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# EXIT MARRAKECH

**A Caroline Link Film**

**Starring**

Ulrich Tukur  
Samuel Schneider  
Hafsia Herzi  
Marie-Lou Sellem  
Josef Bierbichler

**Produced by**

Peter Herrmann

Length: 122 minutes

**World Distribution**

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## THE CAST

Heinrich  
Ben  
Karima  
Lea  
Dr. Breuer  
Hannah  
Martin  
Ahmed  
Abdeslam

Ulrich Tukur  
Samuel Schneider  
Hafsia Herzi  
Marie-Lou Sellem  
Josef Bierbichler  
Clara-Marie Pazzini  
Götz Schulte  
Abdesslam Bouhasni  
Mourad Zaoui

## THE FILMMAKERS

Writer-Director  
Producer  
Line Producer  
Director of Photography  
Sound  
Production Design  
Costumes  
Makeup  
  
Film Editor  
Casting  
Music

Caroline Link  
Peter Herrmann  
Ute Krämer  
Bella Halben  
Andreas Turnwald  
Susann Bieling  
Barbara Grupp  
Nannie Gebhardt-Seele  
Friederike Mirus  
Patricia Rommel  
An Dorthe Braker  
Niki Reiser

EXIT MARRAKECH is a co-production of Desert Flower Filmproduktion with Erfttal Film- & Fernsehproduktion, B.A. Produktion, MTM west television & film, Studiocanal Film, ARD Degeto, Bayerischer Rundfunk, Westdeutscher Rundfunk and Arte, with the financial support of the FilmFernsehFonds Bayern (FFF), the Film- und Medienstiftung NRW, the Filmförderungsanstalt (FFA), the DFFF Deutscher Filmförderfonds, the BKM, as well as the MEDIA PROGRAMM of the European Union.

## TECHNICAL DATA

Length: 122 Min.  
Format: 35 mm & Digital / 1:2,35 (Cinemascope)  
Sound: 5.1 Dolby Surround

## LOGLINE

After the worldwide success of *Nowhere in Africa*, Oscar® winner Caroline Link returns to Africa for her latest feature film EXIT MARRAKECH – an outstanding family drama set in fascinating and exotic Morocco.

## SYNOPSIS

17-year-old Ben (Samuel Schneider) visits Heinrich, his father (Ulrich Tukur), an acclaimed stage director who is at a theater festival in Marrakech with his latest play. But his trip does not start out like a tale from 1001 Nights. The surroundings are as unfamiliar to him as his father, with whom he has had little contact since his parents' divorce. And yet now he is to spend his summer vacation with him. As the two of them continue to drift further and further apart, Ben immerses himself in this exotic country and, shunning his father's luxury hotel, sets out on his own search in this new and foreign world. He falls in love with Karima (Hafsia Herzi) and follows her to her remote village in the Atlas Mountains. When Heinrich doesn't hear from Ben for days, he, reluctantly at first, but then increasingly concerned, begins searching for his missing son. As the two of them travel through this strange land, anything and everything seems possible. They can lose each other for good or find each other anew...

## NEWS RELEASE

EXIT MARRAKECH by Oscar® winner Caroline Link is a compelling drama with a superb cast including Ulrich Tukur (*John Rabe*, *The White Ribbon*, *The Lives of Others*), Josef Bierbichler (*A Year Ago in Winter*, *The White Ribbon*), Hafsia Herzi (*The Secret of the Grain*, *House of Tolerance*), Marie-Lou Sellem (*No Regrets*, *Gangs*) and Samuel Schneider, who drew widespread acclaim for his acting debut in *Boxhagener Platz* in 2010.

EXIT MARRAKECH is the second collaboration of Caroline Link and producer Peter Herrmann. Their first was the immensely successful *Nowhere in Africa*, for which Caroline Link was awarded an Oscar® in 2003. Peter Herrmann is also the producer of *The Pursuit of Unhappiness* and *Desert Flower*.

## The Story

“Sometimes one’s imagination is more exciting than reality.”

(Heinrich to his son Ben)

The last day of school before summer vacation. Ben (Samuel Schneider) would rather travel to Nice with his buddies instead of having to spend the summer with his father in Morocco. Ben’s parents have been divorced for a long time. His mother Lea (Marie-Lou Sellem) is already on her way to Paris to give a concert. Ben’s father Heinrich (Ulrich Tukur) is a successful stage director and is presenting his latest production at a theater festival in Marrakech. Before he leaves, Ben is called into the office of the principal of his boarding school. Dr. Breuer (Josef Bierbichler) doesn’t give him a lecture. Ben is a good student and writes promising short stories. Nevertheless, he seems lackadaisical and glum to Breuer, who suggests he make the most of his vacation with his father and enjoy his freedom.

When Ben arrives in Marrakech, his father is not there to pick him up. Ben is to meet him in the evening at the theater. On his own initiative, he has a look at the famous *Djemaa el Fna*, the city square with the many street performers, snake charmers and various stands. A dealer entices him into a dark side street and sells him marihuana. Heinrich’s production is Lessing’s “*Emilia Galotti*” - a German classic in a North African country. To Ben, that seems as out of place and superfluous as he feels. When he and his father finally meet up, it’s awkward. His father is much too preoccupied with himself and his premiere. But at least Heinrich remembers Ben’s birthday. That midnight he turns 17. At the premiere party the guests sing “Happy Birthday” and Heinrich presents his son with a cake – without chocolate. Ben is a diabetic.

His father is still asleep the next morning as Ben takes off with his camera and roams the narrow streets of Marrakech. He gives away his jacket and his t-shirt to a group of street kids. The afternoon with his father at the pool of the luxury hotel couldn’t be in starker contrast. Heinrich doesn’t think much of Ben’s desire to explore the city. He’d rather get to know Morocco by reading Paul Bowles. Fortunately, Ben meets two young Moroccan stagehands who show him the local scene. In the “Cave Rouge”, a nightclub, Ben is approached by a pretty girl, Karima (Hafsia Herzi). His new Moroccan friends have warned him that the women here are all prostitutes but that doesn’t bother Ben. He goes home with Karima. He doesn’t want sex. He just wants to spend time with her. He doesn’t answer Heinrich’s text message “Where are you?”. Instead, he savors his excursion into the ‘real’ Morocco.

The next morning, Heinrich tells Ben, that he’d like him to finally meet his four-year-old half sister Paula. They’re to join up, along with Heinrich’s wife, in a few days on the coast, in Essaouira. Ben is not keen on the idea. His father’s new family doesn’t interest him at all.

Ben takes off again on his own. He wants to spend time with Karima but she is on the way to her family in a remote Berber village. Ben not only takes her to the bus but spontaneously accompanies her to her home in the Atlas Mountains. Even though Karima knows it will cause her serious problems when she shows up with a man, a foreigner to boot, she allows him to join her.

With considerable misgivings – and only because Karima’s father and brother will not be back in the village until the next day - does Karima’s mother agree to take Ben in. For appearance’s sake, Ben is put up in her grandmother’s house but that night Karima sleeps with him. Ben’s father is now so concerned that he considers reporting Ben as missing to the police. Ben simply sends him a text message: “Everything’s cool”. Heinrich is irritated. His premiere in Rabat is the following day but he can’t just leave without his son. He finds out where Ben is from the two young stagehands and organizes a car. In Karima’s village, things take a turn for the worse. Her father throws her out of the house for bringing the family in disrepute. Instead of going to Rabat with Heinrich, Ben remains insistent. He wants to see the desert, not a German play.

Karima is able to stay with a girlfriend in the next town but Ben is a man and is not allowed to spend the night there. Karima, realizing their relationship has no chance, tells Ben he must leave. Suddenly, he is on his own.

His adventure begins. He books a desert tour with a local guide, Jaouad, but feels lost and miserable. His cell phone battery is almost empty and his supply of insulin is getting low. The next day, however, when Ben surfs down majestic desert dunes, he finally feels the freedom he's been longing for. Just then the police cars pull up. Heinrich alerted the police after not hearing anything from his son in two days.

Ben is 'handed over' to his father in a small run-down police station on the edge of the desert. As the two of them begin their trip back to civilization they have little to say to each other but with time they start to come to terms with each other and put into words the pain they have caused each other. It is the beginning of a reconciliation. Here in the solitude of a strange land, father and son are equals and Heinrich finally grasps how lucky he is to be able to play a role at all in the life of his almost grown up son.

And then, in the darkness, their car goes off the road, crashes through the guardrail and plummets down the embankment, disappearing out of sight...

## **Interview with Caroline Link**

### **Why is your film set in Morocco?**

Before I even knew what direction my story was going to take, I knew that it would be set in Morocco. Over twenty years ago, Dominik and I (editor's note: Dominik Graf is Caroline Link's husband) went there and it made a strong impression on me. In 2011, I went back to the same spots, this time with my producer Peter Herrmann. He gave me the freedom to let the country sink in on me and come up with ideas. "See what occurs to you", is what he said. We had a Moroccan producer who told us a lot of anecdotes about his country and who gave me a lot of inspiration. The same story in a different setting probably wouldn't have interested me as much. Morocco and its intriguing culture gives the father-son conflict a sense of danger and sensuality that appealed to me.

### **Did the country have the same effect on you as the first time twenty years ago?**

No, it's changed drastically. The Morocco I experienced twenty years ago is no longer there. The entire country has opened to tourism, even into the most remote corners of the country, into the middle of the desert – totally different from twenty years ago. But I liked the idea of playing with this kind of tourism instead of our stereotyped image of Morocco. Ben, for example, doesn't experience nature in the classic way; he does this absurd nonsense skiing down the dunes. I thought that was more interesting than showing Morocco clichés we already know to excess from books and movies.

### **If I think of some of the lines of your characters, you seem to regret these developments in Morocco.**

Not at all. The quality of life has improved for many Moroccans. It would be cynical to say; "Too bad, you're not as picturesquely poor as you used to be twenty years ago. You didn't have electricity then and everything seemed so authentic." Sure, a certain charm is no longer there. Especially in Marrakech. They've built too much too fast and some of those hotels and shopping malls are empty today.

### **Your characters see Morocco very differently. Ben travels the country with open eyes; his father stays in his luxury hotel because he thinks he knows all there is to know about the country anyway. Do younger people have a better outlook on the world?**

They don't have as many fears. When you're an adult and have a certain amount of experience and are well read, you tend to be too opinionated. I notice that I occasionally form an opinion too quickly of someone I meet for the first time. And I'm not as willing to let new people into my life. Sometimes you don't give people or places the chance to present themselves from another side. When you're young and so much is new to you, you're much more ready to just let things happen.

### **What interested you in the father-son relationship?**

For me every screenplay begins with a strong connection. It's not just about a protagonist but about the antagonist as well. In literature there can be many. I think that in the movies, the core of the story should revolve around two people. There's usually not enough time for more.

My stories up to now have mostly been about family connections. Father figures play a big role, I can't say why. I had a very close and warm relationship with my father. These are the emotions that move me when I'm thinking about a story. Ben is a young adult who actually doesn't know his father at all. And that means he doesn't know a part of himself. I see a lot of children growing up without fathers. What's going to happen to this generation that's been formed by single moms? Especially boys feel obligated to their mothers. Sometimes this situation is too much for them to handle.

**How were you able to put yourself in the position of a 17-year-old boy?**

I don't always have to put myself in the position of my protagonists. I can't put myself in the position of a deaf father either (editor's note: her film *Beyond Silence*). As a writer I try to make sense of it and give it meaning.

**Are your characters based on real people?**

Yes, real people influence the characters I create as well as their dialogue.

**How do they react when they recognize themselves?**

If they don't come out looking too bad they probably like it. Members of my family have always made their way into my films especially in *Beyond Silence* and *Nowhere in Africa*, although not concretely. It's more the spirit of our family. It was actually my husband Dominik who originally said "Sometimes one's imagination is better than reality". (editor's note: almost the same line as Heinrich's in EXIT MARRAKECH) That's a subject we talk about a lot. What and how much do we have to experience ourselves? Isn't it sometimes enough to experience something through the eyes of a wise writer?

**And what is the answer?**

As it usually is, the truth is probably somewhere in between. I've always tried to experience as much as possible but I've also profited from Dominik providing me with the suitable literature for my travels. If you look at Venice through Thomas Mann's eyes too then it's even more exciting (laughs).

**What else does a good screenplay need besides interesting characters?**

A good movie will appeal to a large audience if its story has an intense emotional core and if it is visually appealing. The conflict has to be universally understandable and touch us but that alone is not necessarily enough. It's very helpful when an alien but attractive world intensifies the conflict. In my films it was the world of the deaf, Africa, a painter's studio - worlds that moviegoers normally don't enter. People think they're going to the movies to see Africa but the film only touches them if the intimate core reaches them and moves them. I love entering new worlds when I'm in the research stage. I consider it a privilege of my profession. The emotional substance of my stories, on the other hand, has to come from deep inside of me.

**Back to Morocco. There's a second family in your film, a Moroccan family. The German father is self-centered whereas this family seems trapped in traditional social norms...**

Of course you can get excited about the role of women in many Islamic families – they do most of the work and have less rights. What interested me more was the question why these strong family ties exist, this extreme feeling of togetherness and shared identity? A lot of Moroccans working on the film told us they'd like to make a lot of money working in Germany but they didn't want to have to live there. Family plays a very important role there, if not the highest. That is something that moves me. The hospitality of those families during the shoot was impressive. And people there are always touching each other - family members, friends, neighbors. They lean against each other, hold hands, are constantly in physical contact. It's so natural and friendly. To us, it's totally unfamiliar.

**That probably affected behavior on the set?**

You mean we all started fondling each other? (laughs)

**I was thinking more in terms of mood.**

There is some culture clash. Certain clichés do apply. Bella (editor's note: the director of photography) and I could be quite energetic and provide the German spirit of discipline: "Alright, people, we have a lot to do so let's do it!" In that respect, Moroccans tend to be – let's say – more laid back and not exactly in sync with our German notions of efficiency. But they do a great job; the film industry in Morocco is first-rate. Except for state-of-the-art equipment you can get everything. They're really good. Their pace, of course, is a little different.



## **Interview with Peter Herrmann**

**Caroline Link had the idea to shoot a film in Morocco. You traveled the country together and you told her: "See what occurs to you." A blank check like that doesn't happen in the film business everyday...**

Well, we had already worked together and I know what she's capable of. Caroline Link has extraordinary storytelling talent. Not many people have that.

**The film deals with a father-son relationship. You're roughly the father's age and you have two sons roughly Ben's age. What was making this film like for you?**

I know how boys in puberty are, how they can drive you crazy and how they can confound you. So of course it's a subject I know a little about...

**Does that mean you're particularly able to put yourself in the father's position in this conflict?**

I could always understand him. Whenever I talked with Ulrich Tukur or Caroline I always tended to empathize with the father figure. But we needed a third lead for this picture – and that was Morocco.

**How was it shooting there?**

All in all, I found it very pleasant shooting in Morocco, particularly because of the people. The crew was professional and very good. Moroccan film people are used to shooting either big American sandal pictures or low-budget movies for TV. We wanted something in between.

**You had to finish shooting by a specified time. How does a producer feel flying to a shoot like that?**

You can't think that way. The shooting schedule has to work but it never does. You always have to be able to adapt to an unforeseen situation. If a location doesn't work out for some reason you have to reorganize the shooting schedule to buy time to find a new location. But you can't always do that in a land like Morocco. You don't have everything under control and so you simply try to go with the flow and improvise.

**How about an example?**

When a big American production company shoots a market scene in Marrakech the crew cordons off an entire area. Everything is staged and all the people you see are extras. But if you do that you don't get what we wanted. We shot scenes in which we had both extras and normal people. We had real, everyday life all around us. It's risky and it's difficult but it worked. I have to admit, being a unit manager for scenes like those is hell though (*laughs*).

**Morocco in your film seems more realistic and ambivalent than it is portrayed in most films and books...**

We'll hopefully be attracting a fairly educated audience and that means our standards are high. We can't afford clichés. Our audience will want to experience something new and will not be satisfied with a confirmation of what it already knows.

**What did you find out about the country that you didn't know before?**

Morocco has a well-educated younger generation but they can't get jobs. For women the situation is even more tragic. Morocco at first glance seems very western. You don't see many women wearing scarves on their heads. But the society is still very traditional and women don't have much to say. But it no longer happens that a young woman with a good education or training goes back to her village and has to take on the traditional role. At first we weren't sure if the Arab Spring wasn't going to be stronger in Morocco. There were riots there on the 20th of February the year we were planning the film...

**How did you react?**

I tried to find out what was going on politically and talked to journalists and young opposition politicians in Morocco and they all told me something different. In the end, everything remained mostly calm – even though there were people who were predicting major riots for the period we would be shooting.

**In a situation like that, does it help that you majored in ethnology?**

Studying ethnology is very good preparation for being a film producer. Ethnologists look at a culture in its entirety. You get a picture of the whole and its parts. If you see the job of a film producer as more than just being a salesman or a production manager but as developing concepts, it is very useful. When we were shooting *Nowhere in Africa*, we were shooting with a tribe well off the beaten track. I sent an ethnologist there in advance and he prepared them for our coming for three weeks. That's a good example of going at things strategically. Producing is like a strategy game.

## **Interview with Ulrich Tukur**

### **What convinced you to star in EXIT MARRAKECH? What was it about the project you liked?**

The director had a good reputation. I had seen two of her films and liked them very much. The screenplay was well-written, the dialogue good, my role seemed to fit and the location was not unattractive.

### **What attracted you to the role of Heinrich? How would you describe him?**

Caroline created a role that has a lot to do with me. Heinrich is at the height of his career and doesn't notice how much it's devouring him. His son shows up like a prop from another world. So what happens to a person who is forced to stop in his tracks and rethink his life?

### **What does Ben expect from a 'good' father and how does Heinrich define his father? And what do you personally think makes a good father?**

Children always expect the same thing. They want their fathers and mothers to have time, to be there for them, to show interest. It's not that Heinrich isn't a good father; he's not a father at all. He loves his work and that's it. But he is capable of love and that becomes apparent when he knows his son is in danger. He sets new priorities and develops as a human being. It is, however, a long and painful process.

### **Some insights we only get through certain experiences. Can we make up for mistakes made in the past?**

We surely can't make up for all our mistakes but we can learn from them. They're what makes up a real personality.

### **What is Caroline Link like as a director? How was working with her?**

Caroline is very precise. She fights like a lion for her films, for every line, every sound. That can be strenuous at times because she catches you immediately if you cheat. And I think she writes wonderful dialogue.

### **How was working with newcomer Samuel Schneider?**

It was fun. He's a very likable, unaffected young man. His acting is wonderfully direct. Unfortunately, he looks too good.

### **How did you experience Morocco as a location? How did you like Marrakech? Any special memories?**

I've worked in Morocco several times. It's an indescribably beautiful country with so many different breathtaking landscapes. I was in Marrakech for several weeks in the late eighties. There weren't any mobile phones then, no satellite dishes, no internet. It was a different city. Of course, it's still colorful and beautiful but globalization has taken its toll and the money and mass tourism have made the archaic, the unique and unusual about it much harder to discover.

## **Interview with Samuel Schneider**

### **What appealed to you about EXIT MARRAKECH?**

Everything! A road movie in Morocco – just that is exciting. You don't get the chance to play a leading role that often and then on top of that with Caroline Link directing. I saw *Annaliese and Anton* as a child. I practically grew up with her films. *Beyond Silence* really impressed me. *Nowhere in Africa* I've watched several times. So of course I wanted to work with Caroline. An Oscar® winner directing you, Ulrich Tukur playing your father – it doesn't get any better.

### **Did you have any input into Ben as a character?**

At first Ben was supposed to be an unathletic 14-year-old. A totally different role that didn't fit me at all. But Caroline let me audition anyway and realized that it could be much more interesting if the story was about two men instead of a man and a boy. That's why she cast me.

### **So the role was custom made for you?**

Kind of. At any rate the character changed a lot because of me. It's to Caroline's credit that she modified her original idea. And it was very fortunate for me.

### **How would you describe 'your' Ben?**

Ben goes through a lot of changes. At the beginning of the film he still comes across as very young – a boarding school boy with braces. He grows up in Morocco. He loses his virginity and lets himself go. As a diabetic he normally would have to be more careful. He's up for everything. He's self-confident and adventurous – a cool guy. But he still has this problem with his dad.

### **What exactly is the problem?**

Ben wants Heinrich to be there for him and tell him that he loves him. Sometimes he'd like to be a little boy again and hugged but at the same time he wants to be treated like a grown-up. Ben has great expectations of his father but tries not to expect anything from him because he doesn't want to be disappointed again. Ben provokes his father, that's his thing.

### **What does family mean to you personally?**

Family is really important to me. They're your people, the ones who teach you everything you need for life and who love you no matter what. Family is back-up. Everybody else can drop you but your family will always be there for you. That's why you should have respect for your family. My father is Turkish so, culturally speaking, I have close family ties.

### **Can past mistakes be made up for as Heinrich tries to do in the film?**

That's exactly what family is all about. Everything can be forgiven. That's the difference between family and friends.

### **How was it working with Ulrich Tukur? Were you nervous about it?**

Not for long. He gave me a lot of tips – how to learn your lines, for example. I picked up his system. Ulrich Tukur usually plays strong characters. In EXIT MARRAKECH he's weak sometimes too. That impressed me about him. It's easy to worry about acting with stars like Ulrich Tukur – the same goes for Josef Bierbichler. But both of them left me a lot of space and that made it easier for me.

### **Did Caroline Link leave you a lot of space, too?**

Let me put it like this: when you're shooting on location in Morocco, in the heat and the chaos in the bazaars, everything has to be structured and well thought-out. You don't have the possibility or the time to improvise. Caroline knows exactly what she wants and that makes you feel secure. She was the boss and I did what she said.

**How was working in the heat?**

Fortunately we had time to adjust to the climate. In the Atlas Mountains I was still wearing my winter jacket at first. Later it got up to 120 degrees and that was strenuous. But we did as the Moroccans: we drank two liters of water in the morning and then only mint tea. That prepares your body for the heat.

**What do you think about when you recall shooting in Morocco? Was there anything special?**

I personally didn't have any culture shock. Because of my Turkish family I'm familiar with the Islamic world. But Morocco is more oriental, more like '1001 Nights'. We had a special shooting permit from the King and could go anywhere – in the Kasbahs, in the old buildings of clay. We saw so much that tourists don't have access to. We shot with a hidden camera in the Mellas, in the red light districts of Marrakech. It could get dangerous. I was running around with earphones. It was all for real. On the Djeema el Fna, when strangers came up and spoke to me – it wasn't staged. It was a real trip, just like it was for Ben in the film.

## ABOUT THE CAST

### Ulrich Tukur (Heinrich)

Ulrich Tukur was born in Viernheim, Hessa, in 1957. He received his baccalaureate in Hannover and a high school diploma in Boston. After studying German and English literature as well as history at the University of Tübingen, he worked as a singer and accordion player before studying acting and drama at the Hochschule für Musik und Darstellende Kunst in Stuttgart. He had his stage debut in Stuttgart in 1982, followed by a role in Heidelberg. His breakthrough came as SS officer Kittel in Peter Zadek's legendary production of "Ghetto". He acted in the Hamburger Schauspielhaus productions of "Hamlet", "Lulu" and "Julius Caesar" among others from 1985 to 1995. He played the lead role in "Everyman" at the Salzburg Festival from 1999 to 2001.

He was still studying acting when he made his film debut in Michael Verhoeven's historical drama *The White Rose* (1982). Several years later, he played the RAF Terrorist Andreas Baader in Reinhard Hauff's *Stammheim*, which won the Golden Bear at the 1986 Berlinale. In 1995 he acted in Michael Verhoeven's *My Mother's Courage*.

In the meantime, the successful international actor has 70 film and television roles under his belt. He acted with Harvey Keitel in István Szabó's *Taking Sides* (2001), with George Clooney in Steven Soderbergh's *Solaris* (2003) and with Ulrich Noethen in Rainer Kaufmann's *Runaway Horse* (2006). Among the many films he has starred in are *Bonhoeffer – Agent of Grace* (2000), Costa-Gavra's *Amen* (2002), based on Hochhuth's play "The Deputy", *Seraphine* (2008) and Michael Haneke's award winning drama *The White Ribbon* (2009). Tukur acted in significant German TV Productions as well as in numerous episodes of one of Germany's most popular and long-running shows "Tatort" (Scene of the Crime), since 2010 regularly as detective Felix Murot.

Ulrich Tukur has received numerous awards for his acting throughout his career. In 1986 he was named "Actor of the Year" by the Association of German Stage Critics. In 2000, the Adolf Grimme Prize followed. In 2004, he won the German Television Award for Best Actor for the "Tatort" episode "Das Böse". For his performance in the Academy Award winning picture *The Lives of Others* (2006), he won the German Film Award for Best Supporting Actor. He received the German Film Award and the Bavarian Film Award for Best Actor for his performance in *John Rabe* (2009).

He has also made a name for himself as a musician. His band Ulrich Tukur & Die Rhythmus Boys has made numerous recordings and toured throughout Germany.

He appeared in Helmut Dietl's satire *Zettl* (2012). The road movie *Houston* directed by Bastian Günther, in which Ulrich Tukur stars, will open in German movie theaters in late 2013. He also played Erwin Rommel in "Rommel" (2012), the movie made for TV about the famous WWII general.

### **Samuel Schneider** (Ben)

Samuel Schneider was born in April, 1995. He has taken part regularly in 'special coaching' at the Actors Studio Berlin since he was twelve. His feature film debut was in Matti Geschonneck's *Boxhagener Platz* (2009). He has also acted in various television productions. His first stage performance was in Robert Wilson's Shakespeare production *The Winter's Tale* at the Berliner Ensemble. In 2013 he played an important supporting role in the American feature film *Lost Luck*, directed by Norman Gerard.

### **Hafsia Herzi** (Karima)

Hafsia Herzi, born in Alpes-de-Haute-Provence in 1987, has Tunesian and Algerian roots and acted for the first time at the age of 13 in a French TV movie. In 2005 she was given her first starring role by director Abdellatif Kechiche in his film *The Secret of the Grain*. The picture premiered at the Venice Film Festival in 2007 and Hafsia Herzi won the Marcello Mastroianni Award (Most Promising Actress). In 2008 she was awarded a César (Most Promising Actress) for her performance.

She then moved to Paris and made films with Raja Amari and Alain Guiraudie. Her voice talents were featured in the animated film *The Rabbi's Cat* (*Le Chat Du Rabbin*, 2011) by Joann Sfar and Antoine Delesvaux. In 2011 she was in two films in competition in Cannes, *House of Tolerance* (*L'Apollonide – Souvenirs de la maison close*), directed by Bertram Bonello and in Radu Mihaileanu's *La source de femmes*. She acted in Hiam Abbass' debut feature film *Inheritance* which was released in France in late 2012. She will soon appear in Emmanuelle Bercot's *On my way* (*Elle s'en va*, 2013).

### **Marie-Lou Sellem** (Lea)

Marie-Lou Sellem, born in Göttingen, has dual citizenship, French and German and grew up partly in Rennes.

She studied acting at the Folkwang Hochschule and after graduating had numerous engagements at theaters such as the Düsseldorfer Schauspielhaus, the Theater Basel, the Hamburger Schauspielhaus, the Frankfurter Schauspiel, the Staatstheater Stuttgart, the Neumarkt Theater, the Deutsches Theater Berlin and the Volksbühne am Rosa-Luxemburg-Platz.

Her film debut came in 1989. Christoph Schlingensiefel cast her in his feature film *100 Years of Adolf Hitler*. She had a starring role in Tom Tykwer's *Winter Sleepers* (1996).

In 2001/2002 she acted in three highly acclaimed German films. For her performances in the drama *Getting My Brother Laid*, the coming-of-age picture *No Regrets* and the children's film *Help! I'm a Boy* she was nominated for the German Film Award for Best Supporting Actress.

Other feature films followed: *Marseille* by Angela Schanelec, *Hannah* by Erika von Möller and *Sooner or Later* by Ulrike von Ribbeck as well as Reiner Matsutani's *Gangs* and Franz Müller's *Die Liebe der Kinder*.

Her TV movie debut was in Michael Gutmann's *Nur für eine Nacht* (1996). Numerous roles in TV movies and series followed. In 2005 Marie-Lou Sellem acted with Ulrich Tukur for the first time in Elmar Fischer's *Dornröschen erwacht*.

### **Josef Bierbichler** (Dr. Breuer)

At the age of 23, Josef Bierbichler began his acting studies at the Otto Falckenberg Schule in Munich. It was there, in the mid-seventies, that he began his longstanding collaboration with dramatist and film director Herbert Achternbusch, in whose films *The Atlantic Swimmers* (1975), *Beer Chase* (1977), *Bye-bye Bavaria* (1977) as well as many others he acted. In the years that followed, Bierbichler worked for directors such as Werner Herzog (*Heart of Glass*, 1976; *Woyzeck*, 1979), Michael Haneke (*Code Unknown*, 2000; *The White Ribbon*, 2009), Jan Schütte (*The Farewell*, 2000) and Tom Tykwer (*Deadly Maria*, 1993; *Winter Sleepers*, 1997). For his performance in *Hierankl* (2003), his first film with Hans Steinbichler, Bierbichler was nominated for the German Film Award for Best Actor and won the Adolf Grimme Prize in Gold. In 2007 he won the German Film Award for Best Actor for his performance in Steinbichler's drama *Winter Journey*. He starred in Caroline Link's *A Year Ago In Winter* (2008), for which he was again nominated for the German Film Award.

Throughout his film and television career, Bierbichler has always continued to act for the stage. The German trade magazine "Theater heute" has named him "Actor of the Year" several times and awarded him the Gertrude-Eysoldt-Ring.

He starred in Thomas Roth's *Brand – Eine Totengeschichte* in 2011 and his first novel, "Mittelreich" was published the same year. He recently starred in the widely acclaimed television mini-series "Crime".



## ABOUT THE FILMMAKERS

### **Caroline Link** (Writer-Director)

Caroline Link was born in Bad Nauheim on June 2, 1964. In 1986 she began her studies in documentary filmmaking and television journalism at the University for Television and Film Munich. Her diploma film *Sommertage* was screened at the Hof Film Festival in 1990 and won the Kodak Incentive Award.

On the side, she worked as an assistant director and screenwriter (among others for the TV series “Der Fahnder”). In 1992 she wrote and directed a short for children, “Kalle der Träumer” for German television. The same year she began researching her screenplay *Beyond Silence* about a deaf couple and their musically talented daughter that she directed in 1995. It was nominated for an Oscar® in 1998 as Best Foreign Language Film. It won numerous other awards including the Bavarian Film Award, the German Film Award in Silver, the Gildefilmpreis in Gold as well as Best Film awards at festivals in Tokyo, Chicago, Vancouver and Calcutta.

In 1999, her successful adaptation of Erich Kästner’s novel *Annaliese and Anton* once again showed her flair for poignant stories. The film went on to garner domestic and international awards (including another Bavarian Film Award).

The Oscar® for Best Foreign language Film went to Caroline Link for *Nowhere in Africa* in 2001. The adaptation of Stefanie Zweig’s novel also won four German Film Awards and was an immense commercial success. Each of the three films had between 1.7 and 1.9 million admissions in Germany alone.

Link then shot the drama *A Year Ago in Winter* (2008), based on the novel by Scott Campbell, about a mother and daughter who react in totally different ways to the suicide of their son/brother. Leading Karoline Herfurth won the Bavarian Film Award for Best New Actress and the German Critics Award. Link took the Bavarian Film Prize for Best Director. The film also won the German Film Award in Silver in the Best Feature Film category. Composer Niki Reiser was awarded Best Musical Score. Josef Bierbichler was nominated for Best Actor as was Patricia Rommel for Best Editor.

## **Peter Herrmann** (Producer)

Peter Herrmann, after studying ethnology in Munich, began working as a documentary filmmaker. *Gin For The Gods*, a 90 minute theatrical documentary about voodoo cults in West Africa was his first success and had its world premiere at Filmfest München. In 1994, he co-founded MTM, the Munich film production company that produced the 2003 Oscar® winner *Nowhere in Africa*. Since 2004 he has also been producing for Desert Flower Filmproduktion GmbH and terrania film GmbH.

The first feature film that Herrmann produced was about Fritz Haarmann, one of Germany's most notorious serial killers. The film was *Deathmaker* and the director was Romuald Karmakar. *Deathmaker* (1995) won many prizes, among them German Film Awards for Best Director and Best Film. Its star, Götz George, was awarded the Coppa Volpi at the Venice Film Festival.

Numerous other productions followed, among them Roland Suso Richter's *A Handful of Grass* (2000), which won an award for children's films in Cannes in 2001 and Jan Schütte's *Fat World* (1998) as well as the acclaimed two-part TV movie *The Bubi Scholz Story* (1998).

Before the novel hit the bestseller list, Peter Herrmann bought the rights to *Nowhere in Africa* (2001) and selected Caroline Link to direct it. In addition to German Film Awards in several categories, the film won prizes at festivals around the world and in 2003, the Oscar® for Best Foreign Language Film.

Herrmann returned to Africa for his next project with director Sherry Hormann about Somali supermodel Waris Dirie. The film, *Desert Flower* (2009) was a box office success in Germany and around the world and won a number of awards.

Herrmann teamed up with Sherry Hormann again to make *The Pursuit Of Unhappiness* (2012), a poetic comedy with Johanna Wokalek, Iris Berben, Richy Müller and David Kross, and inspired by the bestseller of the same name by psychologist Paul Watzlawick.

**Caroline Link and Peter Herrmann returned once again to the continent of Africa – ten years after *Nowhere in Africa* – to make EXIT MARRAKECH.**

## **Bella Halben** (Director of Photography)

Bella Halben, born in 1957, completed her training as a commercial photographer in her hometown of Hamburg and also worked as an assistant camerawoman for news coverage, documentaries and advertising. She began working as a freelance camerawoman in 1988. Her first feature film was the comedy *Looosers!* (1995) by Christopher Roth, for whom she also shot *Baader* in 2001.

Director Hans Steinbichler worked with Bella Halben on his modern, widely acclaimed film *Hierankl* (2003) and her impressive cinematography was awarded the prestigious Adolf Grimme Prize. She continued her collaboration with Steinbichler on *Winter Journey* (2005), *Germany 09* (2009) and *Das Blaue vom Himmel* (2011) as well as the episode of the highly regarded TV series "Bella Block: Mord unterm Kreuz" (2006) and "Polizeiruf 110: Denn sie wissen nicht, was sie tun" (2011).

She was Caroline Link's DOP on *A Year Ago In Winter* (2008). Her camera work was nominated for a German Film Award.

### **Susann Bieling** (Production Designer)

Susann Bieling studied Stage and Costume Design at the Academy of Fine Arts in Stuttgart. After graduating, she became the assistant of artist and stage designer Ben Willikens on many of his stage productions. She began working as a production designer for film and television in 1986. She and Caroline Link have a longstanding professional relationship. Susann Bieling was the production designer on *Beyond Silence* (1996), *Annaluise and Anton* (1999), Oscar® winner *Nowhere in Africa* (2001) and *A Year Ago In Winter* (2008).

She has also worked on a variety of successful children's films such as *Bibi Blocksberg* (2002), *The Wild Chicks* (2006) and *Hier kommt Lola!* (2006). She was nominated for a German Film Award for *Die Abenteuer des Huck Finn* (2012) directed by Hermine Huntgeburth.

She was also the production designer on Huntgeburth's adaptation of the bestseller *The White Massai* (2005) as well as the family drama *The Architect* (2008) by Ina Weisse. She also does set and costume design for stage productions, most recently for William Shakespeare's "Romeo and Juliette" at the Landestheater Sachsen-Anhalt.

### **Barbara Grupp** (Costume Designer)

EXIT MARRAKECH is the third film of Caroline Link that Barbara Grupp has been the costume designer on. The others were *Nowhere in Africa* (2001) and *A Year Ago In Winter* (2008).

Barbara Grupp has also been the costume designer on many of Dominik Graf's films. Her filmography includes classics such as *The Red Cockatoo* (2005) as well as his work for television including "Polizeiruf 110: Er sollte tot..." (2006), "Das Gelübde" (2008), the prizewinning series "Im Angesicht des Verbrechens" (2009), "Polizeiruf 110: Cassandras Warnung" (2011), "Das unsichtbare Mädchen" (2011), "Dreileben – Komm mir nicht nach" (2011) and most recently *Die geliebten Schwestern* (2013).

Grupp has also worked often with Hans Steinbichler (*Hierankl*, 2003, *Winter Journey*, 2006) and Alain Gsponer (*Life Actually*, 2006). Among her many television productions are the films of Johannes Fabrick including "Der letzte schöne Tag" (2011).

### **Nannie Gebhardt-Seele** (Makeup)

Nannie Gebhardt-Seele has worked as a freelance makeup artist since 1987. She began working with Caroline Link on *Annaluise and Anton* (1999) and worked with her again on *Nowhere in Africa* (2001) and *A Year Ago In Winter* (2008).

She has worked on altogether more than 50 feature film and TV movie productions including *Wild Chicks in Love* (2007) by Vivian Naefe, Dominik Graf's highly praised crime series "Im Angesicht des Verbrechens" (2009) and *Vincent wants to Sea*, winner of the 2011 German Film Award.