



MADMAN



THE ZONE OF INTEREST

DIRECTED BY JONATHAN GLAZER

RUNNING TIME 106 Mins

RATED TBC

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SHORT SYNOPSIS

The commandant of Auschwitz, Rudolf Höss, and his wife Hedwig, strive to build a dream life for their family in a house and garden next to the camp.

PRODUCTION NOTES

One of the peripheral victims of atrocity can be language itself, twisted, stripped and reconstituted into bloodless, sterilized euphemism. While less (in)famous than “the final solution,” the chilling designation “the zone of interest”—*interessengebiet* in German—used by the Nazi SS to describe the 40-squarekilometer area immediately surrounding the Auschwitz concentration camp complex on the outskirts of Oświęcim, Poland—speaks to the same determinedly precise and disquieting sense of obfuscation.

In 2014, Martin Amis used the phrase as the title for a grimly picaresque novel that switches perspectives between collaborators, perpetrators, and inmates; in it, one character describes the ‘zone’ as being akin to a mirror revealing one’s true face. In his long-gestating cinematic adaptation, Jonathan Glazer proves less interested in reflection than in repression. *THE ZONE OF INTEREST* is a movie about characters who steadfastly refuse to see themselves: recognition and acknowledgement could easily drive them mad.

Glazer is one of contemporary cinema’s most rigorous formalists, and—diverting from Amis—he steadfastly keeps his own interest on the civilian side of the Auschwitz partition, immersing the audience in the sunny, well-manicured denial of the prosperous, upwardly mobile Höss family, whose patriarch, Rudolf (Christian Friedel) is the camp’s commandant. The Höss’ lavishly subsidized tenancy in a pristine, two-story stucco villa juxtaposes a bucolic Aryan fantasy with the nightmarish realities on which it has (literally) been built.

Tomorrow belongs to them: chatting with her visiting, elderly mother about her recent landscaping efforts, Rudolf’s wife Hedwig (Sandra Hüller) explains that she’s planning to cover the exposed brick around the house’s sprawling backyard with ivy, which in time will grow to obscure the boundaries entirely. “The Jews are over the wall,” she adds, a truth lined with the most monstrous kind of denial. In this ersatz Eden, the Höss’ strive for normality while the camp billows clouds of death—what Elie Wiesel called “wreaths of smoke beneath a silent blue sky.”

Given Glazer’s long-standing facility for stark, terrifying visuals— on display most recently in his Goya-esque short *The Fall* (2019), with its faceless, marauding lynch mob chasing a man through a forest—it would be reasonable to expect the filmmaker’s treatment of this material to push certain limits. It does, but not in the way one might think. The representation of historical atrocity is a complex proposition tackled by directors from Resnais to Spielberg to Tarantino, and Glazer opts for a daring form of inversion. Working from rigorously researched historical materials—and boldly reshaping the narrative of Amis’ novel—the filmmaker has crafted a landmark in the history of modern Holocaust films, one whose horrors remain ambient and ephemeral without trivializing their severity or diluting their power to disturb.

In 2013's singular sci-fi film *Under the Skin*, Glazer was chasing something like a purely alien gaze, at once pitiless and innocent, and *The Zone of Interest* achieves something comparable through an equanimity of imagery. Crucially (and paradoxically) it's the sheer, bristling evenness of the filmmaking—calm, implacable camera placement beneath natural light— that testifies to the extremity of the scenario. An early scene of Rudolf being feted by his children features him being led down the stairs in a blindfold, a perversely playful reversal of his day job; his momentary blindness hints at a more profound state of denial. Later, as the patriarch methodically closes and locks his homestead's many doors before heading to bed (a process mapped carefully via swift, scalpel-like cuts) there's an intermingling of cozy domesticity and free-floating paranoia.

Compartmentalization, as both an architectural and psychic principle, is the guiding theme of Glazer's *ZONE*, which recreates the labyrinthine Höss homestead in exacting detail on location A24 Press Notes *The Zone of Interest* 8 in Poland. (The extraordinary production design is by Chris Oddy, whose team spent four months growing and landscaping the garden area in advance of the shoot). The almost structuralist conception of Glazer's adaptation—its precise pacing; its myriad and deceptively minimal rhythmic repetitions—is a byproduct of a unique production method that saw Glazer and team use up to ten fixed cameras (operated remotely by a team of five focus pullers) to shoot scenes simultaneously in different rooms on set. The effect of this technique is subliminal but uncanny, creating an intimate yet detached aesthetic—reminiscent of reality-television shows like *Big Brother*—that tests the tension between control and spontaneity. With no crew on hand—and the filmmaking apparatus safely embedded within the production design—the actors were able to move with total freedom within a meticulously constructed system, with Glazer scanning multiple monitors from a trailer on the other side of the wall.

“His particular strength is turning theory into practice,” opines a Nazi party colleague at one point in the film—a professional compliment that doubles (however obviously) as the most insidious, inhuman condemnation. The idea of genocide as a kind of limit case of institutional thinking—an infrastructure whose practical considerations and complications preclude any real contemplation of its objective; a practice carried out obstinately in the name of theory —has been examined from a variety of angles, but Glazer's film meets it head on and stares it down from inside a carefully applied set of blinders that trouble the comforts of hindsight and history. Standing side by side at the river that rushes behind their property—the site of so many lyrical family outings— Rudolf and Hedwig could be any couple contemplating their future; when he tells her he's being transferred to the Concentration Camp Inspectorate near Berlin—head office, as it were—her stubborn reluctance to leave the nest she's tended comes from an honest place.

The Höss' belief that they're part of something larger than themselves is similarly resonant, and even relatable, for all of us; keeping our eyes on the prize (whatever it might be) means not looking elsewhere, even and especially when the collateral damage of our aspirations lies in plain sight. For all its shots of containment—of doors sliding shut; of things and people put in their place—*THE ZONE OF INTEREST* is, finally, a radically open film that refuses to close the door on history; it remains dangerously, eternally unclosed.

Q&A WITH DIRECTOR JONATHAN GLAZER

Can you talk about your entry point into THE ZONE OF INTEREST?

I don't make that many films. When I do make one, I tend to be very, very dedicated to that project until it's finished. There's never any overlap for me. So when I finished my last film (*Under the Skin*), this subject came up. It was something that I was always going to take on at some point in my life, I suppose. But I hadn't thought about the perspective of it until I'd read the book; actually, it started when I read a preview of it. There was something in the point of view described that spoke to me, and I called [producer] Jim Wilson and encouraged him to read the novel, and I did the same.

I was taken with the perspective of the fictional camp commandant, Paul Doll, who was a driving force of it—a very baroque character. There was this extraordinary perspective that Martin Amis had partly taken on, which was so fascinating and dangerous. Obviously, Mr. Amis had based Paul Doll on Rudolf Höss, the real commandant of Auschwitz, and so from the novel, I started reading about and researching Höss and his wife Hedwig, how they lived at Auschwitz, right on the corner of the plot, as it were. They had a house and a big garden, and a shared wall that separated them from the camp. It became about the wall for me on some level, really. The compartmentalization of their lives, and the horror that they lived next door. That was the entry point, and it grew from there.

Compartmentalization seems like a major theme in the film, and it's also at the heart of how you made it, with all these camera filming simultaneously in different rooms...

It's a very odd way to make a film, but it was the only way that I could do it. I wanted to understand distance: how far I wanted to be from the characters, and how far I wanted them to be from me. There needed to be a kind of critical distance, I think. It wasn't because I was frightened to touch it; it was more that I wanted to look at it forensically. Almost anthropologically. So I couldn't imagine having a conversation with my cinematographer about backlight or something, about the light not being nice enough on the actress' hair. Or talking about whether we were using the right lens. Or whether we needed an over the shoulder or this or that.

I didn't want to glamorize, which is what cinema can do; that's too easily its language. You've got to work very hard not to do that. So I was thinking that I wanted to just observe. And then after that, the plot became something that I was gradually less interested in as well. I didn't want a story with the Holocaust as backdrop. There are so many books on this—subject, and you can open randomly to any page of any of them and there's a movie on every page. I didn't want to do that, and so I started delving deeper and deeper into it, and it wasn't until I understood *how* I was going to film it that I understood what I was going to film.

The movie is very withholding in terms of what you see; it tries to evoke things through their absence, or else purely through sound, like a kind of ambient genocide...

What I wanted to film was the contrast between somebody pouring a cup of coffee in their kitchen and somebody being murdered over on the other side of the wall. The co-existence of those two extremes. That would be the atmosphere, and how the audience would also experience it. So I thought: these people lived in this house, and committed these crimes over a period of four years. I asked myself: when are we going to go there? When are we dropping in on them?

There must be a very rigorous research process.

I was researching for two years before I put pen to paper. We had researchers working in the Auschwitz-Birkenau Museum and Memorial. Their brief was to go through all the "black books," thousands and thousands of testimonies of victims and survivors. I was looking for anything to do

with Rudolf Höss, or his wife or their children, and after a few months they started A24 Press Notes The Zone of Interest 11 giving us material, sometimes small things, sometimes things that had been published. Testimonies from the gardener, and a few of the servants. In one of them, the gardener, who survived the war, recounted a moment where Hedwig was remonstrating with Rudolf about the fact that he was going to be transferred, and she was furious. She told him they'd have to carry her out of there, out of Auschwitz. And that made me think that's where I want to set it. At the time of this transfer, when there's this threat for this woman of losing everything she's worked so hard for. The film is made with that in the foreground.

We have a film that's a family drama, about a man and his wife. They're very happy. They have five kids in a beautiful home, she's a very keen landscape gardener, she enjoys being surrounded by nature. He's got an important job, and he's very good at what he does. They are a complete partnership. And then he gets the news that his company wants to move him to a different city. She's shocked; she doesn't want to come with him. There's a rift in their marriage. He goes anyway. They do the best they can. They won't give everything up. And then there's a happy ending; he gets to come back and carry on and do what he loves, with them. And then the one thing I forgot to say is that he's the Nazi commandant of Auschwitz. That's where you get the idea of ambient genocide, and also that the story is sort of about us: about seeing ourselves in this, or trying to see ourselves. The thing that we're most scared of, I suppose, is that we could be them. They were human beings.

You observe all of these domestic details in the movie, so that even though we're always aware of when and where we are, there's also specific (and universal) observations about class, about marriage, about parenting, about peoples' relationship to work—all in the larger context of this willed, collective denial. There's madness there.

Do you mean the undertaking is mad, or the people doing it?

The evenness of everything is maddening; the film's gaze is very precise, very even, very non-judgmental.

That's true. But there was also a balance that I needed, which is I needed some light in there as well. I remember on the first of many trips to Poland thinking that I couldn't make the film if there was nothing but darkness. And I met a woman, a ninety-year-old woman who was there at the time, and who was a partisan. She was twelve years old, and she was part of the resistance, in the Polish underground. They had children running back and forth. She told me that she would go out and secretly feed some of the prisoners, and she didn't say it with any pride. It was just what happened; it was what she did, the most natural thing for her at her age in those circumstances.

It made me think about my children, and what's outside their window: this normal, healthy, happy environment. She looked out her window and saw people driven and beaten and executed. She lived maybe two kilometers from the camp. Her story stayed with me, and I felt like it was something very holy; not in a religious sense. But she was on the opposite end of the spectrum to the Hoss', and she was the light. I felt like I could make the film. She's represented in there with the thermal imaging; she's the one who finds the music and plays it; who gathers apples and pears and leaves them. She's an incredibly important part of the film, and she's not really a character. I thought of her more as an energy.

There are a lot of very strange but controlled formal choices in the movie: you mentioned the thermal imaging, but also the prologue and the coda, which are purely black screen, save the words of the title at the start which slowly disappear into the blackness, and even the cut between fiction and documentary, which is very unexpected...

It all had to do with keeping a twenty-first century lens. I didn't want to feel like I was making a movie about this other period, and then putting it in a museum. Like "that happened then."

We're talking about arguably the worst period of human history, but then "let's put it away, it's not us, we're safe from it, it's eighty years ago. It doesn't relate to us anymore." But clearly it does, and troublingly, it may always. I wanted to always be looking with modern eyes.

We also thought about the crispness of everything. The house was built a few years before the Höss family lived in it. It should look new. Auschwitz should also look new. The trees that are fifty feet tall now were saplings then. Everything looked mint, and the cameras pick that up. Everything is sharp and precise and somehow it looks authorless—disembodied. The thermal photography came out of the same idea, which was to not have any lighting at all. There's not one film light in the movie; it's all natural light, or else it's a light in the room that somebody has turned on. So if I wasn't going to light a living room, I wasn't going to light a field. In 1943, you don't see anything in a field at night, so the modern tool is a thermal camera. It's all a matter of consistency, and a commitment to not fetishizing anything. All the tropes had to go.

Can you talk about the relationship between freedom and control in the multiple camera set up? A lot of scenes feel like they've been set into motion more than micromanaged—a bit like in *Under the Skin*, where you have the semi-improvised parts and the very composed master shots.

It was about creating an arena. It was a strange job directing the film, because yes, I needed to be completely exacting and disciplined about what the camera was going to see and allowing room in the frames for complete improvisation. Some scenes are improvised, some scenes are carefully scripted, and in both cases I knew we could always do another take, but I couldn't just walk in and move a chair. So you get rid of continuity. You get rid of lighting. You take out all the boring aspects of filmmaking because you know you can't go in there the way you usually would. It was sometimes very frustrating for me. I had to let go of micromanagement in certain ways. I'm sitting there looking at ten monitors!

There's a scene in the movie where Hedwig is having coffee with her friends, and Rudolf is in his office with these executives from engineering company Topf and Sons who are selling him this new crematorium design, and the SS officers are arriving for a birthday toast and the maids are going back and forth, and it's all happening and being filmed simultaneously, in a language that I don't speak. There was madness in that, but at the same time, I knew that there would be an evenness of tone across all those scenes that we couldn't have gotten in any other way.

The arena is a very good metaphor: there's so much tension in the space, and a lot of time spent mapping its boundaries for spectators. The scene where Rudolf is going around closing the doors and turning out the lights has a structuralist element to it, it's very domestic but also very ominous and ritualistic, and every cut is so precise.

It's like a little movie within the movie. But I think of him as a very frightened man, and that scene is an example of that fear. It makes you think about what he cares about, and who we care about; which bodies we care about and which ones we don't.

It pays off later in the film where you realize that at least one of those doors could open both ways, and that in some ways, he doesn't live on the other side of the wall from Auschwitz; he has

a way in without leaving his house, which is frightening and practical at the same time. He doesn't ever really leave work, and he doesn't ever really leave home.

Those tunnels were real; the bathroom he goes to is actually in his basement. It was very strange, very spooky shit, and it was all so grotesquely organized, you know? Every aspect of it.

Given all of the potential opportunities to look over or past the wall in this movie, literally and figuratively speaking, can you talk about the choice to be absolutely withholding in terms of showing violence?

It's a choice. It comes from those conversations about the ethics of Holocaust representation. I read a lot about that. How can you show the Holocaust? Or maybe: can you show it? Should you show the whole, or can you show just a part? There are brilliant dissertations about it. I have these conversations with my own family, as I'm sure you have as well.

I had to commit, and I knew I didn't want to do reenactments of violence. I didn't want to see extras in striped pajamas being beaten. A pretend beating, however well performed... and then the extra is there later in a catering tent, eating his apple and custard. I had a crisis about that, early on, and then I got more and more stringent about it. There was an early draft that featured some violent scenes, but they took place in dreams only. But I was thinking about horror and genre and all the awful things this movie could become if it backed off of my commitment. I didn't want to be a part of that.

A good example would be a movie like *Salo*; I couldn't make a film like that. I don't have the stomach to make a movie like that. So we stayed on one side of the wall. I knew that the sound— and our interpretation of the sound—would fill in the pictures that we've all seen, that we've studied in school. I didn't want to show the images myself. I think those images bear down on every frame of the movie, on every pixel. But that's all.

Was there anything that almost burst through the wall of the movie?

I'm not going to say no. I certainly wrote things that burst through the wall, and then I didn't film them. You know, we were on the soil of Auschwitz. These German actors were coming to portray people who could have been their grandparents. It was a very strange atmosphere. I don't know if it could have been achieved on a movie lot or even somewhere else in that country. I remember saying to the people I was with that it was about the place. It was about the place. The more I think about it, it's about the shape of the place, about the compartmentalization and the effect of location on character.

At one point, Hedwig tells her mother "The Jews are over the wall," which is true but it's also got the most incredible sort of denial and repression underneath it...

Hannah Arendt talked about the thoughtlessness of genocide, which seems polite or inadequate but she means it sort of literally. Without thought. One day, Sandra Hüller came to me, it was before we shot the riverbank scene where the Höss' talk about their future. She asked if Hedwig is moved in that moment. I said of course she's moved. She's a human being. The question isn't whether she's moved, it's what moves her. What is she moved by? So if you're going to cry in this scene, cry for yourself only.

There's another scene where she and Rudolf are in bed—or in their separate beds, which is totally accurate to the floorplan, two beds, that distance apart—and they're talking and it's just hideous; she wants to go back to a spa, he's thinking about his transfer. She's lying there laughing, and we're all watching on the monitor and laughter is infectious, you know? I thought, are we siding with them? Are we empathizing with them? What are we doing here?

They're following their dreams; to build a home, to cultivate the land, to fulfill this nationalistic ideology: tomorrow belongs to them.

Step by step. They enacted what they were. They were inspired by the American dream; for the Germans, "go East" was like "go West." The same impulse to roll across the land. It's who we are as human beings.

There's a really crucial moment late in the film where Rudolf is heading off to work and he throws up; it's like his body is having doubts about what he's doing. And then suddenly we're in the present day, in Auschwitz. We've moved out of the past.

You don't need me to explain it, but it's funny: I don't see it as going from the past to present. I look at it as the presence of the future. It's very strange, but after I visited the place for the first time, I put a line in the script about weaving together "the here and now," and "the there and then." It was a note to myself. I was looking for that, even if I didn't know what it was. It surfaces there. And then he goes on and does it anyway; he puts his hat on, skips down the stairs and carries on with his work. In that moment, seeing the future, is he a witness to the devastation he's caused? Is he imagining it? He carries on regardless. We carry on regardless. Never again to whoever, or never again to us? It's what we tolerate.

The scene is powerful because his nausea is involuntary: he doesn't have feelings about it, but it comes up anyway. It's irrepressible.

A brilliant philosopher, Gillian Rose, who wrote a lot about the Holocaust, imagined a film that could make us feel "unsafe," by showing how we're emotionally and politically closer to the perpetrator culture than we'd like to think we are. One that might leave us with as she called "the dry eyes of a deep grief." Dry eyes versus sentimental tears. Which I thought was a really strong idea. And that's what I'm trying for. It's not a cold film, but it has to be a forensic film.

A dry eye doesn't blink.

No it doesn't; it's too busy looking. It's hard to look. It's hard not to flinch.

CREW BIOGRAPHIES

Jonathan Glazer – Writer/Director

After completing art school and a degree in Theatre Design, Jonathan Glazer landed a job making film trailers. This led to music videos, TV commercials and art projects.

Glazer's feature directing debut was *Sexy Beast* in 2000. He went on to co-write and direct *Birth* in 2004 and *Under the Skin* in 2014.

Jim Wilson – Producer

Wilson produced Jonathan Glazer's *Under the Skin*, which world premiered in competition at the 2013 Venice Film Festival, was nominated for two BAFTAs, Best International Film at the Spirit Awards, and Best Picture at the Gotham Awards. Before *THE ZONE OF INTEREST*, he produced Trey Shults' *Waves* which world premiered at the 2019 Telluride Film Festival.

Lynne Ramsay's *You Were Never Really Here*, which world premiered in competition at the 2017 Cannes Film Festival, winning Best Actor for Joaquin Phoenix and Best Screenplay. It was BAFTA nominated for Best British Film; Best Film, Director, Actor, and Editing at the Spirit Awards, won two British Independent Film Awards, and was nominated for eight.

Andrew Dominik's *One More Time with Feeling* featuring Nick Cave, which world premiered at the 2016 Venice Film Festival and was Grammy-nominated for Best Music Film.

Iain Forsyth and Jane Pollard's *20,000 Days on Earth*, winner of both Directing and Editing awards at the 2014 Sundance Film Festival, a BAFTA and Spirit Awards nominee for Best Documentary, and winner of Best Debut Director at the British Independent Film Awards.

Joe Cornish's *Attack the Block* (2011), James Marsh's *The King*, which world premiered in Un Certain Regard at the 2005 Cannes Film Festival, and Sophie Fiennes' *The Pervert's Guide to Ideology* (2012) with Slavoj Žižek.

He executive produced Savannah Leaf's *Earth Mama* which world premiered at the 2023 Sundance Film Festival, Sophie Fiennes' *Grace Jones: Bloodlight and Bami* (2017), Edgar Wright's *Shaun of the Dead* (2004), and Jonathan Glazer's short film *The Fall* (2019).

Previously, he was a production executive at Fox Searchlight Pictures, and then Film4, supervising development and production on a range of films including *Sexy Beast*, *Dancer in the Dark*, *The Filth and the Fury*, *Buffalo Soldiers* and *The Last King of Scotland*. He studied Producing at the American Film Institute, and English at the University of Sussex.

Ewa Puszczyńska – Producer

Ewa Puszczyńska, a producer with over 20 years of experience, has founded her own production company, Extreme Emotions in 2016. Her producing credits include, among others, Bafta and Oscar winning *Ida* and triple Oscar nominee *Cold War* both by Pawel Pawlikowski; an art house animation for adult audiences *Kill It and Leave This Town* by Mariusz Wilczyński, which premiered in Berlinale 2020 Encounters, Oscar nominated *Quo Vadis, Aida?* by Jasmila Zbanić, *Fools*, directed by Berlinale

Silver Bear winner Tomasz Wasilewski and Jonathan Glazer's *THE ZONE OF INTEREST* which will premiere in Cannes 2023 main competition. Pawel Pawlikowski's new film *The Island* is at pre production stage as well as Jesse Eisenberg's *A Real Pain*.

The company is developing and financing a slate of projects, both for theatrical release and television, such as *The Master of this Silence* by Jonathan Littell and *Flights* based on a novel by Olga Tokarczuk. The slate includes debuts entitled *Night Butterflies* by Marta Prus and *Safe and Silent* by Justyna Tafel, as the company supports young female directors in developing their careers in a largely male dominated film industry. Ewa Puszczyńska is a member of European Film Academy and of AMPAS and has been listed in Variety 500, an index of the 500 most influential business leaders.

Martin Amis – Based on the novel by

Martin Amis is the author of fourteen novels, two collections of stories and eight works of non-fiction. His novel *Time's Arrow* was shortlisted for the Booker Prize, for which his subsequent novel *Yellow Dog* was also longlisted, and his memoir *Experience* won the James Tait Black Memorial Prize. In 2008, *The Times* named him one of the 50 greatest writers since 1945. He lives in New York.

Łukasz Żal - Director of Photography

Łukasz Żal is a cinematographer based out of Poland. He most recently shot Charlie Kaufman's critically acclaimed *I'm Thinking of Ending Things*, as well as Pawel Pawlikowski's *Cold War*, which earned him an Academy Award nomination for Best Cinematography and was nominated for Best Foreign Language Film in 2019.

Previously, he was nominated for an Academy Award in 2016 for Pawlikowski's *Ida* and was one of two cinematographers of the Oscar nominated animated feature *Loving Vincent* (dir. DK Welchman, Hugo Welchman) in 2017. In addition, he received the Golden Frog Award at Camerimage twice for his work on *Ida* and *Paparazzi* (dir. Piotr Bernas), as well as the Silver Frog Award for *Cold War*.

Lukasz has also shot *Dovlatov* (dir. Aleksiej German Jr.), which premiered at the 2018 Berlin International Film Festival and *The Here After* (dir. Magnus von Horn), an official selection of the Directors' Fortnight at the 2015 Cannes Film Festival.

He is a Member of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, European Film Academy, and Polish Society of Cinematographers.

Chriss Oddy – Production Designer

Multi-award winning Production Designer Chris Oddy graduated in Fine Art Sculpture in 1986 from Ravensbourne College of Art & Design. Chris began his career designing projects for independent theatre productions before going on to design music videos for artists such as Prodigy, Bjork, The Chemical Brothers & Squarepusher, working with directors including Walter Stern, Dawn Shadforth and Chris Cunningham.

Chris has designed many high-end commercials for brands such as Stella Artois, Adidas, Levis & Guinness, working with directors including Traktor, Fredrik Bond, Ivan Zacharias & Jonathan Glazer.

It was his regular collaboration with Jonathan Glazer that led to his first feature film *Under the Skin* with A24/Film 4.

Chris' feature film credits include 71 for director Yann Demange with Warp Films, *King of Thieves* for James Marsh with Working Title films, and most recently THE ZONE OF INTEREST for Jonathan Glazer with A24/Film 4.

Małgorzata Karpiuk – Costume Designer

Małgorzata Karpiuk is a costume Designer living in Warsaw, she works internationally. Since 2009, she has been creating costumes for feature films, documentaries, series, music videos and TV theaters. She is the author of costumes, among others, for the Oscar-nominated film *Quo Vadis, Aida?*, the Sundance awarded *Dolce Fine Giornata*, *Blinded by the Lights*, the HBO series and the music video 'I Promise' for Radiohead. Recent projects include THE ZONE OF INTEREST directed by Jonathan Glazer. 'I love creating a new worlds, looking for new meanings and solutions, working on the border of unreality, fiction and truth'

Paul Watts – Editor

Paul Watts is a British film editor. He started editing in the early nineties predominantly working on commercial projects until 2011, when he edited *Under the Skin* with his long time collaborator Jonathan Glazer. He continues to edit commercial work, as well as occasional other long form projects, his most recent being Glazer's new feature, THE ZONE OF INTEREST.

Mica Levi – Music

Mica Levi is a musician and composer born in Guildford and living in South East London.

They have previously written music for films including *Under The Skin* (2014, dir. Jonathan Glazer), *Jackie* (2016, dir. Pablo Larraín), *Monos* (2018, dir. Alejandro Landes), *Zola* (2020, dir. Janicza Bravo) and *Mangrove* (2020, dir. Steve McQueen).

Bridget Samuels – Music Supervisor

Bridget Samuels is an independent Music Supervisor and Producer based in London. Upon graduating from the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, Bridget responded to the need for professional opportunities for the UK's diverse young musical talent and founded Orchestrate – a network of the UK's most accomplished and adaptable young musicians and music professionals.

Since its conception in 2011, hand-picked ensembles from Orchestrate work in the studio, on-stage and on-screen across all styles and genres.

Orchestrate have collaborated with such internationally renowned composers as Mica Levi, on their Ivor Novello winning, BAFTA and Oscar Nominated score for *Jackie*, and more recently on their score for Steve McQueen's BBC Mini- Series, *Small Axe*; Bobby Krilic and their Ivor Novello winning score for Ari Aster's *Midsommar* and more recently on Krilic's score for *Beau is Afraid*; along with Nico Muhly, Daniel Hart and Adrian Corker - amongst others.

As a Music Supervisor, Bridget has commissioned scores for BFI, BBC Films and Film 4, with recent credits including *Blue Jean* (dir. Georgia Oakley) and *The Real Charlie Chaplin* (dir. James Spinney and Peter Middleton).

Guillame Ménard – Visual Effects Supervisor

After graduating from a visual effects school in the South of France, I moved to London in 2015 where I started working as a digital compositor. I joined One of Us in 2017 where I had the opportunity to work on a variety of films and TV shows, with different technical and visual challenges, such as *The OA*, Matteo Garrone's *Pinocchio*, *We Are Who We Are* or *Munich: the Edge of War*. I've recently finished working on *The Sandman* before working both on-set and in post on Jonathan Glazer's *THE ZONE OF INTEREST*.

Richard Lloyd – Post Production Supervisor

With over 30 years experience in the film and post production industry, Richard is an experienced post production supervisor with a comprehensive knowledge of filmmaking. He enjoys the technical challenges of post production and the use of technology to solve creative issues throughout the process.

Richard has worked on an eclectic variety of films with directors ranging from Bernardo Bertolucci, Tommy O'Haver, Anton Corbijn and Vincent Ward to Jonathan Glazer and The Brothers Quay, and productions ranging from studio films to small independents and television.

He has lectured at the National Film and Television School on all aspects of post production and sat on panels for the NPA.

He previously worked with Jonathan Glazer on *Under the Skin* and maintained this collaboration on *THE ZONE OF INTEREST*.

Simone Bär – Casting Director

The casting of a film is like a systemic family constellation. Simone Bär was a congenial family-positioner.

The 57 year old casting director Simone Bär died on the 16th of January 2023 in Berlin. In a career spanning decades she connected many actors and directors and made us realize that the perfect pairing of the two can create and change a film completely. Impenetrably for most people, Simone Bär elevated the casting process to an art, with her unique sense of wonder and burning with curiosity for the human being and life itself. As a sure judge of character and an expert in human nature, she was always looking for a new face, a new inspiration, always ready to confound predictions and go overboard for a perfect group or a leading part she believed in. We will feel the tension between Bachmann and Frisch in *Ingeborg Bachmann – Reise in die Wüste* by Margarethe von Trotta very soon and maybe witness the presentation of an Academy Award to *Im Westen nichts neues* by Edward Berger with a dazzling new cast or *Tar* by Todd Field. We will see where the new film from Christian Petzold *Roter Himmel* will lead us and how *Sissi und ich* von Frauke Finsterwalder will capture us. Simone Bär did the casting for *Babylon Berlin* for Tom Tykwer, Hendryk Handloegten and Achim von Borries and worked repeatedly with Christian Petzold, Matti Geschonnek, Florian

Gallenberger, Robert Thalheim, Baran Bo Odar and Sherry Hormann for “Nur eine Frau“. As an authority on international arthouse cinema she worked with Stephen Daldry (*Der Vorleser*), Quentin Tarantino (*Inglorious Bastards*), Steven Spielberg (*War Horse*), Jonathan Glazer (THE ZONE OF INTEREST), Françoise Ozon (*Frantz*), Martin Zandvliet (*Land of Mine*) or Wes Anderson (*The Grand Budapest Hotel*). Simultaneously supporting young film filmmakers with great enthusiasm like Ilker Catak, Barbara Ott or Philip Koch, guiding them through their first films, incorruptible and working hand and hand with the artists.

She was very much invested in long-term cooperations shaped by deep trust in her collaborators. Once asked what casting means to her, she answered: “authenticity, a coherency... in the roles so that the characters take me in and enchant me. You cannot make generalizations and you must cast a comedy quite differently to a drama but the actors have to advance the script as good as possible.

She was looking for these actors and finding them in the most congenial way, finely nuanced acting was key to the casting of the Netflix series *Dark*, even the convergence of dialects of a young and older actor in the same role was all important to her. Nina Hoss, Sandra Hüller, Paula Beer, Vicky Krieps, Peter Kurth, Christoph Waltz and many more have advanced their careers through working with her.

Simone Bärs’ skills and expertise brought her worldwide fame. Through her informed decisions and great knowledge many films have gone on to receive prizes and awards, including multiple Academy awards and nominees, Golden Globe awards, German Film Awards, European Film Awards and Grimme Awards.

CAST BIOGRAPHIES

Christian Friedel - Rudolf Höss

Christian Friedel, born in Magdeburg in 1979, studied acting at the Otto Falckenberg School in Munich. His first theater engagements took him to the Bayerisches Staatsschauspiel in Munich, the Munich Kammerspiele, the Schauspiel Hannover and the Staatsschauspiel Dresden, with which he is still connected today. In the title role of Schiller's *Don Carlos* (director: Roger Vontobel) Friedel was invited to the Berlin Theatertreffen 2011, the production was also awarded the German theater prize Der Faust. As Shakespeare's *Hamlet* (director: Roger Vontobel) he has been performing to sold-out houses since 2012 and has made guest appearances at the Shakespeare Festival in the historic Kronborg Castle in Elsinore.

Since 2016 he has also been playing at the Düsseldorfer Schauspielhaus, where he has worked with Robert Wilson in the internationally successful production "Der Sandmann" and most recently for the monologue "Dorian", which was acclaimed by audiences and the press. Friedel and his band Woods of Birnam also composed the music for this evening.

In addition, Christian Friedel is regularly in front of the camera, e.g. in Michael Haneke's feature film *The White Ribbon*, which won the Palme d'Or at the 2009 Cannes Film Festival and was nominated for an Oscar. Friedel received the Metropolis Prize 2015 for the title role in Oliver Hirschbiegel's *Elser – He would have changed the world* and was nominated for both the German and the European Film Prize for Best Actor. Jessica Hausner's historical film *Amour Fou*, in which he plays Heinrich von Kleist, was also honored with an invitation to Cannes. Friedel is a member of the ensemble in the highly acclaimed television series *Babylon Berlin*. In 2021/2022 he shot the feature film THE ZONE OF INTEREST with Jonathan Glazer, which will celebrate its world premiere in competition at the Cannes Film Festival in 2023.

In addition to acting, Christian Friedel is the lead singer and composer of the art pop band Woods of Birnam, which has repeatedly produced major interdisciplinary projects since it was founded in Dresden in 2011. So far 6 albums have been released. In addition, the band composed numerous theater and film music, e.g. for the series Babylon Berlin or for the theater productions of Shakespeare's *Hamlet* and *Macbeth*.

Friedel also works as a theater director. He has staged productions at the Deutsches Theater Göttingen and the Staatsschauspiel Dresden, among others.

Sandra Hüller - Hedwig Höss

Sandra will next be seen in Jonathan Glazer's highly anticipated upcoming feature, THE ZONE OF INTEREST, for Film4 & A24.

Prior to this, Sandra made waves with her revelatory performance in our client Marin Ade's feature *Toni Erdmann* where she won a European Film Award for Best Actress. *Toni Erdmann* has received numerous national and international awards and in 2017 was the German Oscar candidate for Best Foreign Language Film. Most recently, Sandra Hüller starred in Justine Triet's movie *Sibyl* alongside Virginie Efira, Adèle Exarchopoulos and Gaspard Ulliel, and in Alice Winocour's astronaut drama *Proxima* starring Eva Green, Matt Dillon and Lars Eidinger. Since her breakout role in Hans-Christian

Schmid's *Requiem*, where she received the Best Actress award at the Berlin Film Festival (along with many other accolades), she is one of the most revered and in-demand actresses of her generation in Germany.