

**PICTURE TREE INTERNATIONAL presents:**



## **A HITMAN'S SOLITUDE BEFORE THE SHOT**

A feature film  
by  
Florian Mischa Böder

Production HUPE Film- und Fernsehproduktion  
in co-production with  
ZDF – Das Kleine Fernsehspiel  
and  
in co-operation with  
Arte

With funding from

**Film und Medien  
Stiftung NRW**

DEUTSCHER  
FILMFÖRDERFONDS

**FFA**  
Filmförderungsanstalt German Federal Film Board

Distributed by



**CAMINO**  
FILMVERLEIH

## Project Data

Title: The Killer's Solitude before the Shot  
Genre: Offbeat comedy  
Length: Roughly 90 min.

Shooting period: 22 October to 4 December 2013  
Location: Cologne and environs, Belgium

Final format: DCP (digital cinema format)  
Completion: Fall 2014

Broadcaster: ZDF, Arte  
Support from: NRW Film Commission, DFFF (FFA Reference Funds)  
Distribution: Camino Filmverleih GmbH  
Herdweg 27  
70174 Stuttgart  
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World distribution: Picture Tree International GmbH  
Zur Börse 12  
10247 Berlin  
pti@picturetree-international.com

Director: Florian Mischa Böder  
Screenplay: Clemente Fernandez-Gil  
Florian Mischa Böder

Cinematographer: Matteo Cocco  
Production design: Cora Pratz  
Costumes: Peri de Braganca  
Music: Tobias Wagner, Arne Schumann, Josef Bach

Production Management: Andreas Jupe

Actors: Benno Fürmann  
Mavie Hörbiger  
and Wolf Roth as General Lieutenant VanHaarten

Production: HUPE Film- und Fernsehproduktion  
Brauer Roelly Winker GbR  
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## SHORT DESCRIPTION

Koralnik has a dream job as a hitman for a secret EU programme.

Everything would be perfect, except for the fact that he's been waiting to get his first assignment for eight years. Frustrated and bored out of his skull, Koralnik is dying for a chance to finally prove himself. Then, one day, after a quirky woman named Rosa rams her car into his, our hitman-in-crisis decides to put an end to the droning monotony of his daily existence and asks Rosa if she wants to join him for a glass of wine. However, as fate would have it, that very evening he's finally given his first job. Koralnik sets off – not entirely sober and with Rosa in tow – on an absurd and comedic odyssey where everything that can go wrong does.

THE KILLER'S SOLITUDE BEFORE THE SHOT tells the story of two lovable, tragic and comic antiheroes on an absurd and doomed journey. The film explores the impossibility of being happy when the life one leads is a scam – and of the freedom that comes when one has the courage to admit the lie.

## SYNOPSIS

Koralnik is an overly ambitious man with a dream job as a contract killer for a secret EU programme! But there's a catch: it's been eight years since he finished his training and he still hasn't been given one single assignment.

Frustrated and bored out of his mind, he lives his life according to the strict rules of the programme – no social contact and permanently undercover. Caught in a bleak holding pattern, all he does is wait for his phone to ring and the first assignment to come through. Koralnik, however, remains committed to never giving up hope.

One day, shy and quirky Rosa crashes into Koralnik's car – and his life. Before he knows it, the two have a dinner date to discuss the details of the crash. For Koralnik, it's the first opportunity he's had in years to exchange the droning monotony of his daily life for one night of socialising.

Rosa, however, is far from the innocent flower she claims to be. Her aim that evening is to use a treacherous scheme to relieve Koralnik of €30,000. But her plan to make off with Koralnik's money – along with Koralnik's own attempt to have a "normal" evening for once in his life – is thwarted abruptly when Koralnik's mobile rings for the very first time with the assignment he's been waiting eight years for.

Koralnik sets out in haste with Rosa in tow on a chaotic night-time odyssey where nothing goes according to plan! Pretty soon, they realise that neither one of them is what they claimed to be. In the course of the evening, Koralnik tries to blame Rosa for his own failure, only to face the ultimate and painful reality that he is far from the superhuman top agent he thought he was. It becomes clear to Rosa, too, that her fake sob story will not get her far with Koralnik. As they slowly unravel each other's secrets, our two antiheroes move from mutual hatred to honest appreciation.

When Koralnik's target turns out to be one of his own colleagues, his iron-clad approach to life is thrown into deep turmoil. He is forced to confront the dilemma of either protecting his secret programme or putting an end to his unfulfilling life as a hitman. Ultimately, it's Rosa – the biggest liar of them all – who forces Koralnik to face up to the scam that is his life.

## Lead Actors

Role: KORALNIK  
**Benno Fürmann**



Role: ROSA  
**Mavie Hörbiger**



Role: Van Haarten  
**Wolf Roth**



## DIRECTOR FLORIAN MISCHA BÖDER ON HIS FILM

Hard-boiled, unscrupulous and invincible – a superhuman fighting machine in all respects: this is the typical character in a traditional action-packed, secret-agent film. But what happens when these parameters are reversed? What kind of film do you get when you give a character like this real human attributes, weaknesses, unfulfilled longings and even fears? What do we discover when we take a comedic look behind the often too cool exterior of these strong characters. What happens when we go to that place inside a character where they are unsure, where they have quirks, make mistakes and have to deal – like we all do – with the small and everyday challenges of life?

Films about hitmen and contract killers tend to hide any insights into human weaknesses. And that's probably the reason why this is exactly what interests me the most about *THE KILLER'S SOLITUDE BEFORE THE SHOT*: the inflated character of the killer-for-hire clashes with our all-too-real and boring world and is forced to realise that he's a human being just like the rest of us.

This premise contains a tremendous amount of tragicomic potential, and I really wanted to draw as much from that as possible so as to give the film its own unique humour. I wanted to create a type of offbeat comedy that goes beyond any exaggerated slapstick, one that's more ironic and dry and thus feeds in a more subtle way on the break between reality and wishful thinking – and the absurdities arising from that break. It's quite situational and sometimes even bizarre, but it's nevertheless always grounded in the handling of cinematic exaggerations. We let the real be real, and then we break with it in a funny way by means of the characters' attitudes (and the attitude of the film itself). The result is a tragic hero who adds to the humour of the story via a type of melancholy that is rather unusual for a killer. For me, this is exactly what makes *THE KILLER'S SOLITUDE BEFORE THE SHOT* a traditional tragicomedy. I would, however, give it the additional moniker of "offbeat", just to highlight the unique nature of the humour that goes beyond the gag-based jokes.



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Other films that also deal in a tragicomic way with the human weaknesses of their characters (who are usually portrayed in an excessive manner) and which are great examples of this type of humour and tone are "FARGO" and "IN BRUGES", and also the series of Aki Kaurismäki films. These films feature characters that have a hard exterior and a soft core. In my previous film projects, I've always been interested in precisely the dichotomy personified by tough guys with a soft side.

THE KILLER'S SOLITUDE BEFORE THE SHOT deals with the conflict between the "pose" and the "reality" not only in the tone and humour of the film, but also in terms of its theme, i.e. the difference between what we pretend to be and what we really are.

Koralnik, the "hero" of the story, comes to a point in his life where he is forced to change his own image. For years, he's lived his life thinking he was the greatest killer of all time, a type of real-life James Bond. He created a life filled with adrenalin, danger and maximum performance. Even though none of this has come to pass in eight years and he hasn't had one single assignment, Koralnik still clings with all of his might to the delusion of being a top agent. His biggest fear – the insight that he might possibly be a totally normal person – keeps a firm grip on him, so he is forced to suppress all of his doubts as best he can.

In my opinion, the inner conflict that Koralnik experiences here is universal. Each one of us is familiar with those doubts in the back of our minds that question whether the lives we lead – and the way we lead our lives – is right or not: Are we in the right relationship? Are we just fooling ourselves? Are we actually living the fulfilled lives we always wanted? But how often do we really take the time to reflect on these existential doubts, to think about our situation in a sober manner and then have the strength to actually make radical changes? As difficult as it is to break out of your own comfort zone, it's also important. If you repress your doubts for too long, your life will get completely bent out of shape.

And, in fact, Koralnik's life shows definite signs of crumbling, and you just want to yell at him: "Koralnik! Make some changes, finally! You can't go on like this!" But he's created a bubble to live in – one in which he has just enough air to survive, even though he's lost all touch with reality. That is, of course, until the bubble bursts and his lazy self-image is put to the test and falls apart like a house of cards. As painful as this moment is for Koralnik, it's also very liberating because only now does he discover a brand new path.

In this sense, I think of THE KILLER'S SOLITUDE BEFORE THE SHOT as the absurd and comical odyssey of a professional hitman going through a life crisis. It's the story of how his first and only assignment goes horribly wrong; it's about the lies we all tell ourselves and about the power of truth. Ultimately, it's also a very simple and honest call on people to stop hiding, to go out and grab life by the horns, right here and right now, and be as carefree as possible! We are the makers of our own personal prisons ... and Koralnik needs to free himself from his.

## Team



### **Florian Mischa Böder (Author and Director)**

Born 1974 in Hannover | Florian grew up in Germany and the USA | From 1997 to 2002, he studied at Cologne's Academy of Media Arts| While still at university, he worked as a director for "Die Harald-Schmidt-Show" and "Sendung mit der Maus" | He is currently a freelance author and director for film, TV and theatre living in Cologne and Vienna.

### **Clemente Fernandez-Gil (Author)**

Clemente was born in Düsseldorf in 1968. After studying German and history from 1989-91, he attended acting school. Since 1989, he's worked as an actor, author and playwright at several theatres, including Theater der Klänge Düsseldorf, Düsseldorfer Schauspielhaus, Stadttheater Heidelberg, Bauhaus-Bühne Dessau, Theater im Depot Dortmund and Theater Kohlenpott Herne. He also studied screenwriting at the ifs internationale filmschule in Cologne from 2004 to 2007.



### **Matteo Cocco (Cinematographer)**



Matteo was born in 1985 in Italy and studied cinematography at the Academy of Film and Television in Cinecittà, Rome. Parallel to that, he worked as a camera assistant for various Italian and international film productions.

Matteo moved to Germany in 2007 and has been working as a freelance cameraman there ever since. He shot a feature film with director Philip Gröning in 2010, and his films have been shown at several German and international festivals. In 2010, he was nominated for a German Cinematography Award, and in October 2011, he won first prize at the Golden Eye Camera Festival for the short film "Zima".



## HUPE Film

HUPE Film- und Fernsehproduktion was founded in April 2008 by Andreas Brauer, Martin Roelly and Erik Winker. The HUPE team is drawn from various fields of directing and production, and their goal is to create modern and unusual feature and documentary films together with young directors. HUPE Film sees itself as a platform for creatives who have lots of energy and strong ideas, and it offers a highly professional network for effective film and television work.

### Project (a selection)

*Der große Demokrator.* Documentary by Rami Hamze. 82 min.  
A co-production with WDR. Funded by the NRW Film Commission.  
Premiere at the Kassel Documentary Film Festival 2013.

*Die mit dem Bauch tanzen (Dancing with Bellies).* Documentary by Carolin Genreith. 80 min.  
On behalf of WDR. Funded by the NRW Film Commission.  
Premiere at the Berlinale 2013. Release date: June 20, 2013 (Distributor: Zorro Film)

*Frohes Schaffen (Keep Up the Good Work).* Docu-fiction film by Konstantin Faigle. 98 min.  
A co-production with ZDF/Das Kleine Fernsehspiel.  
Production funded by the NRW Film Commission, the FFA and the DFFF.  
Release date: May 2, 2013 (Distributor: W-film).  
Kassel Documentary Film Fest 2012, Competition Max Ophüls Award 2013

*Work Hard Play Hard.* Documentary by Carmen Losmann. 90 min.  
A co-production with ZDF in co-operation with ARTE.  
Production funded by the NRW Film Commission.  
Premiere in international competition at DOK Leipzig 2011: FIPRESCI Award, Preis der Ökumenischen Jury, Healthy Workplaces Film Award.  
Grimme Award 2014. Goldener Schlüssel, Kassel Documentary Film Fest 2011.  
Other festivals: Doc Edge New Zealand, Planete Doc Review Warsaw, Int. Film Festival Jerusalem, Indie Lisboa, It's All True Sao Paulo, German Film Festival Ludwigshafen, CPH:DOK Copenhagen, Visions Du Réel Nyon, Int. Documentary Film Festival, Jihlava, and many more.  
Release date: April 12, 2012 (Distributor: Film Kino Text), "Special Merit" rating

*Eine Insel namens Udo.* Feature film by Markus Sehr. 81 min.  
In co-production with Little Shark Entertainment and WDR/ARTE.  
Production funded by the NRW Film Commission, the FFA and the DFFF.  
Ernst Lubitsch Award 2012 for Fritzi Haberlandt.  
Release date: June 16, 2011 (Distributor: X-Verleih)

*Der Herzerlfresser.* Short feature by Anna Schwingenschuh. 25 min.



Production funded by NRW Film Commission and Cinestyria Graz.  
Premiere at the Diagonale 2010.

*More Jesus.* Documentary by Hendrik Lietmann and Matthias Tränkle. 90 min.  
In co-production with WDR. Production funded by NRW Film Commission. Kassel  
Documentary Film Fest 2012

## **In Production**

*Die Einsamkeit des Killers vor dem Schuss (The Killer's Solitude Before the Shot).*  
Feature film by Florian Mischa Böder. 90 min  
In co-production with ZDF/Das Kleine Fernsehspiel  
Script development and production funded by the NRW Film Commission.

*15 Corners of the World.* Documentary by Zuzanna Solakiewicz. 80 min.  
In co-production with Endorfina Studio, Warsaw.  
Production funded by the Polish Film Institute and the NRW Film Commission.

*Bruderliebe.* Documentary by Julia Horn. 90 min.  
In co-production with ZDF and in co-operation with ARTE.  
Production funded by NRW Film Commission and Saarland Medien.

*Haymatloz – Exil in der Türkei.* Documentary by Eren Önsöz. 90 min  
In co-production with Bulut Film, Istanbul  
Production development and production funded by the NRW Film Commission

## **In Development**

*P2P.* Feature film by Jovan Arsenic. 90 min.  
In co-production with 23/5 Filmproduktion, Berlin  
Script development funded by the BKM and Medienboard Berlin-Brandenburg,  
Production development support from the NRW Film Commission

*Krause hat Angst.* Feature film. 90 min. Screenplay: Frank Maria Reifenberg  
Script development funded by the NRW Film Commission

*Kurt und Inge.* Feature film by Irene Graef. 90 min.  
Script development funded by the NRW Film Commission

## **Team HUPE Film**

### **Erik Winker**

Erik was born in 1973 in Stuttgart. He completed a Master of Arts in communications, film and education, and TV production in Münster, Berlin and Manchester. He also received a degree in film direction from the Academy of Media Arts Cologne in 2003.

During his university studies, he worked regularly as an assistant director for documentaries, e.g., for Andres Veiel ("Addicted to Acting") and Solveig Klassen ("Out of Tibet"). He also did additional media-educational work for children's film festivals and school-related institutions. From 2003 to 2007, he worked as a documentary film producer at LICHTBLICK Film in Cologne. Ever since, he's been active as a freelance director and producer. In 2008/2009, he worked as a lecturer at the Academy of Media Arts in Cologne and as a lecturer in documentary film at the University of Salzburg and the fhs University of Applied Sciences in Salzburg.

### **Martin Roelly**

Martin was born in Kassel in 1977. From 1999 to 2004, he studied at the Academy of Media Arts in Cologne. His graduating project was the children's short film "Böse". Following that, he worked as a freelance production manager for several short feature film projects and as a producer of music videos and image films. Since October 2007, he has been the artistic director at the Odeon Lichtspieltheater GmbH in Cologne.

### **Andreas Brauer**

Andreas was born in Trier in 1973. After completing his *Abitur* (A levels) and *Zivildienst* (Civilian Service) he studied German literature in Bonn where he received his Master of Arts in 2002. In 2003, he completed IHK-certified training as an assistant director at the Kölner Filmhaus.

During his studies, Andreas was an assistant at the Centre for Communication and Media Research in Bonn. Between 2003 and 2009, he worked as an assistant director on several TV films, TV series and feature films, including "Heile Welt", "Tschuschen:power" and "Hinter den Gedanken".