

EDIN  
HASANOVIC

JULIA  
BRENDLER



# SHIFTING THE BLAME

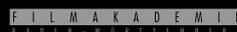


A FILM BY  
LARS-GUNNAR LOTZ

A FFL-FILM- UND FERNSEH-LABOR PRODUCTION IN CO-PRODUCTION WITH SWR, ARTE AND FILMAKADEMIE BADEN-WÜRTTEMBERG FUNDED BY MFG FILMFÖRDERUNG BADEN-WÜRTTEMBERG  
STARRING EDIN HASANOVIC JULIA BRENDLER MARC BEN PUCH PIT BUKOWSKI NATALIA RUDZIEWICZ CASTING DIRECTOR KAREN WENDLAND PRODUCTION MANAGER DARKO LOVRINIC MAKE-UP ARTIST NICOLE DUROVIC  
COSTUME DESIGN TANJA GIERICH ULÉ BARCELOS PRODUCTION DESIGN INA KÜFNER SOUND DESIGN AND MIX CHRISTIAN HECK MUSIC BY SEA + AIR EDITED BY JULIA BÖHM DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY JAN PRAHL BVK EDITORIAL DEPARTMENT BRIGITTE DITHARD (SWR)  
NADJA DUMOUCHEL (ARTE) CO-PRODUCER FRANZISKA SPECHT SEBASTIAN SAWETZKI MANUEL CHALLAL PRODUCER MATTHIAS DRESCHER PHILIPP KNAUSS SCREENPLAY BY ANNA MARIA PRÄDLER DIRECTED BY LARS-GUNNAR LOTZ



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PRODUCTION COMPANY



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OFFICIAL WEBSITE

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PLOT SUMMARY

Ben is given the unique chance of a new beginning in the idyllic „Waldhaus“. As one of seven juvenile offenders he should adopt social skills and experience security in a family-like community. But when he meets his housemother Eva, he is shocked: She is one of his victims. His brutal assault on her was never resolved. Ben does his best not to attract attention, but Eva soon starts to suspect something.



SYNOPSIS

Ben has gone down the wrong path. He repeatedly attacks people, robs them and doesn’t stop at physical violence. His deeds soon bear consequences: Ben lands in juvenile prison. But he shows no remorse.

Social worker Niklas offers him the chance of a fresh start. Ben must prove himself outside the prison walls. He turns the offer down fiercely, but then consents. Ben becomes the freshman in the „Waldhaus“. There are neither fences nor walls, but a strict daily routine, never ending rules and evaluations that enable a rise in hierarchy. His roommate Tobi is assigned to help him with this, who teaches and supervises him. Ben rebels in the familiar community, disregards rules and stirs up the group. When one member of the group is sent back to prison after an aggressive outbreak, Ben realises that he has to watch out. He definitely doesn’t want to return to prison.

Ben begins to engage in the project, meets intern Mariana and enters the community step by step. But when Niklas’ wife Eva returns from a retreat, he is shocked. She is a former victim of his assaults, the one that was never resolved. A game of hide and seek starts for him, where he is permanently on the edge of being found out by Eva. For Eva, every day becomes a harder challenge. The more she tries to forget the past, the more she is overwhelmed by it. Niklas’ worry for his wife grows, while Ben fights to keep his secret safe. He learns how troublesome the consequences of his assault are for Eva. This change catches Tobi’s attention and he grows suspicious. He remains silent though, and covers for Ben.

But then Eva’s suspicion is aroused. When this is confirmed, Ben’s situation seems hopeless. For him as for Eva, a world falls apart. Ben experiences the pain of guilt for the first time, a conscience, and Eva feels the weakness of a victim that wants to forgive but cannot. What she held to be true suddenly loses its value. That they live together evolves into a crucial test and nobody knows how it will end.

INTERVIEW WITH LARS-GUNNAR LOTZ, DIRECTOR

**What is the topic of your film and your approach to it?**

In the beginning there was only an idea, to do something on social workers. To begin with, that sounds quite boring. But many of my friends work in social sector and their stories always sounded exciting to me. I think their work hardly finds attention in films. Besides, I've been involved in voluntary youth work for many years myself.

My author Anna Maria Praßler and I took the time to find a special and gripping approach. By chance we found the Seehaus Leonberg, an institution where inmates could serve their sentence outside prison walls and which is unique of its kind. Here, young offenders often experience family life for the first time, by living together with the social workers and their families. During my research, my respect grew for these young men who took part in this strict program and embraced this second chance to start a new life. The staff also impressed me, their commitment often goes beyond the professional involvement.

We used this as a starting point to construct the story of juvenile offender Ben, who surprisingly meets his victim Eva in form of his social worker. Ben finds himself against his will and with this also what we call a conscience.

It was my mission not to tell of hopeless cases and violent „animals“, as they're often branded. I wanted to show what it means when you stand by them and confront them with their crimes. I wanted to tell a story that doesn't give these boys up, but believes in them.

I also found it interesting, to tell of a character such as Eva's, who becomes a victim to those she wanted to work with, and therefore starts to question her ideals. Through this situation she is forced to deal with her own issues.

**Does the Waldhaus in the film work in the same way the institution does in reality?**

For the most part, yes. Seehaus Leonberg has many more rules and weekly events. Everything is more complex. But we needed to focus of course, on meaningful rituals like giving pointers in the group and the hot chair.

**Isn't it very dangerous to live together with convicts?**

Of course, this is certainly a question you ask yourself! In Seehaus Leonberg nothing has happened so far. The boys are treated with respect, which they offer in return. They don't just come there, but must apply and show good will to change. And as soon as there is even a hint of violence, back they go to prison. And nobody wants to go there again. And they are aware of their unique chance.

**How should they be treated, in your opinion?**

Recidivism is very high in juvenile delinquents. So you have to think about alternatives. Young people often fall deeper into crime when they land in prison. This is why I advocate more sentences to be carried out outside of prison. Of course you need many sponsors, political support and a lot of volunteer staff. In the end, chances are higher that young people find back to a normal life because much more is required of them and encouraged.

**How was working with the actors?**

This was my first feature film and I was very happy to work with the casting director Karen Wendland. This job is easily overlooked. The casting of Ben was not easy. There is a lot of young talent around, but we were looking for someone who believably had the toughness of a violent criminal as well as the inner torment and development to an empathetic boy. With Edin Hasanovic we were definitely lucky because he had such a powerful presence and at the same time played in a very tender and graceful way. Julia Brendler was my first choice for Eva, because she gave the social worker such a wonderful warmth and depth. Working with both, but also with the rest of the ensemble was delightful.



VITA LARS-GUNNAR LOTZ

Lars-Gunnar Lotz was born in Bad Ischl, Austria, in 1982. He grew up near Cologne and first studied Visual Communication at the ART University in Kassel after gaining hands on experience in the filmbusiness. In 2005 he attended the Film Academy Baden-Württemberg to study directing. His first shortfilm **LISANNE** won several international awards. In 2007, he took part in a 3-month exchange program of the Film University LA FEMIS in Paris. Furthermore in 2009 he won a scholarship for the HOLLYWOOD MASTERCLASS at UCLA. His feature film **FOR MIRIAM** (60 min) was shown in 2009 at the BERLINALE in the Section PERSPECTIVE GERMAN CINEMA. The film won an award for BEST ACTRESS. Several AWARDS on international festivals followed.

**SHIFTING THE BLAME** (orig. **SCHULD SIND IMMER DIE ANDEREN**) is his first long feature film, with whom he graduated from film school.

FILMOGRAPHY

2012	<b>SHIFTING THE BLAME</b>	feature film
2010	<b>LIFE IS A JOURNEY</b>	documentary
2009	<b>FOR MIRIAM</b> ( <a href="http://www.miriam-film.de">www.miriam-film.de</a> )	middle length feature film

SELECTION OF AWARDS:  
 59th Berlinale - German Cinema: Best Actress (Franziska Petri)  
 11th Aubagne International Film Festival: Best Actress (Franziska Petri) & Best Film  
 Internacional de Mediométrajes: Best Actress (Franziska Petri)  
 15th Filmschau Baden-Württemberg: Best short Film

2005	<b>LISANNE</b> ( <a href="http://www.lisanne-derfilm.de">www.lisanne-derfilm.de</a> )	short feature film
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SELECTION OF AWARDS:  
 36th Giffoni Film Festival: Best Short Film  
 17th Goldener Spatz: Best Short Film  
 1st International Youth Film Festival Yerevan: Best Short Film



EDIN HASANOVIC

Edin Hasanovic became known to the viewing audience through his role as Kosovo refugee Enes in the series KRIMINALDAUERDIENST (crime series) and through various appearances in e.g. TATORT or POLIZEIRUF 110. SHIFTING THE BLAME (orig. SCHULD SIND IMMER DIE ANDEREN) is his first leading role in a motion picture.



JULIA BRENDLER

Julia Brendler was discovered at age 14 for Defa-Film VERBOTENE LIEBE and was awarded the Hessian Film Prize. She has since worked for television as for cinema. Among her many films are U.F.O., PHANTOMSCHMERZ and DOLPHINS, for which she was awarded at Brooklyn Film Festival.



MARC BEN PUCH

Next to commitments at the German National Theatre Weimar and at the Staatsschauspiel Dresden (theatre) he appeared in many television series like GSG9, SOKO LEIPZIG or DER KRIMINALIST (all crime series). A broader audience knows him by his part as pathologist Dr. Gummersbach in the series DOCTORS DIARY.



PIT BUKOWSKI

Pit Bukowski belongs to the most sought after upcoming talents, for television as for cinema. He appeared in series like SOKO LEIPZIG, NOTRUF HAFENKANTE and GROßSTADTREVIER as well as films like DORFPUNKS.



NATALIA RUDZIEWICZ

Natalia Rudziewicz started working for television during her training. Next to numerous television series she appeared in the television film KEHRTWENDE.

ADDITIONAL ROLES:

- |            |                  |                      |                 |
|------------|------------------|----------------------|-----------------|
| Emre.....  | Aram Arami       | Ausbilder Mike ..... | Levi Harrison   |
| Samir..... | Kais Setti       | Sarah.....           | Julianna Götz   |
| Alex.....  | Oliver Konietzny | Steffen.....         | Alexander Becht |

ADDITIONAL CAST:

Benjamin Erdmann, Joachim Förster, Hassan Charour, Attila Borlan



ANNA-MARIA PRAßLER (SCREENPLAY)

Anna Maria Praßler, born 1983 in Lauingen, completed her film and theatre - as well as psychology studies - in Berlin, Los Angeles and Bologna. After her master's degree with the topic on narration and aesthetics in recent Hollywood films she completed her two-year graduate studies in Script Writing at the Film Academy Baden-Württemberg. During this time, several short and middle length films were produced after her stories. Next to scripts she also writes prose and was nominated at the Ingeborg-Bachmann-Prize for her short story DAS ANDERE in 2011 in Klagenfurt. SHIFTING THE BLAME (orig. SCHULD SIND IMMER DIE ANDEREN) is the screen adaptation of her first full length script. Anna Maria Praßler lives in Berlin.



JAN PRAHL (DOP)

After his high school graduation Jan Prahl worked as freelance Grip and ENG camera operator for news agencies. This was followed by a vocational training in communication for audio visual media as well as work experience in the copying firm Atlantik (Cinopost) and Studio Hamburg. From 2003 to 2007 Jan Prahl was Material Assistant and First Camera Assistant for various local and international films. In 2007 he studied at the Film Academy Baden-Württemberg and received his diploma in Image Composition/Cinematography for SHIFTING THE BLAME (orig. SCHULD SIND IMMER DIE ANDEREN).



JULIA BÖHM (EDITOR)

Julia Böhm studied Montage/Editing at the Film Academy and is editor for feature film, documentary and television journals. In 2007 she attended the Masterclass „The Hollywood Perspective“ at the UCLA in Los Angeles. With the films HERZHAFT (Director: Martin Busker) and SOY LIBRE (Director: Andrea Roggon) she was represented at the MAX OPHÜLS PRIZE. Her diploma film FÜR MIRIAM was her first collaboration with director Lars-Gunnar Lotz and was presented in the section PERSPEKTIVE DEUTSCHES KINO at the Berlinale.



SEA + AIR (MUSIC)

Daniel Benjamin toured through 35 countries, won over ten music prizes and sold tent-thousands of CDs. He was worked together with record label Haldern Pop Recordings since 2006. Many albums originated in this time like THERE'S A MONSTER UNDER YOUR DEATHBED. In 2004 he married his creative partner of many years, the greek artist Eleni Zafiriadou. Under the name of SEA + AIR they recorded their debut album MY HEART'S SICK CHORD in 2011. He is currently working on the film music for the series BLOCH, directed by Michael Verhoeven.

MATTHIAS DRESCHER (PRODUCER)

Matthias Drescher has worked as a producer for various German television production companies in Cologne and Munich (Lunet Entertainment, Pacific Productions and others) as editor for the fiction department at the children's tv-station KI.KA in Erfurt. He supervised among others the animation series CHI-RHO - THE SECRET (26 episodes, each 23 minutes, broadcasted 2010). Beforehand he was producer for the ProSieben prime time series SEX AND MORE (12 episodes, each 45 minutes, broadcasted 2007). He completed his studies with a diploma in series production at the Film Academy Ludwigsburg in August 2004. Before and during his studies he worked for the SWR in Stuttgart and the MDR in Halle/Saale as producer for various radio stations. Matthias Drescher is CEO of the FFL together with Philipp Knauss.



PHILIPP KNAUSS (PRODUCER)

In 2000 the trained publisher studied Production (Creative Producing, International Producing) at the Film Academy Baden-Württemberg and was scholar of the VFF in 2002. After his diploma in 2004 he worked in Cologne as Junior Producer on German television and cinema scripts at Pictorion Pictures as well as Visual Effects Producer and lastly as Coordinator for local and international Coproductions at Pictorion Das Werk. Philipp Knauss is CEO of the FFL together with Matthias Drescher.



FRANZISKA SPECHT (CO-PRODUCER)

Since the Film- und Fernseh-Labor Ludwigsburg was founded, Franziska Specht has worked for the FFL als Producer. In 2010 she graduated from her studies in Production (specialized in Series Producing) at the Film Academy Baden-Württemberg. During her studies she worked for various film and television production companies. She completed her vocational training in Media Communications at the WDR (German Television). From 2006 to 2007 she was a scholar of the VFF, participated in the four-month „Fiction Program 35“ at the Fémis in Paris and received a scholarship for the Masterclass Hollywood Workshop at the UCLA.



SEBASTIAN SAWETZKI (CO-PRODUCER)

Sebastian Sawetzki has worked on 150 projects from 2002 until 2006 as producer in advertisement, documentary, image film and reporting. He studied Production from 2006 to 2011 at the Film Academy Baden-Württemberg. He was nominated in 2010 for the Student Oscar and won a scholarship for the Hollywood Masterclass at the UCLA. 2012 he founded his own production company. With SHIFTING THE BLAME he graduates from his studies at the Film Academy.



MANUEL CHALLAL (CO-PRODUCER)

Manuel Challal studied Production until 2011 at the Film Academy Baden-Württemberg and specialized in International Producing. He took part in the international Animation Production Training by the Funding Program MEDIA and worked for the production company Studio Film Bilder as PR and Marketing Manager. He is currently working on various projects as Creative Producer. With SHIFTING THE BLAME Manuel Challal graduates from his studies at the Film Academy.





FESTIVALS & AWARDS

**Montreal World Film Festival 2012**  
FIRST FILMS WORLD COMPETITION

**WINNER**  
**International Filmfest Emden-Norderney 2012**  
BERNHARD WICKI AWARD  
NDR YOUNG DIRECTORS AWARD  
DGB TRADE UNION AWARD

**WINNER**  
**Studio Hamburg Next Generation Award 2012**  
BEST DIRECTOR

**WINNER**  
**Festival of German Films Ludwigshafen 2012**  
AUDIENCE AWARD

**Filmfestival Max Ophüls Preis 2012**  
COMPETITION

KEY FACTS

**Production:** FFL Film-und Fernseh-Labor Ludwigsburg GmbH & Co. KG

**Editorial Department:** Brigitte Dithard, SWR  
Nadja Dumouchel, arte

**Film Funding:** MFG Filmförderung Baden-Württemberg

**Script Developing:** November 2009 – November 2010

**Casting:** November 2010 – January 2011

**Shooting Period:** February – March 2011 Münsingen, Wiesloch, Stuttgart (Baden-Württemberg)

**Days of Shooting:** 29

**Length:** 93 Minutes

**Shot on:** RED

**Format:** 2,4:1 Cinemascope

**Sound:** 5.1 Surround

**Exhibition Format:** DCP

<b>Director</b> .....	Lars-Gunnar Lotz	<b>Casting Director</b> .....	Karen Wendland
<b>Screenplay</b> .....	Anna Maria Praßler	<b>Production Design</b> .....	Ina Kүfner
<b>Producer</b> .....	Matthias Drescher Philipp Knauss	<b>Costume Design</b> .....	Tanja Gierich Ulé Barcelos
<b>Co-Producer</b> .....	Franziska Specht Sebastian Sawetzki Manuel Challal	<b>Make-Up Artist</b> .....	Nicole Durovic
<b>Director of Photography</b> ...	Jan Prahl, bvk	<b>Music</b> .....	Sea + Air
<b>Editing</b> .....	Julia Böhm	<b>Sound Design &amp; Mix</b> .....	Christian Heck
		<b>Production Manager</b> .....	Darko Lovrinic

OFFICIAL WEBSITE

[www.schuld-film.de](http://www.schuld-film.de)

# HOUSE RULES

*WE DO NOT HARM ANYONE –  
NEITHER THROUGH WORDS OR DEEDS.*

*WE RESPECT OURSELVES AND EVERYONE ELSE.*

*WE RESPECT OUR POSSESSIONS,  
THAT OF OTHERS AND OF THE WALDHAUS.*

*WE ENGAGE ACTIVELY AND POSITIVELY  
IN THE WALDHAUS AND IN THE GROUP PROCESS.*

*WE TAKE ON RESPONSIBILITY FOR  
OURSELVES, OTHERS AND THE WALDHAUS.*

*WE WILL NOT DO ANYTHING THAT SHEDS  
THE WRONG LIGHT ON US, OTHERS OR THE WALDHAUS.*

*WE TREAT OTHERS POLITELY AND WITH RESPECT.*

*WE DON'T USE ILLEGAL DRUGS, OR ACCEPT  
OTHER DRUGS OR PASS THEM ON.*

*WE KEEP TO THE STANDARDS AND RULES THAT HAVE  
BEEN AGREED ON IN THE WALDHAUS.*

*WE CONFRONT TO HELP, NOT TO HURT.*

*WE ACCEPT CONFRONTATION AND CRITICISM.*

*WE DON'T LEAVE THE PREMISES OF THE WALDHAUS  
WITHOUT THE EXPLICIT PERMISSION OF THE STAFF.*

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DATE

\_\_\_\_\_  
SIGNATURE