Rath*, *Landkrimi*, *Vienna Blood*, *Die Toten vom Bodensee* and many more



© Rafaela Pröll

LUKAS WALCHER AS FRIEDRICH REISS

Born in 1990 in Gröbming
trained at the Ernst Busch Academy of Dramatic Arts
in Berlin

Awards: Ernst Binder Scholarship 2023, Nestroy
Prize for Best Regional Production 2022 for *Garland*,
Nestroy Prize for Best Regional Production 2021 for
 dritte republik (eine vermessung)

Selected Films: *Licht, kein Licht* (2026), *Vier Minus
Drei*, (2026); *Nie Allein* (2024), *Des Teufels Bad* (2024),
Cornetto im Gras (2023)

Television Works: *Alpentod – Ein Bergland-Krimi*,
Tirolerblut, *Uhudlerverschwörung*, *Der Pass*, *SOKO
Donau – Wien* and many more



© Maria Noi

LINDE PRELOG AS MARGARETHE REISS

Born in 1949 in Hartberg
actress, author, songwriter, singer and cabaret artist.
Trained at the University of Music and Performing Arts
in Graz

Since the 1970s, theatre in Vienna, Graz and Bolzano,
first TV role in 1976 in *Alpensaga*, and in cinema since
the mid-1980s. German Crime Fiction Award for Best
Actress in 2024 for *Bis in die Seele ist mir kalt*

Selected Films: *Welcome Home, Baby* (2025), *Rickerl*
(2023), *Lourdes* (2009), *Revanche* (2008), *Indien* (1993),
Atemnot (1984)

Television Works: *Alpensaga*, *Kaisermühlenblues*,
*Stinatz-Krimis (Kopftuchmafia, Uhudlerverschwörung,
Eierkratzkomplott)*, *Der Pass* and many more



© Peter Reichert



TEAM AND PRODUCTION

KATHARINA RABL

DIRECTOR AND CO-AUTHOR

Born in 1993 in Waidhofen an der Thaya, raised in the northern Waldviertel

Katharina Rabl is a director, writer, and producer based in Munich and Vienna. After studying German literature in Vienna, she moved to Munich in 2016 to study documentary film directing at the University of Television and Film (HFF). Since 2017, she has been creating her own works in the documentary, hybrid, and narrative fields. Her short films *Dead Sea Dying* (co-directed with Rebecca Zehr, 2019) and *Ich kann jeder sagen, aber wer sagt Wir?* (2022) have screened at international festivals such as *Visions du Réel*, *DOK Leipzig*, *DOK.fest Munich*, *Diagonale*, and the *Hamburg Short Film Festival*; for *Dead Sea Dying* she received, among others, the German Film Critics' Award and the Tenk Award in Nyon.

Erinnerungen eines Waldes/Memories of a Forest (director, co-written with Karla Cristóbal) is her graduation film and also her feature debut. Alongside this, she gained experience in producing films at *Mischief Films* and teaches frequently at the *HFF Munich*.

Filmography

L'esprit de l'escalier, documentary film. Author and director 2017

Dead Sea Dying, documentary film. Co-director 2019

Ich kann jeder sagen aber wer sagt wir?, documentary film. Director 2022

Erinnerungen eines Waldes, feature film. Co-author and director 2026

Chronologie einer Melancholie, feature film. Author and director. 90 min., in development



© Stella Traub

JACOB KOHL

DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY

Born in 1986 in Lörrach
studied theatre, film and media studies in Vienna and
visual design at the *HFF Munich*

His films have been screened at prestigious festivals
and have won awards including the German Youth
Film Prize and the Audience Award at the Regensburg
Queer Festival.

Filmography als DoP (Selection)

Aufzeichnungen ohne Ort, directed by Steffi Wurster 2026
Taste of Salt, directed by Raaed Al Kour 2025
Future Is Panorama, directed by Muschirf Shekh Zeyn 2024
Atomnomaden, directed by Kilian Armando Friedrich
and Tizian Stromp Zargari 2022
Überleben, directed by Kilian Armando Friedrich and
Lara Milena Brose 2021

ULRIKE TORTORA

MONTAGE

Born in 1963 in Freiburg im Breisgau
German film editor

Ulrike Tortora began working as an assistant editor
to Alexander Kluge in 1986. She has been a freelance
film editor since 1988. In 2014, she was awarded the
German Camera Prize for her work on the documentary
film *Der Kapitän und sein Pirat*. Tortora has been an
honorary professor at the *HFF Munich* since 2018.

Filmography as Editor (Selection)

Pferd am Stiel, directed by Sonja Kröner 2026
Der verlorene Mann, directed by Welf Reinhart 2026
Azza, directed by Stefanie Brockhaus 2025
Polizeiruf 110: Schweine, directed by Tomasz Emil Rudzik
2024
Mordsschwestern – Verbrechen ist Familiensache
(Fernsehserie, 3 Folgen) bis 2023
Für immer, directed by Pia Lenz 2023
Tatort: Schattenkinder, directed by Christine Repond 2022
Tatort: Risiken mit Nebenwirkungen, directed by
Christine Repond 2022

PETER KUTIN

MUSIC COMPOSER

Born in 1983 in Styria

He lives in Vienna and Berlin, working as a composer
and producer. He has collaborated extensively with
musicians, composers, directors, theatre productions
and investigative journalists.

Sound design and composition works (Selection)

Everytime, directed by Sandra Wollner 2026
Militantropos, directed by Alina Gorlova,
Yelizaveta Smith and Simon Mozghovyi 2025
The Trouble With Beeing Born,
directed by Sandra Wollner 2020
Homo Sapiens, directed by Nikolaus Geyrhalter 2016
Over The Years, directed by Nikolaus Geyrhalter 2015
Soldate Jeanette, directed by Daniel Hösl 2013
Dark Room, directed by Billy Roisz 2014
It Has To Be Lived Once And Dreamed Twice,
directed by Rainer Kohlberger 2019
Moghen Paris, directed by Katharina Copony, 2016



MISCHIEF FILMS

Mischief Films was founded in 2002 as an independent documentary production company. Our focus is on collaborating with innovative filmmakers who aim to use their documentaries to shed new light on life stories or current issues. As producers, we actively support our directors' unique cinematic styles. Our work centres on international co-productions for cinema and television. With the aim of reaching a wide audience, our films are screened at world-renowned festivals and on international television.

In Produktion

ConTatto directed by Hanna Schaich and Federica Dauri. Debut film, feature documentary

Time Off directed by Dariusz Kowalski. Feature documentary

Machiavelli – Die Leidenschaft der Politik directed by Iris Fegerl.

Co-Production with *Seppia* (FR), GA&A (IT), in collaboration with ORF and Arte

Filmauswahl

Militantropos a film by *Tabor Collective*. Co-Production with *Tabor* (UA) and *Les Valseurs* (FR) in Cooperation with SWR/Arte, Premiere Cannes, *Quinzaine des Cinéastes* 2025

Wishing on a Star directed by Peter Kerekes. Co-Production with *Videomante* (IT), *Kerekes Films* (SK), Premiere Venice International Film Festival 2024

Henry Fonda for President directed by Alexander Horwath

Co-Production with *Medea Film Factory* (DE), Premiere Berlinale Forum 2024

LEYKAUF FILM

Film producer and managing director, Nicole Leykauf, founded *Leykauf Film* in 1996. *Leykauf Film* has deliberately remained a small company throughout the years, enabling Nicole Leykauf to focus on individual projects and to give them her full attention. She loves to work alternately with experienced filmmakers and graduates from the University of Television and Film Munich. While visually appealing cinema-documentaries are her passion, there are certain topics where internationally applicable TV formats are more appropriate. Nicole Leykauf has been a member of the *German Film Academy* since 2007. She occasionally works on committees to enhance the reputation of documentaries.

In Produktion

The Noise of Absence directed by Alexander Hick. Debut film,

Co-Production with *if... Productions Film* und *Tambo Productions*, Lima

Making Good Again directed by Gilad Baram und Bnaya Halperin.

Co-Production with ZDF *Kleines Fernsehspiel*

Suchen Finden, Haben, Halten, Lassen directed by Verena Wagner. Graduation Film at *HFF*

Filme (Auswahl)

Spring in Kangiqsualujjuaq directed by Marie Zrenner. Graduation Film at *HFF*, supported by the partnership Bayern-Québec, Premiere *DOK.fest München*, 2025

Letzte Runde directed by Elizaveta Snagovskaia. Graduation Film at *HFF*, in Co-Production with MDR and BR, Premiere at *Hofer Filmtage*, 2022

Der Fall el Masri directed by Stefan Eberlein. Co-Production with ZDF / ARTE, 2021

Wild Plants directed by Nicolas Humbert. Feature documentary. Co-Production with *Close Up Films* (CH), Partner: Bayerischer Rundfunk, ARTE 2016



MEMORIES OF A FOREST

GERMANY/AUSTRIA 2026, 91 MIN

ORIGINAL TITLE: ERINNERUNGEN EINES WALDES

CAST

Julia Windischbauer
Johanna Orsini
Lukas Walcher
Dominik Warta
Linde Prelog
Sophia Burtscher
Claudia Kainberger
Michael Litschauer
Franziska Machens
Marie-Therese Futterknecht

TECH SPECS

Shooting format Digital
Mastering 2K
Master format DCP
Sound 5.1
Aspect ratio 1:1.66
Subtitles English

CREW

Script Katharina Rabl, Karla Cristóbal
Director Katharina Rabl
Director of Photography Jacob Kohl
Editor Ulrike Tortora
Music Composer Peter Kutin
Dramaturgy Hans Christian Schmid
Set Design Lena Kalt, Linda Hofmann
Costume Design Miriam Waldenspuhl, Fabia Röhrig
Make-up Design Julia Giannaris, Simone Kaiser
Sound on Set Malin Peters, Lorenz Kainz
Sound Design Alex Würtz
Sound Mixing Gerhard Auer
Color Grading Generosa Lanza
Line Producers Christina Schmid, Natalie Seraphim
Executive Producers Nicole Leykauf, Ralph Wieser

A PRODUCTION BY

mischief

LEYKAUF FILM
|Dokumentarfilm
Produktion|

IN COLLABORATION WITH

UNIVERSITY OF
TELEVISION AND FILM
MUNICH, GERMANY



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LUDWIG
THE RENTAL

World premiere at the 43rd Filmfest München 2026, section Neues Deutsches Kino

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