

PICTURE TREE INTERNATIONAL
PRESENTS

THE

PAINTER

A FILM BY ALBERT OEHLER OLIVER HIRSCHBIEGEL BEN BECKER

 PICTURE TREE
INTERNATIONAL



ORIGINAL TITLE: Der Maler
GENRE: Docufiction
LENGTH: 94min
COUNTRY OF ORIGIN: Germany
LANGUAGE: German with Voice Over by Charlotte Rampling
CAST: Ben Becker, Cornelius Tittel, Gudrun Gut
DIRECTOR: Oliver Hirschbiegel
SCREENPLAY: Ben Becker, Albert Oehlen
CINEMATOGRAPHERS: Philip Bienmüller, Severin Bärenbold, Dominik Frey, Timna Gibson, Alexander Kruse, John-Philip Kuhn, Michail Zeldin
EDITING: Alexander Dittner
MUSIC: Gudrun Gut, Nathan Wooley
PRODUCER: Oliver Hirschbiegel, Albert Oehlen
EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Mike Downey
SOUND: René Kampka, Florian Minkner, Yves G. Schläpfer, Philipp Scholz, Patrick Wehrhahn
WORLD SALES: Picture Tree International



pti@picturetree-international.com
www.picturetree-international.com

A ONE MAN 'TOUR DE FORCE' DEPICTING ARTIST **ALBERT OEHLEN** STRUGGLING WITH A PAINTING AND THE MEANING OF HIS CREATION.

"Watching PAINTER I was bowled over and challenged in a way I love. Ben Becker and the filmmakers manage to infiltrate the impossible dream world. I was completely taken in and wanted to stay there." **CHARLOTTE RAMPLING**

"if you imagine a paintbrush as a motorcycle this film is the sequel and conclusion of easy rider"

ALBERT OEHLEN and **OLIVER HIRSCHBIEGEL**

THE PROJECT

Under the direction of legendary director **OLIVER HIRSCHBIEGEL** ('Downfall' / 'Der Untergang'), Actor **BEN BECKER** (Key Credits) on screen impersonates the famous contemporary painter **ALBERT OEHLER** and re-creates a painting that Oehler himself and in parallel is creating step by step in the background, with the actor improvising the process in front of the camera. The finished on-screen painting is an original 'Oehler' on which the artist himself never laid hands. The off screen blueprint painting was destroyed after principal shooting had finished.

Originally planned to be a performative statement the projects developed into a fully fledged feature film of 92 minutes, crossing formal boundaries and questioning the meaning of the creative process and the struggle for authenticity on various levels.

THE PAINTER follows the artist/actor as he is struggling and suffering along this process with us watching in joyful despair and what might happen next until the white canvas has turned into a finished painting.

The outcome is a one-man rollercoaster that appears to be a documentary but in fact is a staged and guided improvisation with the 'real' process happening behind the camera. THE PAINTER is a constant flow of the artist's journey with elements of farce and comedy topped with emotional moments of truth....in front of and behind the camera and leaving it up to us to decide what is real and/or authentic.

Being one of the most significant, contemporary painters, Albert Oehler's approach is complete refusal of the common art circus. In its own way the Film reflects this very stance.

Likewise, it questions the purpose of obsolete thinking patterns created by white straight male artists of a certain age that have dominated the art world for centuries. It explores the idea of authenticity & original and subsequently the concept of copyright and ownership which manifests the very basis of capitalism.

It is up to us, the audience to decipher the THE PAINTER'S amalgam of true and false / silly and serious, real and surreal.

Oliver Hirschbiegel and Albert Oehler are longtime friends and both studied at the 'Hochschule der Bildenden Künste Hamburg' with 'The Painter' being their first artistic collaboration in a long while.





THE DIRECTOR

OLIVER HIRSCHBIEGEL

OLIVER HIRSCHBIEGEL, born December 29, 1957, in Hamburg, went to sea as a scullion after finishing Waldorf school. On his return, he studied painting and graphic at Hamburg's Hochschule der bildenden Künste Hamburg but soon turned more and more to the departments of photography, video, and film; did installation art and performances, and finally switched to film directing. After directing various successful Television Projects Hirschbiegel made his feature debut on the movie screen in 2001. The thriller "The Experiment" ("Das Experiment") became a box office hit at home and abroad, won four German film awards (Lola).

After the one-person chamber play "My Last Film", ("Mein letzter Film" 2002), starring Hannelore Elsner, Hirschbiegel made his international breakthrough in 2004 with "Downfall" ("Der Untergang" 2004) about the final hours in Hitler's Führerbunker based on the book by Joachim Fest and produced by legendary German producer Bernd Eichinger. Despite mixed reviews at home "Downfall" sold more than 4.6 million cinema tickets and premiered to standing ovations in a Gala Screening at the Toronto Film Festival before being sold all around the world and, up to date, being the highest grossing German language Film internationally since the advent of Television.

Riding on the success of "Downfall", Hirschbiegel directed "Just an Ordinary Jew" (2005), followed the British-Irish co-production "Five Minutes of Heaven" (2009) about a member of the Protestant UVF militia – played by Liam Neeson, which premiered at the Sundance Film Festival and won the BAFTA award for best screenplay among others.

After the TV miniseries "Borgia" (2011), Hirschbiegel directed the biopic "Diana" (2013), starring Naomi Watts as the later Princess of Wales and then returned to Germany for his next feature film: "13 Minutes" ("Elser" 2015) which recounts the true story of German resistance fighter Georg Elser, who attempted to kill Adolf Hitler in 1939 and premiered at the Berlin Film Festival as a Berlinale Special.

THE ARTIST

ALBERT OEHLER

ALBERT OEHLER was born in Krefeld, Germany in 1954. He attended the Hochschule für Bildende Künste in Hamburg, where he studied under Sigmar Polke until 1981.

During the early stages of his career, Oehler's artistic inclinations and thematic interests were diverse, ranging from music to painting. Neo-Expressionism became the prevailing aesthetic in the 1980s, inspiring him to combine abstract and figurative elements throughout his paintings. He established a close friendship with German artist Martin Kippenberger and dedicated himself completely to abstract painting.

As early as a decade ago, Oehler set up a studio in a tower of the city walls of Segovia, where he began to work on computer generated images that would become integral to his paintings. Oehler's spatially complex works use the collision of figuration and abstraction as a strong reminder of the multiple forces involved in the resurgence of painting at the latter part of the 20th century.

Albert Oehler has exhibited extensively throughout the United States and Europe. Recent solo exhibitions of his work have been held in institutions such as the Palazzo Grassi in Venice in 2018, The Cleveland Museum of Art and Guggenheim Bilbao in 2016, The New Museum in 2015, Museo di Capodimonte in Naples, Italy and the Musée d' Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris in 2009. He has also participated in exhibitions in major institutions such as the Musée Cantonal Des Beaux Arts in Lausanne, the Renaissance Society in Chicago and at the Kunsthalle in Basel. Oehler's show at MOCA Miami in 2005 marked his first major solo exhibition at a museum in the United States. In 2009 Taschen published an oversized artist's monograph as part of its XL series that covers the entire scope of Oehler's oeuvre. Albert Oehler lives and works in Switzerland.

The Art world considers Albert Oehler as part of the 'New Wilds' and as protagonist of Neo-Expressionism.





THE ACTOR

BEN BECKER

BECKER was born in Bremen, the son of actress Monika Hansen and actor Rolf Becker. He is the brother of actress/singer Meret Becker and the stepson of legendary German actor Otto Sander ("Das Boot", "Wings of Desire"). Becker started his acting career in theatre and had his breakthrough as a screen actor in Joseph Vilsmaier's features "Schlafes Bruder" "Comedian Harmonists" as well as the international surprise hit "Gloomy Sunday". In 1995 Ben produced his own theatre production Sid & Nancy with his sister Meret. Since then Ben Becker has continued his work for film, theatre and as performance artist in many prestigious production. He was awarded two times with the prestigious 'Adolf Grimme Preis' and is among Germany's most outstanding and versatile actors.

VOICEOVER

CHARLOTTE RAMPLING

CHARLOTTE RAMPLING is an English actress, model, and singer, best known for her performances in European art films. Born in England and raised in several countries across Europe, she was heavily influenced by her mother, a famous painter in the 1950s and the 1960s. Charlotte started her career in the early 1960s when she appeared as a model in a 'Cadbury' advertisement. She received her very first acting offer when she was discovered by a casting agent while walking down a street in London. After playing small uncredited roles in films, she finally appeared in a starring role in the film 'Georgy Girl.' In the 1960s, her career blossomed with films such as 'The Long Duel' and 'Sardinia Kidnapped.' She ventured into French cinema with 'Sequestra di Persona.' She also starred in several Italian and American art films. She also played controversial roles during her career and turned herself into one of the most iconic female stars of the 1960s and the 1970s. She slowed down around the 1980s and appeared in selected films only. Some of her recent films are 'Melancholia' and 'Assassin's Creed.'

THE EDITOR

ALEXANDER DITTNER

ALEXANDER DITTNER was born in Hanover in 1967 and has worked as a freelance editor since 1996. Since the beginnings of *bullyparade* (1997 to 2004) he has worked with Michael Bully Herbig, including on his feature films *Erkan & Stefan* (2000), the most popular film since German reunification *Der Schuh des Manitu* (2001), *(T)Raumschiff Surprise - Periode 1* (2004), *Wickie und die starken Männer* (2009), *Buddy* (2013), *Bullyparade - Der Film* (2017) and *Balloon* (2019). In 1999 they both founded Xframe GmbH.

He worked with director Gregor Schnitzler on *Soloalbum* (2004) and the Berlinale entry *Die Wolke* (2006). In 2004, Alexander Dittner filmed the television documentary "Gegen die Grenze - Das Leben des Michael Gartenschläger" (*Against the Border - The Life of Michael Gartenschläger*), which he directed and wrote in addition to editing. In the following years, he preferred to work on children's and family films, including *Herr Bello* (2007), *Die wilden Kerle 5* (2008) and *Hexe Lilli - Die Reise nach Mandolan* (2011), but also took over the editing of comedies such as *Zwölf Meter ohne Kopf* (2009), *Groupies bleiben nicht zum Frühstück* (2010) and of Helmut Dietl's latest work *Zettl* (2011). Alexander Dittner proved that he also knows his way around animated films with *Die Konferenz der Tiere* (2010), *Tarzan 3D* (2014) and *Pets United* (2019). For the latter, which spent over 2 weeks in Netflix's worldwide top ten, he also served as associate producer.

For his work as Editor on Oliver Hirschbiegel's drama *Elser - He Would Have Changed the World*, Alexander Dittner was nominated for the German Film Award in 2015. He also worked with Hirschbiegel on the acclaimed television series *Der gleiche Himmel* (2017). Most recently, Alexander Dittner edited Joachim Lang's *Mackie Messer - Brecht's Threepenny Film* and is currently working on the international opera adaptation *The Magic Flute*.





THE SCORE

GUDRUN GUT

The music is contributed by legendary singer composer **DJ GUDRUN GUT** who got infected by music when working in a mail-order shop for underground music records. After moving to Berlin in 1975 and studying at the Academy of Arts (Berliner Hochschule der Künste) she joined Berlin's underground music scene as band member of the Performanceband 'DIN A Testbild'. In 1978 she was part of the collective founding the shop 'Eisengrau' which produced clothes, tapes, fanzines and that she later on led together with Blixa Bargeld, with who she was also part of the founding members of the legendary underground band 'Einstürzende Neubauten'. During the 80s Gudrun was founding member of the band 'Malaria' and the experimental project 'Matador' with Pepita Duursma and Beate Bartel.

In 1990 Gudrun was part of a famous soundplay production 'Hamletmaschine' as Ophelia together with Blixa Bargeld and under the lead of theatre director Heiner Müller. The same year she also founded the music label 'Moabit Music' and the followed by the label 'Monika Enterprise', with which she published musicians like Quarks, Komëit, Barbara Morgenstern and Contriva. From 1993 Gudrun was running the Music Project 'Ocean Club' which had regular shows in the legendary Berlin club 'Tresor' as well as foreign shows in the UK and China as well as a weekly show on Berlin Cult Radio 'Radio Eins' until 2012. In the new millennium Gudrun worked with various artists on an array of music projects and Albums. She is a member of the association 'Freunde der Uckermark' with which members she co-organises the 'UM-Festival' for contemporary Arts, Literature and Music.

THE EXECUTIVE PRODUCER

MIKE DOWNEY

MIKE DOWNEY founded the UK-based independent production house Film and Music Entertainment (F&ME). Mike has worked with the likes of Peter Greenaway, Agnieszka Holland, Julien Temple, Pawel Pawlikowski, Andrzej Jakimowski, Juraj Jakubisko, Fridrik Thor Fridriksson, and Stephen Daldry, and now Oliver Hirschbiegel.

A woman with blonde hair is shown in profile, looking out a window. The background is a vibrant, abstract painting with yellow, orange, and blue tones. The text 'WORLD SALES' is overlaid in large white letters.

WORLD SALES

PICTURE TREE INTERNATIONAL

PICTURE TREE INTERNATIONAL (PTI)

is an energetic world sales and production company with its headquarters in Berlin. PTI's line-up of up to 15 films a year is designed to ensure the right mix of art-house and crossover productions to fully maximize the artistic and financial potential of each film. Picture Tree International was founded in December 2012 by Andreas Rothbauer and has been run jointly by his partner and Co-Managing Director Yuan Rothbauer since 2017.



pti@picturetree-international.com
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