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MONTAGE STEFAN STABENOW
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EINE HEIMATFILM PRODUKTION
GEFÖRDERT DURCH BKM,
FILM- UND MEDIENSTIFTUNG
NRW

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THOMAS SCHUBERT

RICARDA SEIFRIED

JEAN-LUC BUBERT

TER

VICTORIA TRAUTTMANSDORFF
LARS EIDINGER
MERLE WASMUTH
PAUL FABNACHT
DIANA MARIA BREUER
JUDITH BOHLE
MATS THIERSCH
FRANZISKA HARTMANN



MÄR

REGIE JAN BONNY

CHEN

Film und Medien
Stiftung NRW

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HEIMATFILM

WINTERMÄRCHEN

GERMANY. A WINTER'S TALE

Director

Jan Bonny

Screenplay

Jan Eichberg & Jan Bonny

Actors

Thomas Schubert, Ricarda Seifried, Jean-Luc Bubert

Produced by

HEIMATFILM

Producer

Bettina Brokemper

Junior-Producer

Maike Drinhausen

Supported by

BKM & Film- und Medienstiftung NRW

Short Synopsis

GERMANY. A WINTER'S TALE chronicles the story of Becky, Tommi and Maik, a three-headed rightwing terror cell, which lives underground and dreams of nationwide attention. Entangled in a complex relationship of love, hate and friendship their path of destruction leads to a series of violent crimes. Their ostensible values like honor, pride and loyalty increasingly suffer a loss of meaning...

Synopsis

Tommi and Becky are completely stuck in their relationship, but they still have one thing in common: they both want to kill foreigners, they want to kill „the others“. In their ideological obstinacy they see themselves in the glorified role: spearheading a revolution, as heroes in the vanguard of a new era. That's what they want. And to kick start their private life.

But the fantasy collides head-on with the facts of daily life in the underground: a desolate apartment, money tight, constant hunger and frustration. One wrong word and the tense mood can easily turn hostile, ending in biting insults and humiliation.

It had all started with the grandiose imaginings of Tommi and Becky, in which they appeared as a self-styled Bonnie and Clyde. Now they can't even manage to be intimate, let alone commit a murder together. Tommi rambles on about building some kind of bomb but it never materializes. Becky hates him for it; hates herself; hates both of them for their abject failure, which generates zero commiseration – it seems even their sympathizers have long since lost all faith in the pair.

Something has got to change, and fast. Then suddenly Maik appears on the scene, wants to join up. But just hanging out in the flat, the endless bickering, soon drives Maik crazy. He's a man of action – he didn't come for futile debates and harebrained scheming. Contrary to Tommi, Maik can actually commit cold-blooded murder without bating an eyelash. That scores points. It doesn't take long for Becky to swap allegiances. But Tommi, too, has to admit that he admires Maik for his hard-boiled follow-through – finds himself attracted to Maik, even.

Together the two men carry out their murder spree, which inevitably strengthens their bond. At last, they are “somebody” now. But their narcissism is simplistic and easily satisfied and the thrill of adrenalin and a bloated ego is short-lived. Becky, suddenly on the fringes of the real action, misses out on the “glory” altogether. When the homoerotic attraction of the two men finally boils over, Becky leaves the group and returns from whence she came: back home to mom.

Maik, however, is adrift without Becky: he needs her attention, her admiration; otherwise it all seems so pointless. So he and Tommi set out to bring Becky back into the fold. They are confronted with Becky's mother and the situation soon escalates. In the end, the three drive off, happily reunited.

Feeling jacked-up and liberated the trio believe they can now become the “next big thing”, just like they'd always dreamed. In their feeble musings they rebrand their pathetic lives and abhorrent deeds as a great sacrifice for love and honor. No one can stop them now. WTF.

Director's Statement

About one and a half years ago, I visited the NSU trial in Munich. The NSU was primarily being reported on journalistically. And when it was being reflected on artistically, it was often cautious, explanatory, and from a safe standing point. There are stories on the “others,” failed existences are explained, the distinctions between successful and unsuccessful lives are drawn. In almost every case, one’s own moral position and the security of one’s own judgements is reaffirmed. We have spoken about it, therefore we have it under control.

I am not so sure about that. We do not have the NSU under control. The pretentious combinations of letters asserts historical proximity to groups like the NSDAP (Nazi Party) or the RAF—no less pretentious acronyms. It insinuates an ideology and the firmness of this ideology, but the shocking thing is also the private aspect—the simplicity of these three people from the German underground, their boundless narcissism, their self-assuredness, and the self-aggrandizement in the fantasy of omnipotence that justifies their use of force. The verdict of the NSU trial didn't solve the existing problem.

In our film we consciously narrate three characters that need to be discovered as characters of their own right, who live in a cheap and tough frenzy, in which doing and killing are the only ways of assuring one’s own value. It is a film that explores questions about the banality of evil and the banality of the factual. Becky, Maik and Tommi are three people that operate with, next to, and against one another—not for but rather only against something. „Germany. A Winter’s Tale“ should be imposing on the audience. It should be a frenzy and a view into the abyss, from which we always try to spare ourselves. The film should do what only a film can: convey an experience with force and physicality, being sensual and at eye level with the characters, precisely where we would prefer some superior distance. I want for us as spectators to have to defend ourselves against a film that we can not ignore and that forces us into conflict. There is no true light in this film, and there is no lesson. As an audience it is only our own consideration and action that can make the difference. The key question is not how could these three become who they are or how were these “others” socialized, but rather how could it have been so simple? Just as Bonnie and Clyde brought violence into pop culture, this film is supposed to be sobering with its violence. Unfortunately Jokes and laughter are not only the distinguishing marks of the good and the wise.

As a title, *Wintermärchen* (*Germany. A Winter’s Tale*) refers to Heinrich Heine, whose books were burnt by the Nazis, as a reminder of his *Wintermärchen*. “It was in the sorrowful month of November, the days became duller, the wind tore the foliage from the trees, and so I traveled to Germany.” On the other hand, “*Wintermärchen*” refers to the stupid *Sommermärchen*, the “summer fairytale”—the 2006 World Cup in Germany, which brought back German flag displays and an uncomfortable new German nationalist ease. One should be permitted to ask if all this was and remains so innocent— in that sense *Wintermärchen* is a dark fairytale, a dirty fantasy.

Cast

Tommi	Thomas Schubert
Becky	Ricarda Seifried
Maik	Jean-Luc Bubert
Mother	Victoria Trauttmansdorff
Watzek	Lars Eidinger
Nadja	Merle Wasmuth
Schorsch	Paul Faßnacht
Rosa	Diana Maria Breuer
Susann	Judith Bohle
Boy	Mats Thiersch

Crew

Screenplay	Jan Eichberg & Jan Bonny
Director	Jan Bonny
Producer	Bettina Brokemper
Junior Producer	Maike Drinhausen
DOP	Benjamin Loeb
Production Design	Julia Maria Baumann
Costume Design	Ulrike Scharfschwerdt
Make-Up and Hair	Skadi Lesske
Gaffer	Klaus-Peter 'Grube' Venn
Music	Lucas Croon
Casting	Susanne Ritter
Editing	Stefan Stabenow, Christoph Otto
Sound	Christoph Schilling
Mix	Matthias Schwab
Sound Design	Matz Müller
Line Producer	Sascha Verhey
Production Manager	Annette Schilling
Duration	ca. 125 Minuten
Aspect Ratio	Cinemascope

Production

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