



18th TOKYO INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL

22. October – 30. October 2005

presents
in competition

HITLERCANTATA

Press Screening: 27th 18:50 – 21.05
Press Conference: 27th / 28th (dates to be confirmed)
Festival Screenings: 23rd: 19:10-21:55 followed by Q&A – with director
26th: 13:15-16:00 followed by Q&A – with director
28th: 14:15-17:00 followed by Q&A – with director & actress

Contacts World Sales: Atrix Films
Solveig Langeland, Capitol Tokyo Hotel, Oct. 22 – Oct. 27
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Attending Director: Jutta Brueckner, Oct. 22 – Oct. 30
Attending Actress: Lena Lauzemis, Oct. 27 – Oct. 30

Press Information:

Saxonia Media Filmproduktion GmbH,
À jour Film, KoppMedia

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BKM Bundesbeauftragte für Kultur und Medien
MDM Mitteldeutsche Medienförderung
Filmstiftung Nordrhein-Westfalen
Filmboard Berlin-Brandenburg

&

WDR, MDR and ARTE

present

HITLERCANTATA



A film by Jutta Brueckner
starring Hilmar Thate and Lena Lauzemis

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Quotes:

„in my film, the music composition of the HITLER CANTATA is changing everybody life.. .“

Jutta Brueckner - Director

“The music plays the lead role of the film...”

Peter Gotthardt - Composer

“Hitler sells. But Jutta Brueckner does not exploit the thrill of the evil. Rarely have I seen a story of this genre so complex as Jutta Brueckners HITLER CANTATA.”

Michael André, Producer has co produced German and international movies for cinema and television: i.e. Lars von Trier: Dancer in the Dark, Michael Haneke: Caché, Patrice Chereau: Intimacy.

“HITLER CANTATA shows, how much the fascist seduction used the power of eroticism. Brueckner gives an emotional and intellectual insight into the psychic dimension of totalitarianism. This film is important.”

Hans-Joachim Schlegel, Filmcritique, film historian and board member of the Festivals Moskau, Montreal, Wiesbaden

“Jutta Brueckner's HITLER CANTATA makes us understand the hysteria for Hitler. Her analysis of the social infantilism is ironic, but not without compassion and her glimpse on those, who fell for the dictator, is laconic, without sentimentality.”

Naum Kleiman, Film Historian and the director and curator of the Museum of film in Moscow

FESTIVALS:

2005

Moscow International Film Festival, Russia

Official Selection: « Second World War: Glance from the 21 Century »

Tokyo International Film Festival, Japan

Official Selection: « World Competition »

Montreal World Film Festival, Canada

Official Selection: « Focus on World Cinema »

Museum of Modern Art, New York, Curator Laurence Kardish, USA

Official Selection: "Cinema 2005"

Denver International Film Festival 2005, USA

Official Selection

10th International Film festival of Kerala, India

Official Selection: "Contemporary World Cinema"

SYNOPSIS

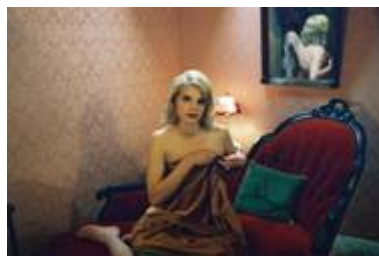
HITLER CANTATA is a film about music, which is composed in times of Hitler's Third Reich. Ursula (Lena Lauzemis) takes the position as an assistant to famous composer Broch (Hilmar Thate), who shall write a cantata for Hitler's 50th birthday.

The film brings together Broch, an ex-communist, Ursula, an adoring Hitler fan and her fiancé Gottlieb, who is an SS-Colonel and orders the music piece.

While Gottlieb works with the SS on plans for the "Final Solution", Ursula becomes witness of the fears and dangers for the Jewish population. Her growing love for composer Broch brings new passion into the music piece....

When Ursula is faced with questions about her family heritage, her life is in danger...

A provocative World War II melodrama which raises troubling questions about zealotry and the muse, HITLER CANTATA opens with a bravura bit of CGI trickery: during a lavish Nazi parade, aspiring young composer Ursula Scheuner (Lena Lauzemis), obsessed with Hitler and music, catches the Führer's eye but subsequently faints while attempting to approach his motorcade.



After being rejected by the conservatory, she uses her contact with SS colonel and fiancée Gottlieb Just (Arnd Klavitter) to secure the post of assistant to famous composer Hanns Broch (Hilmar Thate), a secret anti-Nazi who's been hired to create a cantata celebrating Hitler's impending 50th birthday. At a remote Finnish estate, the mismatched pair struggle over their ideologies and personal feelings. Meanwhile back in Berlin, filmmaker Fritz Schmitz (Andreas Günther) is engaged by Just to make lascivious films for SS consumption, ensnaring the Jewish Gisela in his scheme.

"The subject of all my films," explains director Jutta Brueckner, is "how an age shapes people and also destroys them, forcing them to discover the blackest depths within themselves".

Directors Statement:

Statement 1: (about 60 words)

There is a forgotten chapter in the history of the Third Reich: the invisible bond between Hitler and women. Looking at these women, crying and fainting in the presence of Hitler, I ask myself: How would I have behaved. Would I have been able to see through this splendid performance?

Statement 2: (about 120 words)

We know the images: women, who run after Hitler, scream, weep and faint. Who was "der Führer" in their eyes? A God, a substitute for a father, or a distant lover? After the war, an American soldier found thousands of love letters that German women wrote to Hitler. What was this invisible bond between him and the women all about? This question has always tormented me. The film tells the story of one of these women. While working on the production, I asked myself numerous times: How would I have behaved. Would I have been able to see through this splendid performance?

ABOUT THE FILM AND THE DIRECTOR'S INTENTION

We have seen them all, the pictures of hysterical screaming and crying women fainting in the presence of Adolf Hitler. Ordinary women of all levels of society who were spellbound by the Nazi leader. The pictures remind us of scenes we saw during the hype of Beatlemania and adoring fans of today's pop stars. Who were these women? And what made Adolf Hitler so attractive to female Germans who wrote passionate love letters and even marriage proposals to one of the most evil persons in the history of mankind?

With her feature film *HITLER KANTATE*, director and screenwriter Jutta Brueckner takes us into the life of one of those women. The film tells the story of 21-year-old Ursula (Lena Lauzemis) a young aspiring composer and zealous devotee of Adolf Hitler and the Nazi ideology. After being refused studies at Berlin's conservatory she teams up with famous composer Hanns Broch (Hilmar Thate), who against his inner conviction, agrees to write a cantata for Hitler's 50th birthday. Ursula, with her torrid admiration for Hitler, and Broch, the secret anti-Nazi, travel to the composer's country house in Finland to start working on the musical piece. While the cantata for Hitler's birthday does not advance well, Ursula and Broch slowly develop a relationship, which is defined by passion, jealousy and an over all fear to be denounced.

In *HITLER KANTATE* filmmaker Jutta Brueckner provides an insight into the fear and desire behind Hitler's popularity with women.

Brueckner internationally premiered her critical acclaimed film *HUNGER YEARS: IN A LAND OF PLENTY* at the Berlin and Cannes Film Festivals. Both *HUNGER YEARS* and *ONE GLIMPSE AND LOVE BREAKS OUT* won the award for Best German film of the Year. Her documentary about Bertold Brecht – *LOVE, REVOLUTION AND OTHER DANGEROUS THINGS* - won several national and international awards. Brückner also holds writing credits for Volker Schlöndorff's *COUP DE GRACE*.

About the cast

Finding the right cast was crucial for me. The film is about ordinary people during the Third Reich. I decided that in order to be as authentic as possible, it is important to work with German cast. I wanted to stay as close to the memories, experiences and thoughts of the German people.

Hilmar Thate, who plays the composer Broch, has a long experience of portraying heroes. His interpretation of Shakespeare's "Richard the third" is legendary. I knew instantly he would be the right person to play Broch.

In newcomer Lena Lauzemis I found the perfect cast for Ursula. In her, we can see the charisma, intelligence and the strong will that allows Ursula's transformation from a torrid Hitler fanatic to a person who is able to see beyond the charade.

CAST / CREW / TECHNICAL DATA

<i>Writer / Directress</i>	Jutta Brückner
<i>Producer</i>	Hans-Werner Honert, Klaus Schmutzer
<i>Line Producer</i>	Sven Sund
<i>DOP</i>	Thomas Mauch
<i>Editor</i>	Monika Schindler
<i>Cast</i>	Lena Lauzemis (Ursula) Hilmar Thate (Broch) Rike Schmid (Gisela) Arnd Klawitter (Gottlieb) Krista Stadler (Alma) Dirk Martens (Hastrich) Christine Schorn (Ursula's Grandmother) Andreas Guenther (Fritz) Christiane Lemm (Ursula's Mother) Armin Dillenberger (Mueller)
<i>Production Design</i>	Elke Grundig
<i>Music</i>	Peter Gotthardt
<i>OV Version</i>	German language
<i>Format</i>	35 mm, colour, 1:1.85
<i>YEAR</i>	2005, Dolby SRD
<i>Length</i>	114 minutes, 3.547 meter , 7 reels

Director - Biography

Jutta Brueckner studied Political Science, Philosophy and History in Berlin, Paris and Munich and wrote film scripts for Bavarian Television (BR), Bavaria Studios, Ulla Stoeckl and Volker Schloendorff. Since 1985, Brückner is a professor for Film at Berlin University of Arts (Universität der Künste).

Brueckner is working as a director since 1975. Her filmography includes award-winning films like **Tue recht und scheue niemand** (documentary, 1975), **Ein ganz und gar verwahrlostes Maedchen** (1976), **Hungerjahre - in einem reichen Land** (1980), **Laufen lernen** (TV, 1982), **Luftwurzeln** (short, 1982), **Ein Blick und die Liebe bricht aus** (1986), **Lieben Sie Brecht?** (film essay, 1993), **Bertolt Brecht - Liebe, Revolution und andere gefaehrliche Sachen** (documentary 1998), and **Hitler Kantate** (2005).

Jutta Brueckner – Filmography and awards

1987:

„Tribute for outstanding achievement in the art of film“ International Film Festival, Denver, USA

Scripts / Writer:

Various Scripts for Bavaria Film Production, Germany

Der Fangschuss (Le Coup de Grace) by Volker Schlöndorff
Co-Writer

Eine Frau mit Verantwortung (A Woman with Responsibility) by Ulla Stöckl
Writer

Feature Films – Writer and Director:

2005: Hitler Kantate (Hitler Kantate)

Theatrical Feature

starring Lena Lauzemis (Sonnenallee, Unknown Friend, Yugotrip) and Hilmar Thate (Volker Schlöndorff 's The Ninth Day, Elective Affinities, Paths in the Night, King of St. Pauli (mini-serie)

1998: Bertolt Brecht – Liebe, Revolution und andere gefährliche Sachen (Bertolt Brecht – Love, Revolution and other dangerous things)

Theatrical Documentary

Festivals:

Goeteborg, Berlin, Jerusalem, St. Petersburg, Figueira da Foz, Minneapolis, New York, San Diego, Halifax, Rio de Janeiro, Denver, Portland, Sao Paulo, Mar del Plata, Taipeh, San Francisco, etc.

San Diego:

Official Selection of Brecht-Centenary, International Brecht-Society

Official Selection, Goethe Institutes for Brecht Year

Awards:

Grand Jury Prize, Figueira das Foz

FIPRESCI Prize, Figueira da Foz

1993: Lieben Sie Brecht? (Do you love Brecht?)

TV – Essay for German Public Broadcasting (ZDF – Kleines Fernsehspiel)

1986: Ein Blick und die Liebe bricht aus.

Theatrical Feature

Festivals:

Berlin, Venice, Mar del Plata, Chicago, Madrid, Paris, Lissabon, London, etc.

Nominated: Prix de l'Age d'or der Kinemathek, Brüssel

Award:

German Critics for Best Film 1986/87

1984-93: Kolossale Liebe. Fernsehfilm.

Festivals:

Mannheim, Florenz

1982: Luftwurzeln – Episode in „Die Erbtöchter“

Short Film

Festivals

Oberhausen, Duisburg

Awards:

German Film Critics for Best Short 1982 / 1983

1982: **Laufen lernen** (Feature Film)

Festivals: Berlin, Brüssel, Sceaux, Florenz.

Awards:

**Audience Award, Sceaux , Award IFFS, Figueira da Foz
Nominated: Prix de l'Age d'or Kinemathek, Brüssel**

1980: **Hungerjahre – in einem reichen Land**
(Hungeryears – in a land of plenty)

Festivals: Rotterdam, Berlin, Cannes, Locarno, St. Petersburg, Brüssel,
Sceaux, Figuera da Foz

Awards:

FIPRESCI Award, Berlin Film Festival
Award of German Film Critics for Best Film of the Year
Nominated: Prix de l'Age d'or Kinemathek, Brüssel

Various Audience Awards and Screenings i.e.:
India, Australia, Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Denmark, Italy, Spain, Portugal,
France, Belgium, USA, Canada, Argentina, Chile, Uruguay, Russia

1977: **Ein ganz und gar verwahrlostes Mädchen** (Theatrical Documentary)

Festivals: Berlin, Duisburg, Florenz, Avellino, Denver

1975: **Tue recht und scheue niemand**, Documentary

Festivals: Rotterdam, Berlin, Leipzig, Duisburg, Denver

Her films have also been screened in Special Presentations / Director´s Film
Work in:

Barcelona, Madrid, Lissabon, Porto, Nantes, San Francisco, New York,
Sidney, Melbourne, Bombay, Delhi, Moskau, Tiblissi, Montreal, Toronto,
Vancouver, San Francisco, Washington, Denver, Florence, Algier,
Jerusalem, Haifa, Belgrad, etc.

Key Cast:

Lena Lauzemis (Ursula)

Lena Lauzemis' acting career started in 1996 when the 13 year old joined the Berlin based youth theatre group "Wild Bunch". Just a year later, Lena was cast as Lavinia for Heiner Mueller's theatre play ANATOMIE: TITUS FALL OF ROME – EIN SHAKESPEAREKOMMENTAR (Dir.: Thomas Heise). Since then Lauzemis played in numerous TV films and productions for the big screen such as SONNENALLEE, FREMDE FREUNDIN, HERZRASEN and DIE MUTTER.

Hilmar Thate (Hanns Broch)

Award Winning actor Hilmar Thate plays the composer Hanns Broch. With his over 50 years of acting experience, Thate is one of Germany's most respected members of his guild. Trained in 1947 at the Acting School in Halle, Germany, Thate debuted in 1949 at the Cottbus Theater. Since then he worked at prestigious theatres such as the Maxim Gorki Theatre, the Berliner Ensemble, the "Deutsches Theater" as well as the Schillertheater, to name a few. He was directed by some of Europe's most famous directors such as Peter Zadek, Ingmar Bergmann and Rainer Werner Fassbinder.

After protesting against the expatriation of famous songwriter Wolf Biermann from East Germany, Thate's career in East Germany came to an abrupt end. In 1980 he was granted to move to West Germany with his wife – actress Angelica Domroese.

Some of his many awards for his work include the Adolf Grimme Award for WEGE IN DIE NACHT (Dir.: Andreas Kleinert) and the Bavarian TV Award for OPERATION RUBIKON (Dir.: Thomas Berger).

Since 1955 Hilmar Thate could be seen in countless theatre plays and over 30 movies for TV and the big screen such as Berthold Brecht's MUTTER COURAGE UND IHRE KINDER (Dir.: Peter Palitzsch, Manfred Weckwerth, DIE SEHNSUCHT DER VERONIKA VOSS (Dir.: Rainer Werner Fassbinder), DER KOENIG VON ST. PAULI (Dir.: Dieter Wedel) und THE NINTH DAY - DER NEUNTE TAG (Dir.: Volker Schloendorff)

Rike Schmid (Gisela)

Rike Schmid's start training as an actress at the Jugendkunstschule in Cologne, Germany and she is only 12 years old. While still at school, she played in various amateur theatre plays. After finishing high school, Schmid was cast for German TV blockbuster AUS GUTEM HAUS. Since then Rike Schmid could be seen in numerous German TV productions such as DER FUERST UND DAS MAEDCHEN (Dir.: Richard Engel), where she starred alongside Academy Award Winner Maximilian Schell. Schmid studies sociology and lives in Berlin.

Arnd Klawitter (Gottlieb)

Hamburg born actor Arnd Klawitter was trained at the Munich based Otto Falckenberg-School. He worked at the prestigious Muenchner Kammerspielen and was cast for numerous plays at the Staatstheater Stuttgart, where he worked with directors such as Christof Loy, Henning Bock and Sandra Strunz; Klawitter appeared in many German TV and cinema productions such as PUENKTCHEN & ANTON (Dir.: Caroline Link), DER LADEN (Dir.: Jo Baier) and DEUTSCHLANDSPIEL (Dir.: Christoph Blumenberg).

Krista Stadler (Alma)

Born in 1940 Krista Stadler studied at the renowned acting school of actor Helmuth Krauss in Vienna, Austria. She became a successful theatre actress before giving her TV debut in 1974 with EINE GESCHIEDENE FRAU. Since, Stadler has been working in countless TV movies and series as well as in productions for the big screen. She worked with director Nico Hofmann on TOEDLICHE WENDE and was awarded the BUNDESFILMPREIS for BEST ACTRESS for her role in LENA RAIS (Dir.: Christian Rischert).

Dirk Martens (Hastrich)

Born in 1964 in Germany, Dirk Martens is one of the best-known TV actors in his home country. He acted in more than 40 TV series and movies. His credits include some of Germany's most popular TV series such as TATORT, TODESSPIEL, POLIZEIRUF 110, SK KOELSCH, KLINIKUM BERLIN MITTE and DER ALTE. He also works continuously on the stages of theatres like DUESSELDORFER SCHAUSPIELHAUS and the ERNST-DEUTSCH-THEATER in HAMBURG. On the big screen Martens could be seen in films like DIE ZWEITE HAND (Dir.: Urs Buehler Bend) and FEINDLICHE UEBERNAHME – ALTHAN.COM (Dir.: Carl Schenkel).

Director of Photography

Thomas Mauch

International award winning cinematographer Thomas Mauch was born in 1937 in Heidelberg, Germany. After completing his education as a photographer, he started teaching at the HOCHSCHULE FUER FILMGESTALTUNG (University of Film) in Ulm, Germany. With his work on LEBENSZEICHEN (SIGNS OF LIFE) in 1967, Mauch started a long partnership with acclaimed director WERNER HERZOG. For Herzog, he filmed movies such as STROSZEK, FITZCARRALDO and AGUIRRE – THE WRATH OF GOD for which he was awarded the German FILM AWARD IN GOLD and the NATIONAL SOCIETY OF FILM CRITICS AWARD in the USA. Since, Mauch worked on over 60 films. His credits also include works as a writer, producer and director. In 1987 he directed his first film ADRIAN AND THE ROMANS. Some of his latest films include international productions like LA MOITIE DU CIEL (Dir.: Alain Mazar), THE TALE OF SWEET BARRETT (Dir.: Stephen Bradley) and SAINT- CYR (THE KING'S DAUGHTER, Dir.: Patricia Mazuy) with Isabell Huppert in the leading role.

Composer

Peter Gotthardt – Composer

Composer Peter Michael Gotthardt was born in 1941 in Leipzig, Germany. He completed his musical education at the "Hochschule fuer Musik" (University of Music) in Berlin. During the late sixties and early seventies, he worked at the acclaimed KOMISCHE OPER in Berlin and was the director of music at the ENSEMBLE 66 with which he toured in countries such as Egypt, Austria, Russia and Norway).

At the age of 24 Gotthardt composed his first piece for an orchestra. During the following years he created several contemporary symphonies and started to work with famous East German Rock Band the PUHDYS in 1972.

Since 1976 he is working as a freelance composer. The public also knows him for his compositions for countless TV series and movies such as POLIZEIRUF 110, DER STAATSANWALT HAT DAS WORT, DER HAUPTMANN VON KOEPENICK and DIE LEGENDE VON PAUL UND PAULA (The Legend of Paul and Paula).

Producer's Statement – Hans-Werner Honert

How far would somebody go for his or her convictions and passions? Would somebody go as far as the Holocaust? Or as far as the London terror attack in 2005? The drive behind this passion is a strong belief in justice, truth and doing the right thing.

Our film tells the story of a woman and her inner journey from a fanatic to a thoughtful and analytical person. Hitler was the idol of many women during the Third Reich. He was their object of desire.

Ursula, our main character, is one of them.

She believes in Hitler as the rightful leader who represents good, truth and justice. Slowly, she begins to understand the true nature of her idol and the fascistic political system of the Nazi's. She is able to make her own decisions, and her blind passion and yearning turn into thinking.

This is the quintessence of the film. This is why I wanted to produce HITLER CANTATA. The film is an invitation to live a conscious life. To be human means to be able to think and to make conscious decisions. This was true yesterday, remains true today and will be true tomorrow.

I am grateful that Jutta Brueckner and my co-producer Klaus Schmutzer invited me to join them on their path to create this film.

INTERVIEW WITH JUTTA BRUECKNER (DIRECTOR) & PETER GOTTHARDT (COMPOSER)

Question:

Mrs. Brueckner, the title of the film is "Hitler Cantata", but the cantata for Hitler's 50th birthday cannot be heard anywhere in the movie.

Brückner:

The cantata is the trigger for huge changes in the lives of the central characters of the film. But both of the protagonists fail to compose the music.

Gotthardt:

There are some fragments of the cantata hidden in the film music.

Brückner

Schubert's "Winterreise" is the actual cantata of the film. It is one of the core musical pieces of Romanticism. One of the most famous songs of that time "Am Brunnen vor dem Tore" even became a German folk song. This song represents everything one would call typical German for that time: Longing for the homeland, the loneliness while being far away from home and the pain of loss.

Question:

But those are universal feelings!

Brückner:

Sure, but the German "Lied" represents those emotions like no other music. It stands for those feelings like Spain stands for "Flamenco" and the "Black America" for Blues. One wouldn't even translate the word into other languages.

Question:

Where is the connection between Schubert's "Winterreise" and the Third Reich?

Brückner:

In one of the last scenes of HITLER CANTATA – the scene of the arrest - you can hear Schubert's "Winterreise". The last sentence of this "Lied" is a hubris, which started during Romanticism and continues during the Third Reich: "If there is no god on earth, we are gods ourselves.". This "Lied" was sung sometime before Nietzsche came up with his famous sentence "god is dead".

Nazi leaders counted on this hubris, which was deeply rooted in the German society. Ursula is part of this ideology.

Question:

So this is how you portrait history? By using this kind of music

Brückner:

Yes. While the protagonists are experiencing history as it happens, the music can portrait a much wider picture of the time. I did not want to create a historic movie that just reconstructs the past. It was important to me to incorporate today's knowledge and distance.

Question:

Mr. Gotthardt music plays a central role in HITLER CANTATA . Many different musicale eras and influences can be found in the film. How did you reconcile the Jewish hit "Bei mir bist Du scheen" with Schubert's "Winterreise", Nazi battle songs and communist agitprop? What was your musical concept?

Gotthardt:

The film portraits many areas of the life in Berlin of 1938. During the long preparation time, Jutta and I searched my musical archive for pieces, which represent the time portrayed. They function like a historical document. By listening to them, we know exactly in which historical time we are. They are typical contemporary pieces like "Ich hab' das Fraeulein Helen baden sehn..."

Gotthardt:

...other hit songs of that time, dance music, a Polish folk song or an old communist battle song. All of those musical pieces create the atmosphere of that time. As we had a very small budget to pay for usage of rights of existing music, it was on me to compose several songs in the style of 1938.

When doing this, it is very important to pay attention to the rhythm and ductus of melody and language of that particular time. A film is authentic if you succeed to create the sound of the era portrayed.

Brückner:

Some of the music is very important to the storyline of the film. Convinced that his assistant Ursula is a spy for the Nazis, the composer Broch tells her to write down the musical notes of a Polish folk song they hear. He is sure that she will fail. But when she doesn't, he realizes, that Ursula has indeed musical talents.

Gotthardt:

I also had to write music and lyrics, which automatically identify a certain character. A chanson for example, or the girls choir you can hear, when Ursula is running after Hitler's car, holding in her hands the cantata she wrote for him. Another good example is the love song in the manner of Richard Strauss, Broch sings to Ursula.

Brückner:

Those songs are not a leitmotif. They describe certain characters. The "Arian" woman who trusts Hitler like a little child or the Jewess who sings an erotic chanson. Those were the stereotypes of that time and Hitler used them for his political goals.

Question:

Mrs. Brueckner, the film contains a lot of illustrative music, but there is no real leitmotif as in most of today's movies.

Brückner:

No, because music is the love affair and the main interest of both of the central characters.

Question:

There is a fluid boundary between background music and on-scene-music in many of the scenes.

Brückner:

Yes, and it changes its character many times and often connects different locations. The background music of the looting scene can be found again in Broch's dream sequence in the SS-Quarters.

The music of the scene where a Jewish woman rehearses her performance also accompanies Ursula when she imagines herself in the position of this woman. The music does not emphasize the dialogues of the protagonists, but expresses their subconscious emotions.

Gotthardt:

The music actually plays the lead role of the film. Therefore I was able to convince the producers that with an electronic sound alone, the work could not be done.

I wanted to emphasize the complexity of the music. This is why I used different ways of interpretation: a big band, my own orchestra, solo-singers, choirs, solo piano parts and a big symphony orchestra.

I used a contemporary, modern sound only for the credits. And even here I remained true to the style. I used solo violins, alto saxophones, sopranos and big symphony orchestras. I tried to follow the music of Richard Strauss, Hindemith, Bartok, Eisler, Ravel, Weill and Strawinsky. But except one quote of Richard Wagner at the end of the film, everything you hear is original music.

Brückner:

When Broch and Ursula play the piano together at the end of the film, they musically develop into modern time. While everybody celebrates Hitler's 50th birthday to the sounds of Richard Wagner, the two already experienced failure while the rest of the Germans are still doomed to fail.

Question:

Mr. Gotthardt, does the musical production for a movie start before filming begins?

Gotthardt:

Pre-Production was a very difficult time. Completing the music took two years. We shot many scenes with playbacks. I believe I produced around 20 playbacks during the time from January to May 2004. Filming started in May 2004. Writing the orchestra score took only 10 days. In November 2004 we recorded the music with the Bulgarian Symphony Orchestra in Sofia. It was a wonderful experience. You can hear that everybody put his heart and soul into it.

Question:

And all this without any compromises and difficulties?

Brückner:

Yes, mostly. Peter's music was exactly what I wanted. Well, there was one compromise – I really wanted to use Ellington's "Creole Love", but it was too expensive to use it.

Interview Jutta Brückner with Michael André (Commission Editor WDR):**MA:**

Hitler got plenty of gifts for his 50th birthday, but to my knowledge he did not get a cantata, which was especially written for him.

JB:

Hundreds of cantatas were composed in honor of Hitler. Many also for his 50th birthday - but yes, you are right, none of them was an official gift of the "Reichsmusikkammer" (Reich Music Chamber).

MA:

Ignoring the fact that there was no official cantata, how accurate is the film from a historical point of view?

JB:

It is very accurate though it is not a documentary. I am interested in questions like: How did Hitler and his ideology affect the people? How did a Nazi become a Nazi? Where did self-deception start and where did it stop?

MA:

Today "Der Untergang" is internationally one of the most noted films about the Third Reich. Your film focuses on a new angle in regards to the Third Reich: Women and their fanatic admiration for Hitler.

JB:

I read numerous memoirs of young women who were like my lead character, Ursula. They stood at the roadside to catch a glimpse of Hitler. They screamed "Heil", cried and fainted in his presence.

Such a torrid admiration for a political leader was something completely new. We know a lot about the history of the Third Reich, but very little about the women who supported it. Hitler once said: "If I want the support of the women I have to offer an object of desire." He talked about himself. With this he became a substitute god, substitute lover and also substitute father.

MA:

Today we would call this hysteria. We can see behavior like this in pop-concerts.

JB:

After the war tons of love letters to Hitler were found in the "Reichskanzlei". Some of those women wrote in a manner as if Hitler was their husband who just went on a short trip. There were letters that included pre-nuptial agreements, which just had to be signed by Hitler. The Nazi party was very embarrassed by those letters. They even tried to admit some of the women to mental institutions.

MA:

The film's main character Ursula also writes a love letter to Hitler. But she is far away from being hysteric. She seems pragmatic, determined and protects her interests by all means. Isn't it contradicting?

JB:

For many of the young women Nazism included a promise of a new beginning: A new life with new structures for marriage and families. It seemed like emancipation...

MA:

But Hitler banned women back into their traditional roles.

JB:

This was only half of the ideology. Nazism was also the protest of the youth against the establishment. This is why many of the young girls liked to join the BDM (League of German Girls). It was their way of getting away from parental control. Fathers were deprived of their power by Hitler's "the perfect father". In addition, the Reichsparteitage (Congress of the Nazi Party) were huge "erotic" markets. Birthrates always rose remarkably after the huge party meetings.

MA:

Also Ursula finds herself pregnant after such an event. Despite the fact, that Nazi propaganda demands "a child for the "Fuehrer", Ursula decides to have an abortion. How does this fit into her torrid admiration for Hitler?

JB:

Well, you can see this as her first sin. She is aware of the fact, that she will never be able to be a composer when having this child. But a life without music is not an option for her. When she learns, that her application for the music conservatory was rejected because she is a woman, she understands, that not everything Hitler promised to women is true. She realizes that she can only rely on herself. Therefore the abortion is the beginning of a path to disobedience.

MA:

How authentic are your other characters?

JB:

Each character has an historic model. Many times I left the model aside in order to create more freedom of development.

MA:

At the beginning of the movie Ursula's fiancé Gottlieb appears as a nice and naive academic. He even instigates an intrigue in the Reichsmusikkammer (Reich Music Chamber) for Ursula's sake. Shortly after this he is one of the Nazi's leading characters. On one hand he is "the dream of every mother in law", and on the other hand an evil Nazi.

JB:

Gottlieb is as controversial as all the characters of my film. I like controversial characters. Just like in real life, the line between good and evil is often very thin. I am interested in the process of good becoming evil and evil becoming good. I don't care about the obvious.

MA:

The composer Broch is portrayed as the typical German artist who collaborates with the Nazi regime in order to proceed with his art. He does not have the strength and courage to protest or even emigrate.

JB:

Yes, but I also show the drama of an artist who is doomed to silence. In a conversation with his Jewish girlfriend he says: "An artists has to be heard. If nobody listens to him anymore he could as well be dead."

Question:

Don't you just give him an excuse for political assimilation?

Brückner:

No. Broch is a tragic character. He believes that he can trick the Nazis. You have to understand, that music was the form of art least infiltrated by the ideology of the Third Reich. It weren't the notes, but the lyrics in a song, which represented Nazism. Broch believes for a very long time that with creating compositions he is not supporting the system he hates so much.

MA:

But he keeps on working for the system even after he realizes that he has to use lyrics he resents.

JB:

This is when he puts lipstick on the pig. Self-deception is especially common with intelligent people.

MA:

You mentioned earlier, that all the characters in your film are ambivalent. Gisela, the young Jewish woman mentions at one point how much she wanted to join the BDM (League of German Girls).

JB:

She even takes it a step further. She asks her father to publicly announce that he is actually not her father. As "only" "half-part" Jewish she would be able to stay in Germany. This is the tragedy of assimilation. Many Jews refused to believe that Germany is on its way to evil.

MA:

There is a physical resemblance between Ursula and Gisela – the "Arian" and the Jewish German. At one point even Gottlieb, Ursula's fiancé, mistakes Gisela for Ursula. By using the double theme you incorporate a central idea of Romanticism -

JB:

The story of those two women is filled with subliminal comparisons – German identity, Jewish identity, longing for a father, renunciation of a father – those two characters represent all the controversies in the story.

To emphasize the controversies visually, I used techniques like crossing the axis line and using reflecting images

Using these techniques is almost like committing a sin in traditional cinematography. But it was important for me to tell the story as complex as possible. I don't believe it is sufficient to portray the characters simply as good and evil. We are too educated to play the fool.

MA:

There is one more central theme in the film. In order to undermine the moral of the Polish people, Gottlieb orders the production of a pornographic movie, which is to be distributed in Poland. Did this really happen?

JB:

I heard rumors like this several times. Many of my Polish colleagues are convinced that movies like this can be found in the archives.

MA:

So HITLER CANTATA suggests a close connection between political tyranny and sexual perversion.

JB:

Nazism is one big perversion. It is the reversal of all moral rules. The political system laid the foundation for sadistic acts in prisons, concentration camps and occupied territories.

Fascism and sexual perversion is a difficult subject with little academic research. Maybe we have to read the books of Susan Sontag again to find the answer to "Why do many of the sexual perversions use SS-Symbols."

In Nazi propaganda sex was part of the concept of the Jew as the enemy. The male Jew for example was often portrayed as a rapist (like in "Jud Sues" the most important Nazi propaganda film).

MA:

We act like voyeurs when we watch Gottlieb masturbate over pictures of a confiscated porn movie with Gisela. Later on Gottlieb orders the movie to be burned.

What happened to Gottlieb during the time in between those instances?

JB:

He does exactly what he was told to do. He destroys his "inner Jew". The "inner Jew" represented everything that kept a person from functioning within the Nazi system: Lust, passion, curiosity, concern, empathy etc.

It included anything that kept people from believing in the big goal, which was to rule the world.

MA:

HITLER CANTATA is a film about music and history. In many of your movies you showed interest in Germany's past. Your movies were always very subjective and sometimes even autobiographic.

JB:

Also HITLER CANTATA has autobiographic elements. My whole life I asked myself the question of how I would have reacted during that time. Would I have been able to resist? How long would it have taken to see through the charade?

I would call the film a fictitious autobiography.

Statement of Michael André, Editorial and dramatic advisor

Short version

We know "Hitler sells". But do we realize the current need for stories about heroes of the Third Reich? Stories from the sole perspective of the average German are a thing of the past. HITLER CANTATA is settled in between the different existing levels of story telling.

The film tells the stories of the average German as well as the ones of the Nazi leaders. HITLER CANTATA talks about the admiration and love of women for Hitler, but at the same time it shows us how torrid admiration can turn into resistance.

During my time as an editor and dramatic advisor with the WDR I have been working on many historic movies. But I rarely came across a film with the complexity of HITLER CANTATA.

Long version:

Just like in the late 60's, the time of societal changes and new political hopes, we face an up rise in interest of films about the Third Reich. The new interest materializes during times of economic depression and fear of social decline.

Without any doubt, in good times and in bad times as well the years of 1933 – 1945 still keep our thoughts busy. But one might easily overlook that the perspective of dealing with the subject has changed over the years.

The narrative perspective, the storyline and even the central characters changed completely. The sole parallel of a film like Axel Cortis "Ein junger Mann aus dem Innviertel" (1973) and Oliver Hirschbiegel's "Der Untergang" is the interest about the historical Hitler.

The same can be said about the perception of the German resistance. Just recently director Jo Baier celebrated with his movie "Stauffenberg", which is the name of the leader of the German resistance within the "Wehrmacht", a new German hero.

The audience wants to see and learn about the heroes of that time.

The way to tell the story of the Third Reich changed significantly. In the past, stories were told from the perspective of the average German. Today, movies talk about the leaders of the Nazi structure, just like Breloer did in his TV mini series "Speer und Er".

HITLER CANTATA doesn't do either of the two. It fits right in between. The film tells the stories of the average German as well as the ones of the Nazi leaders. It also gives an insight on how a person changes from naive to evil. HITLER CANTATA talks about the admiration and love of women for Hitler, but at the same time it shows us how torrid admiration can turn into resistance.

During my time as an editor and dramatic advisor with the WDR I have been working on many historic movies such as Margarethe von Trotta's TV series "Jahrestage" or Hartmut Schoens' "Kalter Sommer". But I rarely came across a film with the complexity of HITLER CANTATA. It is not just another movie about the Third Reich. It uses a fresh angle to portray the never-ending trauma of Germany's history.

Michael André

The author is a member of the editorial staff of the WDR TV movies department. Since 1998 he has been co-producing several German and international productions for TV and the big screen. (i.e.: Lars von Trier's "Dancer in the Dark", Michael Haneke's "Caché", Patrice Chereau's "Intimacy")

Co- Producer:

Klaus Schmutzer, A Jour Film and TV Productions

After completing his film studies, producers class, at Babelsberg Film school Konrad Wolf in 1978, Klaus Schmutzer producer more than 40 feature and documentary films i.e. CENTRAL STATION, LEIPZIG (1993), FAITH LOVE HOPE (1994), DAYS OF THUNDER (2002), MY GREATEST LOVE (2003), BIG BROAD WORLD, INVISIBLE – ILLEGAL IN EUROPE (2004), HITLER CANTATA (2005).

A Jour Film and TV Productions was founded in 1991

HITLER CANTATA MUSIC SOUND TRACK

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