

MATTHIAS
ZIESING

PEGAH
FERYDONI

MORITZ
HEIDELBACH

MIGNON
REMÉ

CONRAD F.
GEIER

A GREGOR ERLER FILM

THE LAST BERLINER

PRESS KIT

FILM3 PRESENTS A KÖNIGSGARTEN FILM / CORNELSEN FILMS PRODUCTION WITH LUFTSCHLOSS FILMPRODUKTION A GREGOR ERLER FILM MATTHIAS ZIESING, PEGAH FERYDONI, MORITZ HEIDELBACH, WOLFGANG PACKHAUSEN, CONRAD F. GEIER, TULLO PROTHMANN, TOM KEINE AND MIGNON REMÉ
„THE LAST BERLINER“ SUPPORTED BY MFG FILMFÖRDERUNG BADEN-WÜRTTEMBERG MUSIC BY RÜTGER HOEDENMACKERS DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY MORITZ REINECKE EDITOR MORITZ GEISER PRODUCTION DESIGNER ANNE ZENTGRAF MAKEUP JULIANE GUCHEN COSTUMES SOPHIA LUND SOUND TOBIAS BIEHNER
SCREENPLAY SUPERVISOR ANDREAS WÜLSCHLEDEL KEY SPEECHES MARCO DEL BIANCO MARVIN MANEK STORY MATTHIAS ZIESING, GREGOR ERLER SCREENPLAY GREGOR ERLER, BENJAMIN KABAUC CO-PRODUCER MARKO MASSINGER PRODUCER MATTHIAS ZIESING, GREGOR ERLER, CHRISTOPHER CORNELSEN DIRECTED BY GREGOR ERLER

FILM3

DN
DIGITAL NETWORK

SONO2

MFG
BADEN-WÜRTTEMBERG

cornelsen Films

LUFTSCHLOSS
FILMPRODUKTION

DIFERENCE
DIGITAL
INTERMEDIATE

DESIGN FOR FILMS

THE LAST BERLINER

Berlin. The last unrenovated building in a trendy neighborhood is being vacated. The former tenants are moving out, but Dietmar (67) refuses to budge. His son Tobias (34) tries to convince him to move into social housing. However, his father resists – he will not leave his beloved apartment which has been his home for 40 years.

The situation between Tobias, his father, and the building's realtor, who seems to be there by chance, escalates and gets completely out of hand.

When the young police officer Shirin suddenly appears in the doorway, Tobias must decide whether he will really take a stand for something for the first time in his life and follow through with it. But is that all there is to it? What was the father really planning? It quickly becomes clear that the truth is much more complicated, and that many things are not quite what they seem in this chamber play full of twists and turns ...

A Berlin thriller about the highly topical issue of gentrification – gripping and tragic right until the surprising end.

CREW

director: Gregor Erler
story: Matthias Ziesing & Gregor Erler
screenplay: Gregor Erler & Benjamin Karalic
producer: Matthias Ziesing, Gregor Erler, Chris Cornelsen
co-producer: Marko Massinger
DP: Moritz Reinecke
editor: Moritz Geiser
composer: Rutger Hoedemaekers
production design: Anne Zentgraf
production: film13 GbR, Königsgarten Film UG, Cornelsen Films GmbH
co-production: Luftschloss Filmproduktion

CAST

Matthias Ziesing	(Tobias Heine)	Conrad F. Geier	(Conrad Klages)
Pegah Ferydoni	(Shirin Kämper)	Thilo Prothmann	(Thorsten Öhlmann)
Moritz Heidelberg	(Mark Franke)	Tom Keune	(Volker Hebestreit)
Mignon Remé	(Sabine Görgens)	Marie Anne Fliegel	(Frau Fuchs)
Wolfgang Packhäuser	(Dietmar Heine)	Henrike Hahn	(Marie)





CHARACTERS



DIETMAR HEINE

Though a Berliner from birth, the city is no longer his own. The 65-year-old faces the transformation and challenges of the big city with increasing frustration and anguish. He doesn't get all the hype, the tourist crowds and party hipsters. His favourite pub became a parent-child family café, where coffee costs as much as three beers once did. For over 40 years, he has been living in his apartment in an old building in Berlin, and now he is expected to move on from there too. He has tried to defend himself against the new owner's threats of eviction. But his letters of complaint remain unanswered. Dietmar doesn't see why a real estate agent who is only half as old as his rental contract should be able to chase him out of his apartment and home. Dietmar was able to pass on his values and ideals to his son Tobias, but not his readiness to confront and resolve problems. And so, while Dietmar feels that he's alone in his struggle against the repression of old tenants, he won't give up without a fight ... no matter what.

TOBIAS HEINE

Tobias (34, loyal and altruistic) is a kind, conscientious guy. Nevertheless, he still struggles constantly to adapt to life. He originally studied photography in Berlin but has been earning his bread as a plumber for years. The life is hardly a dream come true. The job is tough and unrewarding, and he spends the little free time he has trying to help his father. Tobias longs for a life that really fulfils him, where his talent and ideals can be applied – but he is also anxious about changes and confrontation. Unlike his father, he is too afraid of conflict to face the injustices and torments of everyday life. And so, he carries on ... until he snaps and has to decide: Should he rebel once and for all and possibly lose everything in the process, or keep on being a cog in the wheel?



SHIRIN KÄMPER

Shirin Kämper (28, a cheerful soul) is a friendly, empathetic, yet very assertive young policewoman with a strong sense of justice. Shirin grew up in rather modest circumstances in Berlin-Kreuzberg and is used to working everything out by herself. Now - almost at the end of her training as a senior police officer – she is completing the practical part of her training. It is Shirin's last week as a street officer. This morning, she still had no idea what turns her day would take. Personally and professionally, she is reaching her limit and must ask herself where justice ends and injustice begins.



MARK FRANKE

Mark Franke (29, real estate agent) is the perfect sales drone. Young, dynamic and handsome, with a winning smile that never fades. Well dressed, hip and modern – to suit his lifestyle and his clients. Franke comes from a well-off family and moved to Berlin only four years ago. Thanks to his mother's connections, he was able to immediately begin working with one of Berlin's most successful real estate companies. He quickly established himself as a top-selling real estate agent who can very successfully market to the desired target group and effectively evict annoying older tenants. At the age of 29, he believes he has experienced, seen and done it all. No one can possibly show him anything new. Not least due to his privileged life, he lacks the ability to understand and empathize with the worries and problems of those with modest incomes. And after all, the old tenants shouldn't be so upset and should regard the eviction “not as an end, but as a new beginning”. He doesn't realize that this very statement will cost him his head today.

SAUBERE WÄNDE
SIND HÖHERE MIETEN

BIOGRAPHY GREGOR ERLER (DIRECTOR & WRITER)

Gregor Erler (born 1982 in Berlin) is a film director and screenwriter.

At the age of 16, Gregor Erler published a short story in the Austrian daily newspaper Der Standard, which was critiqued by the Viennese bestselling author of Opernball (English title: Opera Ball) and PEN chairman Josef Haslinger. Gregor's other short story Der Anfang vom Ende – live was later officially published as part of a short story collection.

Having already worked as first assistant director for various film productions, Gregor Erler began his film studies at Germany's most acclaimed film school Filmakademie Baden-Württemberg in 2004 with a major in film directing.

His neo-Nazi satire "A Weekend for Racists" was recommended for educational purposes by the Educational Committee and can now be found in numerous German school libraries. In addition, Gregor's short films "Borderline" and "Breaking the Rules" were topics for film theoretical semester or final theses at the University of Portsmouth, UK, among others. His short film Being the Odd One Out received the "Prädikat wertvoll" (honoured as valuable) rating from the German Film Rating Commission.

In 2007, Gregor Erler received the Karl Steinbuch Scholarship for "outstanding creative and innovative achievements" and in 2008 the Hollywood Masterclass Scholarship from the University of California, Los Angeles. In 2010, he made the internationally very successful short film St.Christophorus: Roadkill. Gregor's short films have been screened at over 120 film festivals worldwide and have won over 50 awards. Gregor Erler also produces music videos and commercials. His spots have been awarded at the LIA London International Awards and the GWA Effie Awards.

The Last Berliner is his debut feature film. An enthralling and tragic Berlin thriller on the highly topical subject of gentrification, suspense is guaranteed until the very end.

FILMOGRAPHY

2018 – The Last Berliner (feature film)
2011 till 2018 – various commercials & music videos
2011 till 2018 – working as an author/writer
2010 – St. Christophorus: Roadkill (short)
2010 – One Man Show (short)
2006 – Being The Odd One Out (short)
2006 – Bad Luck, Good Luck! (short)
2005 – A Weekend For Racists (short)
2005 – Breaking the Rules (short)
and many more...

AWARDS (EXCERPT)

Puchon Int. Film Festival, Korea (Jury's Choice Award)
Sitges Film Festival, Spain (Paul Naschy Award)
FANT Bilbao Film Festival (Best Short Film)
Britisch Horror Film Festival (Best Student Film)
HCFF Los Angeles, USA (won: Best Director)
American Int. Film Festival, USA (Best Director)
Malta International Film Festival (Golden Knight)
BIAFF Awards UK (Silver Plus Award)
Cotswold Intl. Filmfestival UK (Gold Plus Award)
Fantastic Fest, USA (nomination)
Raindance Film Festival, UK (nomination)
Hofer Filmtage, Germany (nomination)
Max Ophüls Filmfestival, Germany (nomination)
Europäische Kurzfilmbiennale (nomination)
Shanghai Int. Film Festival, China (nomination)



GENTRIFY THIS

DIRECTOR'S NOTE

It was August 1989 and I was incredibly proud. My father opened the bathroom door to reveal his work: A freshly tiled bathroom, new fittings, and — most importantly — a completely embedded corner bathtub. I'd never seen anything like it, neither had any of my friends. Not at that time, not in East Germany. My parents never had much money, but my father was a plumber and knew people and the bathtub had been exchanged for a few "blaue Fliesen" ("blue tiles"), which was a code for the precious West German money.

A few months later, the Berlin Wall fell and we had to leave the house with the beautiful bathroom as a result of a claim to re-transfer — and rightly so. I didn't understand it back then and I didn't want to leave. Here, I had my own room, a creepy but beautiful attic to play in and a huge garden with a tree house. And now we were told to leave. For me as a 7-year-old, it cut me to the quick, I can only imagine how my father must have felt. Just a month after we'd moved out, the brand-new bathroom was torn out and replaced by a posh winter garden. Today, the house is a prohibitively expensive villa, but in those days, it housed three families and the bullet holes it had received during the war were still clearly visible.

It was precisely this feeling, the feeling of being torn out of your familiar environment, this helplessness, because the old owners of course had every right to take back their house — this very feeling triggered me when I started developing the material for THE LAST BERLINER. That awful uneasiness when you know something is right and it still doesn't feel fair. Today, of course, tenants are forced to leave their beloved homes for very different reasons, but that doesn't change the way it feels, does it? Doesn't it feel exactly the same for an old Berlin tenant to suddenly have to leave his apartment after 40 years? When the new tenants are just half as old as the rental contracts the old tenants had?

What I particularly like about the material is that the unwieldy subject of "gentrification" suddenly receives some emotional figures and both sides get to have their say. It was also very important for me to not simply use the topic as a "vehicle". Evictions are not followed by the start of a new life, a trip to the seaside or possibly some heist film in which estate agents are under attack. The material remains rooted in the subject, even throughout its finale and twist. Tobias's only option is to flee because lofts have been secretly built in place of social housing complexes. The SWAT team can't storm at first, because the bathroom window was bricked up as the new owners' way of getting the tenant out. Tobias only has a gas bottle, because the actual heating is out of order, and the estate agent can't escape because the door hasn't been repaired. One of the most tragic moments in the film is drowned out by deafening construction noise. And even for the percussion of the movie's marvelous soundtrack by Rutger Hoedemaekers, demolition waste from newly renovated houses was used.

For me as a filmmaker, the viewer's emotional journey while watching the film, the entertainment value and suspense are my top priorities. I love a moving camera that remains very close to the characters and connects the SWAT scenes homogeneously with the apartment scenes instead of separating them from one another. I like that the movie starts by showing the vastness of the big city before being reduced to a narrower, claustrophobic and darker view, almost in real time. Even if the film is set in a German city during daylight hours, camera and light are used more like in a Scandinavian thriller.

We put all our passion and experience into making this chamber-play-like thriller that is consistent and surprising alike, never leaving the viewer out. There's no moralizing undertone, no emotional drama, but a gripping, stirring film that will have audiences biting their nails. It's reduced to the vital parts, with a heightened focus, and the reductions should be understood as a stylistic device. There are only few, selected, good settings. The cast is small but highly talented. The visual language is captivating and fresh, always close to the people, close to the action.

I am convinced that we have shot a great, emotional, and very relevant film with very limited means, and autarchic funding. Almost daily, I read newspaper articles, see news excerpts, and read blogs that precisely describe the fates we see in the film. This film concerns everyone directly or indirectly and the marginalization of old milieus is happening worldwide. Berlin, London, or New York, the place doesn't matter. During our research, we met with many affected tenants, but also estate agents, and all the measures of eviction described in the book are real. After studying at the Filmakademie Baden-Württemberg, I returned to my hometown, Berlin and I live in the Prenzlauer-Berg neighborhood, which indirectly makes me part of the gentrification. Nevertheless, or rather, because of that, I have turned this book into a film, and I would like to give the feeling that I had as a child and all the people affected their very own film.

Gregor Erler (director & co-writer, September 2018)





PRODUCER'S NOTE

It was time. Time to roll up our sleeves and make a thrilling, emotional and bold film that tackles sensitive issues. A film that shows the displacement of whole neighborhoods, established structures, cultural areas and gives the word “gentrification” a moving and gripping appearance. Eclectic, fair, and always entertaining.

We stand behind this highly topical, relevant film, the themes of which concern residents of Berlin, Munich, and Hamburg alike, plus millions of other large cities worldwide. We have used all our passion and experience to film a chamber-play-like thriller that is resolute and surprising, and never leaves the viewers out. It is not finger wagging or a drama of sensitivities; it is an enthralling, stirring nail-biter.

We are convinced that a very small budget is not a barrier, but an opportunity – an opportunity to bring our vision to the screen independently and with integrity. The topicality of the material also demanded a timely implementation beyond tedious funding channels. Get rid of the baggage, sharpen the focus, and see the reduction as a stylistic device. The right film at just the right time.

A film that will carry you away, pull at your heartstrings and maybe even provoke. But in any case, an emotionally touching film that does not let viewers leave the cinema feeling indifferent. It's Germany's first real gentrification thriller.

producers Matthias Ziesing, Gregor Erler, Christopher Cornelsen,
Marko Massinger (September 2018)



MAIN CAST



MATTHIAS ZIESING (character: Tobias Heine)

This Berlin-born actor completed his training at the renowned Ernst Busch Academy of Dramatic Arts in Berlin. Even during his training, he made a name for himself in the film and television industry with numerous short films. After successfully graduating in 2005, he played the leading role in the elaborately produced historical drama series UNTER DEN LINDEN, and he had a guest appearance in the award-winning theatre performance PENTHESILEA. After playing several leading roles in episodes of series such as TATORT, SOKO LEIPZIG, and DIE CHEFIN, international cinema and TV productions such as VALKYRIE, HANSEL & GRETEL: WITCH HUNTERS, and COUNTERPART followed, as well as leading roles in the successful series BETTYS DIAGNOSE and DIE KANZLEI. Parallel to this, he played the leading role of Kerea in the multi-award winning production of CALIGULA at the Deutsches Theater in Berlin from 2009 to 2011.

With the film THE LAST BERLINER, Matthias Ziesing is venturing into new territory. As well as playing the main character Tobias Heine, he is also working for the first time as a producer, together with successful director Gregor Eler.

PEGAH FERYDONI (character: Shirin Kämper)

Tehran-born actress Pegah Ferydoni did not start her artistic career in the traditional way of attending a drama school; instead, she directly put her natural talent to the test on the stage of the Maxim Gorki Theatre in Berlin and as a presenter of the ZDF KULTURPALAST show. She first appeared on television in 2004, playing the leading role of Helin in FOLLOW THE FEATHER. The German public primarily knows her for her leading role as Yagmur in the award-winning ARD smash hit series TURKISH FOR BEGINNERS. In addition to other appearances in German film and television productions, such as SOKO KÖLN and DER VERLORENE SOHN, she played one of the protagonists in the international drama WOMAN WITHOUT MAN in 2009, directed by Shirin Neshat. Ferydoni is currently part of the new series of the successful Sky production PASTEWKA.



MORITZ HEIDELBACH (character: Mark Franke)

Even before his training at the Cologne-based drama school "Der Keller", Moritz Heidelbach acted in various theatre productions. During his time at the drama school, he was involved in the WAISEN production, amongst others, which was awarded the 2013 Cologne Theatre Prize. In the following years he appeared in further theatre productions, including the premiere of Maurice Maeterlinck's THE LIFE OF THE ANT on stage in Wuppertal, directed by Christian von Treskow. Aside from his theatre work, he has played numerous roles in national and international film, television, and cinema productions, such as SUITE FRANÇAISE and various episodes of TATORT. In 2016, he won the "Puck" award as the best emerging actor. In addition to numerous television productions, he is a member of the main cast of Gregor Eler's film THE LAST BERLINER

CAST



Wolfgang Packhäuser
(Dietmar Heine)



Mignon Remé
(Sabine Görgens)



Conrad F. Geier
(Conrad Klages)



Thilo Prothmann
(Thorsten Öhlmann)



Tom Keune
(Volker Hebestreit)



Marie Anne Fliegel
(Frau Fuchs)



Henrike Hahn
(Marie)



Sebastian Achilles
(Robert SEK)

CREW (EXCERPT)



Benjamin Karalic
Co-writer

ST. CHRISTOPHORUS (mit Gregor Erler)
DER LETZTE BULLE, IM KNAST



Moritz Reinecke
Director of Photography

BIS AUFS BLUT, PLÖTZLICH TÜRKE,
DER LETZTE MIETER



Rutger Hoedemaekers
Composer

TRAPPED, ARRIVAL (percussion),
MOTHER! (percussion)



Moritz Geiser
Editor

LA DEUTSCHE VITA,
DER LETZTE MIETER



Anne Zentgraf
Production Design

THIS AIN'T CALIFORNIA,
QUATSCH UND DIE NASENBÄRBADE,
MUTTERLAND

FILM13

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www.film13.de

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FACT

Title: Der Letzte Mieter (German) / The Last Berliner (international)
Language: Deutsch (english subtitles)
Year of completion: september 2018
Running time: 96min 53sec
DCP screener: 4K scope (1:2,39) , 5.1 Sound, english subtitles

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