

BIRTE SCHNÖINK

OLE LAGERPUSCH

ANDREAS DÖHLER

JUSTUS FISCHER

 69th Internationale
Filmfestspiele
Berlin
Perspektive Deutsches Kino



THE COMPONENTS OF LOVE

A FILM BY
MIRIAM BLIESE

A PRODUCTION OF THE GERMAN FILM AND TELEVISION ACADEMY BERLIN | IN COPRODUCTION WITH RUNDfunk BERLIN-BRANDENBURG, MIRIAM BLIESE & CLEMENS KÖSTLIN | SUPPORTED BY MEDIENBOARD BERLIN-BRANDENBURG AND THE GERMAN FEDERAL FILM BOARD | WITH BIRTE SCHNÖINK, OLE LAGERPUSCH, ANDREAS DÖHLER, JUSTUS FISCHER, BRIGITTE ZEH, FALK ROCKSTROH, SOPHIA BURTSCHER, PETER WEISS, TOBIAS KASIMIROWICZ | DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY MARKUS KOOB | EDITOR DIETMAR KRAUS | PRODUCTION DESIGN BEATRICE SCHULTZ | COSTUME DESIGN WARIS KLAMPFER | MAKEUP ARTIST JIL LA MONACA BROIDY | SOUND MARC REINKOBER, KAI ZIARKOWSKI | SOUNDDESIGN HANNES MARGET | RE-RECORDING MIXER JAN PASEMANN | GRADING YVES ROY VALLASTER | CASTING CONSULTANT SUSANNE RITTER | SCRIPT CONSULTANT HANNES HELD | FIRST ASSISTANT DIRECTOR KATHARINA RIVILIS, KATHARINA WYSS | EXECUTIVE PRODUCER DFFB ANDREAS LOUIS | PRODUCTION MANAGER LÉA GERMAIN, CLEMENS KÖSTLIN | COMMISSIONING EDITOR RBB VERENA VEIHL | PRODUCER CLEMENS KÖSTLIN | WRITTEN AND DIRECTED BY MIRIAM BLIESE

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THE COMPONENTS OF LOVE

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TECHNICAL INFORMATION

GERMANY 2019
FICTION, 97 MINUTES, COLOR
SCREENING FORMAT DCP, 2K IN 2D, 24FPS
ASPECT RATIO 1:1,66
SOUND FORMAT 5.1 SURROUND, DIGITAL PCM
LANGUAGE GERMAN
SUBTITLES ENGLISH
WORLD PREMIERE 69.BERLINALE, 2019,
PERSPEKTIVE DEUTSCHES KINO

CAST

BIRTE SCHNÖINK - SOPHIE
OLE LAGERPUSCH - GEORG
ANDREAS DÖHLER - FRED
JUSTUS FISCHER - JAKOB
BRIGITTE ZEH - IRIS
FALK ROCKSTROH - SOPHIE'S FATHER
SOPHIA BURTSCHER - MONIKA
PETER WEISS - MARKUS
TOBIAS KASIMIROWICZ - SEPP

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LOGLINE

Sophie and Georg once loved each other. Now they are separated. In fragmented scenes, the film draws the elliptical portrait of a modern family.

A serious breakup comedy with singing elements.

SYNOPSIS

When Sophie and Georg meet and start to fall in love, she is pregnant from her ex boyfriend who has left her. Georg naturally grows into the role of a father to the newborn child Jakob. Meanwhile the composed family has to deal with the usual issues of modern parenthood: Who is allowed to work, who takes care of the kid? How much freedom is possible, how much sacrifice must be made? And is there room for passion in the midst of all this? A few years later, Georg and Sophie are separated. Jakob is six years old and his parents are desperately fighting over

his custody. Until Sophie's new boyfriend starts to mediate between the parties.

In fragmented scenes which all take place in front of the same apartment building in Berlin, the film draws the elliptical portrait of a modern patchwork family. The characters share their sorrows and longings between walls, pillars and on parking lots. Home is no longer a safe haven, but a windy intermediate space. A laconic look at the everyday irrationalities of love.



DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

In the beginning there was a desire to make a film that is set entirely at a simple front door. To accept the challenge of having to find ever new situations in this same setting, without the film getting boring or losing credibility. I wanted to put the focus on a place that we usually just casually pass through. To take up phrases and actions that are usually marginalised and move them to the center of the action. All this because I believe that the casual moments of life tell us much more about reality than the so called "big events".

This happened in combination with the urge to conclude with a major theme of my life: separations. I think that it is one of the great characteristics of our time that we do not have the ability to stay together even though it is what we most

desperately wish for. I am surrounded by couples with children who are desperately trying to remain lovers and who fail miserably to do so. My own parents did not succeed either. And I myself also live in a complicated patchwork family. Why is that? I think the answer is in the little details. In all the little things and banalities that make up the everyday life of love and so few match our noble expectations.

I believe that a separation by itself is not a disaster. The real disaster is the inability to deal with the separation. We do not need any tools to avoid separations altogether; we need to find new tools for the time afterwards. This is why I wanted to tell a story about how we continue on after a separation. A time that, in turn, is made up of trivialities and banal little fights, but also, in rare moments, an adult kind of affection that may ultimately be the more interesting form of love.



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DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

FRAGMENTS OF A SEPARATION

If I have learned anything from my own painful encounters with separations, starting with the separation of my parents, it is that there are no simple truths. Every party believes that they know the only true version of the story and cannot seem to bear the other party's view because it questions everything that they have built for themselves. As a child I tried to find the culprit. I wanted to be able to tell a common version of the story with which everyone can identify, and I failed miserably. Now I believe that this is impossible and there is not one linear story of a separation. There is no point trying to put the many small events that lead up to a separation into a causal relationship. They are just there, each one by itself. And each party will build their own story from them. That is why my film is designed as a mosaic. The film jumps back and forth between the times and tells individual moments from different perspectives.

THE DIFFERENT FACES OF LOVE

The plot of the film takes place at different points in time and therefore will jump abruptly from custody disputes to being in love, from family life to child abduction. Happiness and tragedy, love and hate stand side by side uncommented. The hard confrontation of moments

from different times of the relationship allows me to interrupt the narrative flow and open up a level of reflection that interests me: Why is it that we never really connect? How much hatred is in love, how much love is still in hatred? And what is more valuable: the shimmering love in the beginning or the mature affection in the end?

FROM SHORT TO FEATURE

The film builds on my short film "At the door", which tells the story of a separated couple by only showing a man at an intercom. After finishing the short film, I realised that I would like to tell more about this couple. I also noticed how appealing the extreme reduction of means that I had tried in "At the door" was to me. By forcing myself to write all the scenes in an out-of-the-way place like this front door, it creates situations that surprise me, but that seem strangely familiar at the same time. This may be because as a couple, whether together or separated, we spend much more time in-between than we are aware of. When coming home, when getting ready to leave, at the child pick-up or drop-off...



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DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

THE FILM AS A STAGE

The restriction to a single venue brings a certain theatrical abstraction with it. It places a larger value on the dialogue and the viewer's imagination is needed to fill in the spaces left out in the narration. We have to work out ourselves what happens between the scenes. Everything that happens in places other than this front door, we will never see and might only know about it when told so by a character. My origins lie in theatre and I find it appealing to see how far you can go also in film to create a distance between the audience and the action. In my film there is a certain theatricality of the acting and mise-en-scene, which allows a deviation from pure naturalism. I want to be able to feel in movies - but I also want to leave space to think and laugh. Identification is not everything.

THE OTHER BERLIN

I grew up in West-Berlin. The Berlin of my childhood is made up of post-war buildings, streets a little too wide and trees that smell sticky and sweet in the summer and stand lost between train stations and newsagents in the winter. In most films of recent years, which play in Berlin today, I see another Berlin. It is a Berlin of Wilhelminian buildings with graffiti-filled walls and dirty streets or on the other hand the smooth glass fronts and townhouses. It is the post-reunifica-

tion Berlin the world is crazy about. Nevertheless the old West-Berlin still exists. To be honest it has changed surprisingly little over the years and I was tempted to capture this forgotten Berlin on film.

HANSA-VIERTEL

The location was absolutely essential for this film: The apartment building where Georg and Sophie live and the building door where a large part of the film is set. I was looking for a building with something archetypical; a clarity that emphasises the characters and their actions and does not let them get lost in the local color.

In the 1950s architecture of the Hansaviertel in Berlin-Tiergarten, I found the sober clarity I was looking for, but also a restrained form of beauty. The post-war modernism of the Interbau'57 architecture seems almost gentle to me, despite the size and astonishing modernity of the buildings. The architecture is made for man. It does not overwhelm the actors, but always opens new views and perspectives. The buildings work in harmony with nature: the clean lines of the pillars and its openings frame the Tiergarten and transform nature into single frames.

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THE CONVERSATIONS OF MODERN-DAY CITY DWELLERS

The characters in this film are people, as I know them from my personal surrounding. They have creative jobs and work independently. They have children, but they do not give up their freedom. These people do not just talk to exchange information. Talking to them is a purpose in itself. They fall in love, fight and separate through talking and because of the way they talk. Reflecting on oneself in conversation is so essential to these characters that speaking about an action often becomes more important than the action itself. The characters of this film have a capacity for self-irony that unites them and that helps them master many difficult situations.

A SERIOUS COMEDY

The film shifts in tone between realism and exaggeration, between seriousness and comedy. As inspirations I could name Godard as well as Bergman, Woody Allen as well as Rossellini. I tried to take every situation as seriously as possible. I wanted to believe every development and recognise every sentence. But at the same time, I need the irony to deal with these all too familiar situations and sentences. I need the distance to be able to see more clearly in the jungle of everyday life. Or, to put it in Heinrich

Heine's words: „And if the heart in our body is torn - / Torn, and cut, and bruised - / Then all we have is that beautiful piercing laugh.“

TERRIBLY BEAUTIFUL LOVE SONGS

The German Schlager is a recurring theme in the film. Not the famous old songs from the 1920s, but more trivial tear-jerkers - so schmalzty they are hardly bearable: Freddy Quinn, Siv Malmquist, Rudi Carrell. Songs about heartbreak, eternal love and all-consuming desire. These Schlager songs form an ironic commentary on the films plot. They cite an ideal image of love that has little in common with today's daily life, but that at the same time we never quite manage to get rid of.

**WE BELONG TOGETHER
LIKE THE WIND AND THE SEA
TO PART FROM YOU
IS SO HARD TO ME...**

DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT





CAST

BIRTE SCHNÖINK

Birte Schnöink is well known as an actress in theatre. From 2006 to 2010, she studied Acting at the prestigious Hochschule für Schauspielkunst Ernst Busch in Berlin. Since 2010, she is part of the Thalia Theatre in Hamburg where she has been working with directors such as Luk Perceval, Stefan Pucher, Jette Steckel and Nicolas Stemann. Her first lead role in film was the part of Henriette Vogel in Jessica Hausners „Amour Fou“ that was screened at the Cannes Film Festival 2014 in „Un certain regard“. For this role she was nominated in 2015 as Best Actress for the Austrian Film Awards.

OLE LAGERPUSCH

Ole Lagerpusch is also especially well known to the theatre audience. After his studies at the Hochschule für Schauspielkunst Ernst Busch in Berlin he was immediately engaged by the prestigious Thalia Theatre in Hamburg and later by the Deutsches Theater in Berlin. He has been working with directors such as Dimiter Gottscheff, Andreas Kriegenburg and Jette Steckel. In films, he appeared in productions such as „Lower Upper Cut“ by Nicolas Wackerbarth (2010) and „The Have-Nots“ by Florian Hoffmeister (2015). In „The Components of Love“ he performs his first leading role in film.



TEAM

MIRIAM BLIESE DIRECTOR AND SCREENWRITER

Miriam Bliese was born in 1978 and grew up in Berlin and Paris. After working in theatre in Hamburg and Berlin, she studied literature and philosophy at Freie Universität Berlin and worked as a freelance journalist for tv channels such as ARTE. From 2005 on she studied directing at Deutsche Film- und Fernsehakademie Berlin (DFFB). She is the author and director of several short films that have been screened at international festivals. In 2014 she won the Short Tiger Shortfilm Award for her film "At the door". "The Components of Love" is her first feature film.



FILMOGRAPHY (SELECTION)

- 2013 **AT THE DOOR**, An der Tür, short, Arte/DFFB
- 2013 **MY ANGEL**, Mein Engel, short, Arte/DFFB
- 2012 **BARBARA**, short, Arte
- 2011 **TANGO**, short, rbb/DFFB
- 2011 **SILENT DAYS**, Stille Tage, short
- 2007 **WALTZ**, Walzer, short

CLEMENS KÖSTLIN PRODUCER

After graduating from high school in Berlin, he completed his civil service in Lima (Peru) and began studying economics at the University of Zürich (CH) and freelancing in film production. Since 2011 he is studying film producing at the German Film and Television Academy Berlin. In addition to studying he has worked as a production manager, e.g. for "A Young Man with High Potential" (Linus de Paoli) and for the production and world sales entity Coproduction Office. "The Components of love" is his graduation project.



FILMOGRAPHY (SELECTION)

- 2018 **A YOUNG MAN WITH HIGH POTENTIAL**, Director: Linus de Paoli, Fiction Feature, Hahn Film AG
- 2014 **AT THE RIGHT TIME** Zur rechten Zeit, Director: Eliza Petkova, Short film, DFFB
- 2013 **AT THE DOOR**, An der Tür, Director: Miriam Bliese, Short film, Arte/DFFB
- 2013 **MY ANGEL**, Mein Engel, Director: Miriam Bliese, Short film, Arte/DFFB
- Kurzfilm, Arte/DFFB
- 2012 **THE GIFT**, Das Geschenk, Director: Mariejosephin Schneider, Short film, DFFB

TEAM



MARKUS KOOB
DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY

Markus Koob studied Cinematography at the German Film and Television Academy Berlin (DFFB). His graduation film "Self-Criticism of a Bourgeois Dog" was awarded the Prize for the best debut 2017 by the German Film Critics Association. His collaborations as cinematographer were shown at film festivals such as Berlinale, Cannes, Rotterdam, New Directors / New Films (New York), FICUNAM and the Viennale. He works as a freelance cinematographer and lives in Berlin. The collaboration with Miriam Bliese results from the preceding short "At the Door".



DIETMAR KRAUS
FILM EDITOR

Dietmar Kraus studied editing at the film school "Konrad Wolf" in Potsdam-Babelsberg, where he completed his diploma in 2004. Since then he has worked as a film editor on numerous feature-length documentary and fiction films, amongst others with directors Maria Speth ("The Days Between" & "Madonnas"), Sylke Enders ("Moon Calf") and Jonas Rothlaender ("Familiar Circles" & "Fado"). From 2007 to 2009 he was a guest professor for editing at the film school in Babelsberg. Since 2016 he is a board member of the German film editors guild BFS, and since 2017 he is a curator at the film festival Filmplus in Cologne.

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BEATRICE SCHULTZ
PRODUCTION DESIGNER

Born in 1968 in southern Germany. After graduating from high school, she completed a tailoring apprenticeship as well as working as an assistant at the Stuttgart and Munich state theatres and operas. From 1992 to 1998, she studied costume and stage design at the University of Fine Arts (UdK) in Berlin. She started working as a costume and stage designer for theatre, but soon discovered that her passion lay in film. Since 1998, she worked as a freelance production designer for a wide range of art and feature films, e.g. "Western" (Dir.: Valeska Grisebach), "Uns geht es gut" (Henri Steinmetz), "Halbschatten" (Nicolas Wackerbarth), "Continuity" (Omer Fast) or "Falscher Bekenner" (Christoph Hochhäusler).



WARIS KLAMPFER
COSTUME DESIGNER

Waris Klampfer, born 1985, studied Costume Design at the University of Fine Arts in Berlin (UdK) under the direction of Prof. Lisa Meier. Since then she has made numerous costumes such as for Eliza Petkova ("Zhaleika") or Hannah Dörr ("Midas oder die schwarze Leinwand"). In addition to her own work, she has assisted in numerous German and international film and opera productions. Away from the cinematic influence, she develops textile sculptures in public space.

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