

HEAVEN

Rated R for “a scene of sexuality”
Release Date: October 4th (limited)

HEAVEN

Cate Blanchett.....Philippa
Giovanni Ribisi.....Filippo
Remo Girone.....Filippo's Father
Mattia Sbragia.....Major Pini
Alberto Di Stasio.....Public prosecutor
Giovanni Vettorazzo.....The Inspector
Gianfranco Barra.....The Lieutenant
Vincent Riotta.....Chief Guard
AND Stefania Rocca as Regina

Directed by	Tom Tykwer
Screenplay by	Krzysztof Kieslowski Krzysztof Piesiewicz
Produced by	Maria Köpf Stefan Arni AND Frédérique
Produced by	Anthony Minghella William Horberg
Executive Producer	Sydney Pollack
Executive Producers	Harvey Weinstein Agnés Mentré
Co-Executive Producers	Teresa Moneo Manuela Stehr
Associate Producers	Marc Baschet Cedomir Kolar
Line Producers Italy	Mario Cotone Marco Guidone
Line Producer	Stefaan Schieder
Director of Photography	Frank Griebe
Edited by	Mathilde Bonnefoy
Production Designer	Uli Hanisch
Costumes by	Monica Jacobs
Sound Recording	Wolfgang Schukrafft
Rerecording Mixer	Matthias Lempert
Chief Make-Up Artist	Morag Ross
Casting	Shaila Rubin

HEAVEN

Production Notes

“Heaven, I’m in heaven . . . and my heart beats so that I can hardly speak.”
-- Cole Porter

In HEAVEN, a lonely young police officer (GIOVANNI RIBISI) and a guilt-ridden crime suspect (CATE BLANCHETT) set off on a desperate and thrilling quest not so much for survival as to explore whether the possibility for justice, redemption and love can be found on earth. The result is part thriller about a woman forced to take the law into her hands, part stirring romance about the search for a higher form of rectitude.

HEAVEN is also the melding of two entirely unique cinematic visions. The first is that of rising director Tom Tykwer, known for his energetic and passionate visual style as seen in such films as “Run Lola Run” and “The Princess and the Warrior,” films that revealed his unique ability to play with notions of fate, chance and the ability for love to change the most hardened person. The other is that of the late Krzysztof Kieslowski, internationally renown for his moving explorations of the human condition, and especially the choices people make in their lives, in such films as the “Red,” “White” and “Blue” trilogy and “The Double Life of Veronique.”

When Kieslowski passed away suddenly of a heart attack in 1996, he left behind a final work, HEAVEN, part of a trilogy that was to continue with “Hell” and “Purgatory,” co-written with his long-time associate Krzysztof Piesiewicz. In the screenplay, rich themes centering around justice, freedom, vigilantism, guilt, loss and passion are stamped on to two of Kieslowski’s most memorable characters: a woman whose anger and grief at a terrible wrong cause her to commit a heinous crime; and a love-struck cop whose intense longing blinds him to risk and leads to an unexpected life of running. Like all of Kieslowski’s tales, HEAVEN offers many signs and clues but no easy explanations for the dangerous and often desperate choices these two characters make.

The setting is Turin, Italy where Philippa (Blanchett), an English teacher at her wits end after watching several people she cares about die from drug overdoses, and fed up with a police force that will nothing to help, plants a bomb in a trashcan inside the office of one of Italy’s most despicable yet scot-free dealers. Tragically, fate intervenes, and the trashcan is moved, allowing the bomb to kill several innocent people, and the dealer to escape yet again. Philippa is quickly arrested and taken in for interrogation, where she learns for the first time what she has done and discovers she is suspected of

being part of a terrorist organization. No one is willing to listen to the truth of Philippa's story, but then there is another twist of fate. One of her police captors, the quiet Filippo (Ribisi), falls inexplicably in love with her, and decides to help her in her quest to finish the process of meting out justice that she began. Their journey together takes them from simple retribution to a search for true redemption, a journey that traverses through a moral and physical maze from which there appears to be no obvious escape.

Well before Kieslowki's death, the director had stated that it was his hope to eventually see HEAVEN and the rest of the trilogy directed by a young filmmaker, perhaps a series of three different new talents, rather than tackle it himself. He did not live to see the dream become reality but the French production company, Noe, which held the rights to HEAVEN, had every intention of making sure the film was made in the manner Kieslowski originally intended. In searching around the world for the right young visionary to take on HEAVEN, Noe approached Miramax who in turn approached Anthony Minghella ("The English Patient") who in turn, wishing to focus on his own writing projects, suggested Tom Tykwer, who then was making big waves with the critically acclaimed "Run Lola Run."

Says Minghella, who became a producer on the film: "At the time, I expected the film would become a collision of two opposite visions. Not until later did it become clear to me that my initial assessment of the situation was completely wrong. Kieslowski and Tom Tykwer are actually very close to one another -- I now see that their artistic world-views are almost identical."

Still, no one wanted to see HEAVEN become a flat-out imitation of Kieslowski's highly unique filmmaking style. Instead, the mandate from the beginning was for Tykwer to take Kieslowski's creative inspiration and follow his own dynamic inner vision wherever it might lead. In other words, to infuse Kieslowski's story with his own radically lyrical sense of action, imagery and character. Summarizes executive producer William Horberg: "This impossible concoction of a Polish script, a German director, an Australian lead actress and an Italian-American actor manages to create its own unique identity and voice. It is neither a remake nor an homage to a filmmaker whose language was inimitable. Rather, it is a new, self-confident work in the unmistakable personal style of Tom Tykwer."

Adds producer Frederique Dumas: "Kieslowski's scripts are very simple and thus they always rely heavily on the director's vision. Like Kieslowski himself, Tom Tykwer has a real ability to create myths. In all of his films, he translates a very strong, very personal vision into an original reality. For this reason it was clear that HEAVEN could never become an imitation. The writing is Kieslowski. The

cinematography, the scenes, the sound designs, the performances are all the result of Tykwer's decisions."

HEAVEN is a co-production of X Filme creative pool and Miramax Films. The producers are Anthony Minghella, Maria Köpf, William Horberg, Stefan Arndt and Frederique Dumas. The film is executive produced by Harvey Weinstein, Agnes Mentre and Sydney Pollack.

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"Like a script I always wanted to write . . ."

"I became immersed in this screenplay as if it were my own," says Tom Tykwer of HEAVEN, which marks the first film he has directed that is not in his native German language. "I knew exactly what the story was getting at, not just explicitly, but implicitly as well, atmospherically, beyond the moral conflicts and narrative circumstances. I was able to see myself reflected in it. I also had a very strong feeling that the script connected with themes I had taken up in my previous films, but in a way I had not encountered before. I definitely knew I wanted to take on this challenge."

Although in awe of Kieslowski and the power of his films, Tykwer immediately felt a genuine freedom to take the material in his own personal direction, opening the story up to his stirring sense of visual poetry – and offering images of a more serene and romantic nature than ever before seen in his work. "Usually with other people's scripts, I have the feeling that I have to illustrate someone else's language. But, in the case of HEAVEN, I never had the impression that I was the illustrator of someone else's idea, not for a second," he explains. "I internalized the script immediately and developed my own visual ideas. My feeling was definitely that this was like a script I had always wanted to write but never had."

The offer for Tykwer to make HEAVEN originally came to the unique German film collaborative of which he is a founding member-- X Filme -- at a time when Tykwer was already in pre-production on "The Princess and the Warrior," which went on to win international critical praise. Recalls X Filme managing director Stefan Arndt: "We were excited because we thought the script was one of the best we had ever read. Of the material in Kieslowski's final trilogy, HEAVEN comes the closest to Tom's cinematic vision. When you read the script, it reads as if Tom had written it." Adds the collaborative's other managing director Maria Köpf: "All of his themes are in there: fate, coincidence, desperation and redemption through the belief in love. It was clear, however, that Tom was going to make 'The Princess and the Warrior' first."

Tykwer did so but the themes of HEAVEN continued to percolate, in part because they are not dissimilar from those found in “The Princess and the Warrior,” which is also about two people who come together under intense circumstances and eventually teach one another about love. “There is a common theme in both films: the idea of a person who has withdrawn and locked himself – or herself, in the case of HEAVEN -- up emotionally and must, with unbelievable ardor and stamina, be opened up again to emotions,” says Tykwer. “But in HEAVEN, the roles are reversed between man and woman, and the setting is radically different, which gives the film a very distinct mood and atmosphere.”

HEAVEN, Tykwer explains, also ups the stakes by placing its two lovers in extremely desperate, almost hopeless, circumstances, allowing the heroes of the film to exist in a kind of ethereal state of grace brought about by a sense of doomed fate and time running out. “This shows the brilliance of Kieslowski and Piesewicz as writers,” Tykwer observes. “In their work, they start with very simple elements, but these then lead to a devastating web of complications that cannot seem to be escaped. As an observer, you grow more desperate for the lead characters – whom the film forces you to get close to in spite of their crimes – to find their way out of this maze.”

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“A group of people prepared to immerse themselves so deeply . . .”

Almost from the minute Tom Tykwer read HEAVEN, he had a singular actress in mind to play the alternately strong and devastated character of Phillipa: Cate Blanchett. “The idea of casting Cate at first was a crazy idea that turned into an obsession,” admits Tykwer. “Incredibly, it became a reality. The script was sent to Cate and two weeks later she was signed on. It was not only unbelievable, it was a little uncanny.”

Tykwer felt that the inner struggle of Phillipa, whose unabating anger at a drug dealer turns her unexpectedly into a vigilante, was key to the film’s impact. “Phillipa is a woman who commits an unforgivable error,” he says. “She kills innocent people. But she still remains in the center of the film. As witnesses to her gradual development, we are forced to have an understanding of her and the transformation that she undergoes. This is a major challenge, because we really want to distance ourselves morally from this character. HEAVEN tries to overcome this moral distance and open the audience’s heart to people like her who appear to be lost. Her character is all about freeing a woman who previously saw life in rigid patterns, who must learn to escape negativity.”

Says Cate Blanchett of her snap decision to take the risky role: “It was a very instinctive choice, and a very quick one. Somehow I knew immediately I wanted to be a part of this thing. It’s an incredibly meaningful story, and when Tom and I met for the first time we had this very far-reaching conversation that could have lasted for days.”

Blanchett found herself particularly fascinated by the film’s tangle of difficult themes and emotions. She says: “The strength and the depth of this screenplay are that it forces us to ask unusual, extremely provocative and deep-cutting questions about spirituality and love, forgiveness and punishment, and many other things that we often prefer not to think about in our everyday lives.”

And in order to let these powerful underlying themes come to the fore, Blanchett saw the process of making HEAVEN as a kind of personal search for truth, in collaboration with cast and crew. “When you take on a project and you already know all the answers, you end up making a one-dimensional film,” she says. “That’s why it was immensely enjoyable on this project to work with a group of people who were prepared to go so far and immerse themselves so deeply in something– and that’s also why I enjoyed working with Giovanni so much. I very much hope that we have succeeded in making a film that will touch people both on a visual level and on a deeper, spiritual level. It’s a film that’s meant to leave you thoughtful rather than giving answers up front.”

Of Blanchett’s wide-ranging performance, which runs the gamut from primal anger to bereft devastation to spiritual longing, Tykwer says: “Cate’s presence is ambiguity made flesh. Photographing her is incredibly demanding. She has a face that is always capable of changing. At the same time, there are very few people in the world who are as much in command of what they project, not just technically but also in terms of their aura, as she is. She has mastered the interplay between absolute control and completely letting go of her emotions. That’s very important, because it is also a hallmark of the character she plays: a person who, in a virtually obsessed state, is capable of committing a controlled act that she is also able to justify within her schematic way of thinking. But as she allows emotion and love into her life again, her view of the world changes as well.”

Tom Tykwer expected the search for Filippo, the intense young police officer who sacrifices everything – his job, his father, his own freedom -- to help Philippa escape, to prove more difficult. But in an unusual move, Giovanni Ribisi took the initiative and did the work for him. “I read the script and immediately started chasing Tom around,” he recalls. “I flew to Europe a few times to see Tom and

annoyed him quite a bit. I really wanted to take on this challenge. To me, the screenplay had a simplicity that contained no apology of any kind. This is a recurring theme I see in Kieslowski's films, and especially in this script."

Tykwer recalls meeting Ribisi early on in the casting process: "What was supposed to be a five-minute meeting turned into an intense three-hour session. The strange effect of it was that I immediately saw Filippo in front of me. However, I wasn't willing to believe that the first one could be the right choice, so I had to make sure. I met with dozens and dozens of other actors, many of them very interesting, but in the end the Filippo I imagined simply didn't make an appearance. Clearly, I just had to go through all this in order to recognize that my very first impression really was correct. Giovanni's style of tender obsession predestined him for the part. There was a quiet determination and insistence that he absolutely had to play Filippo, so that eventually I could see it too. My impression was that he had read the script as an actor in the same way that I had done as a director."

Together, Ribisi and Blanchett agreed to be fearless, to take the same kinds of bold emotional risks their characters are so willing to jump into as part of the story. Recalls Blanchet: "When my husband came for a visit during the shoot, he said, 'My God, it's all so intense.' I considered it for a moment and thought, 'You're right, it is intense.' But after all, we are dealing with a man and a woman experiencing things that very few people ever go through. One could almost describe it as a meta-natural condition. A woman who accidentally kills four people and then plans another murder in order to be able to go on, to get over it -- that is something very, very few of us can imagine in our lives. We're dealing with people who are haunted by these astonishing acts."

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"Filmmaking is a dialogue. . ."

As production of HEAVEN proceeded, it became more and more a mixture of historical legacy, youthful innovation and personal vision. Once Tykwer began to work on the script in earnest, he found himself taking advice from an extremely diverse and creative production team that included such members as award-winning writer-director Anthony Minghella and lauded American filmmaker Sydney Pollack. In a sense, this too, reflected Krzysztof Kieslowski, who always believed strongly in the collaborative spirit of filmmaking.

Minghella and Tykwer worked closely in refining the script for HEAVEN. Explains Tykwer: “I worked through the script in great detail with Anthony Minghella. Anthony sees himself primarily as an author and only then as a director, and in working with him, I saw that very clearly and benefited from it very much. With him, I once again carved out a path into the story until I had fully internalized it and made it completely my own.”

Minghella himself sees his writing contribution as relatively small: “My work on the script was limited to cosmetic corrections. As a Briton, I was able to help Tom convey the meaning of the script directly from the Polish. I say that not so much in a literal sense—I’m talking more about issues of content and semantic things that I was able to contribute. I also helped Tom to situate the film in Italy in such a way that all of the elements were right. My family background is Italian, so I have a good feel for that. Tom did the creative work; I was just an adviser.”

Nevertheless, as their relationship deepened, Minghella found himself even more impressed by Tykwer’s instincts and filmmaking artistry. “Tom’s films could only come from him—they are genuine visions,” says Minghella. “Along with his technical expertise, he has an uncannily precise insight into the human psyche. He does not shy away from either risk or hard work as he makes his ideas reality.”

Sydney Pollack also downplays his role in the production, although Tykwer says that Pollack had a real knack for making exactly the right suggestion, especially in the editing room. “As a detective, Sydney is extremely quick,” says Tykwer. “He immediately gets to the heart of any problems.” Says Pollack: “I only tried to support Tom and only made a few suggestions. Tom found some of them useful and rejected others. He is an intelligent listener. He listens without ever feeling as if he is being attacked, and he always passionately defended his point of view. I have a great deal of respect for his views and his sense of when he has to say no. He knows exactly what he wants.”

In addition to being an experiment in mixing filmmakers’ visions, HEAVEN was also an experiment in a new style of free-wheeling globally cooperative filmmaking – something the X Filme cooperative is particularly interested in exploring in order to create a dynamic future for cinema. “HEAVEN is a film for which we had to bring together many different energies – and to move across various languages and national boundaries. We had slowly been working toward this kind of filmmaking already with X Filme,” says Maria Köpf, “so this was a wonderful opportunity to really explore it in action.”

For Cate Blanchett, this overriding sense of cooperation and crossing boundaries was key to the film's entire production process. She notes: "Kieslowski himself once said 'filmmaking is a dialogue.' And along those very lines, this film was a true cooperation between a lot of artists from all over the world. And what we all shared in common is a search for some kind of truth."

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"HEAVEN had to be set in Italy . . ."

When it came to setting, Tom Tykwer remained faithful to Kieslowski's script. "HEAVEN had to be set in Italy," he says. "In particular, this has something to do with a spiritual presence in the country. There is no better place than Italy in which to situate this connection to the theological and the transcendent, especially in a city like Turin where the geometry is so unsettling and which, at the same time, has always been a center of the occult, with an unbelievable variety of shades of belief."

He continues: "Turin is incredibly beautiful and interesting, architecturally speaking, and totally underrepresented in film. Despite all the modernity, the atmosphere of past centuries is present everywhere you go. But for me, the most amazing thing about Turin was discovering the positively brutal graphical severity of this city. It first became really clear to me when we flew over the city in a helicopter. You can overlay the city with a grid that is virtually oppressive, and naturally it has our characters trapped. So the heroes have to escape not only from prison, but also from this city, which, because of its structure, doesn't let go of people."

This is contrasted with the film's other major location: the Tuscan countryside. "Tuscany is exactly the opposite of Turin," notes Tykwer. "The soft hills whose colors blend into one another are symbols of an almost limitless landscape. The lyrical power of the Tuscan countryside provides something that is very melancholy but simultaneously liberating. When the characters arrive in Tuscany, we know that things will take on a clarity that wasn't visible before. In Turin, where the film begins, darkness and negativity still dominate."

The characters' journey from darkness into light is also reflected in the film's poetic and passionate camerawork, provided by Frank Griebe, who worked very closely with Tom Tykwer. "Frank and I did a lot of experiments," states Tykwer, "and we were always looking for new nuances in order to take the film slowly from a certain hardness and violence toward a gentler, softer, and more open narrative style in terms of color and movement. We spent a long time figuring out how to do that without

being too obvious about it. And yet we wanted it to be palpable—how the film moves from one set of circumstances to another and how the film itself becomes a different one.”

The creative intensity on the set continued into the editing room, in part because Tykwer and his editor, Mathilde Bonnefoy, had set themselves the goal of making a particularly precise and concise film without any extraneous elements. Says Tykwer: “Mathilde’s courage and her achievement lie in her having pushed me hard to cut even things that were spectacular, and reduce the film to its very essence. The film became as concentrated and clear as it could possibly be.”

Anthony Minghella summarizes: “HEAVEN is more of a haiku than an ornate gothic poem. It is an unbelievably tight, controlled film that demanded everything of its filmmakers and demands a lot of the audience as well. It appeals equally to mind and heart. When you’re dealing with themes like these—guilt, fate, fighting for love and redemption—there is no other way.”

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ABOUT THE CAST

Cate Blanchett (Philippa)

Cate Blanchett has become one of the most sought-after leading ladies of her generation, with her recent work including Sam Raimi's dark thriller "The Gift," Gillian Armstrong's wartime drama "Charlotte Gray," Barry Levinson's comedy "Bandits" and an appearance as the Elf queen Galadriel in Peter Jackson's critical and box-office hit "The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring."

Blanchett's breakthrough came with her impressive performance in the title role of Shekhar Kapur's "Elizabeth," which earned her an Oscar nomination and a Golden Globe Award. The versatile beauty was also seen in Anthony Minghella's film version of Patricia Highsmith's "The Talented Mr. Ripley," Mike Newell's "Pushing Tin," and the Oscar Wilde adaptation "An Ideal Husband." "The Man Who Cried," with Johnny Depp and Christina Ricci, was entered in the 2000 Venice International Film Festival.

Cate Blanchett attended the National Institute of Dramatic Art in Sydney after studying art history and economics at Melbourne University. She then joined the Sydney Theatre Company and appeared in "Top Girls" and "Kafka Dances," for which she won a "Best Newcomer" award from the Sydney Theatre Critics in 1993. Her performance in Oleanna earned her a Rosemont Award the same year.

Although she remained loyal to the theater, in 1994 she began gaining experience in front of the cameras in television productions such as "Heartland," "Bordertown," and the "Police Rescue" series. Her first sizable film role came in 1997, when she appeared with Glenn Close in Bruce Beresford's World War drama "Paradise Road." An impressive performance opposite Ralph Fiennes in Gillian Armstrong's literary adaptation "Oscar and Lucinda" brought her to the attention to Shekar Kapur, who then offered her the lead role in "Elizabeth."

Giovanni Ribisi (Filippo)

Within just a few years, Giovanni Ribisi (born in 1976) has made a name for himself as one of Hollywood's most promising young talents, thanks to a series of impressive performances in film and television. His recent work includes the action film "Gone in 60 Seconds" with Nicolas Cage and Angelina Jolie, the Wall Street thriller "Boiler Room" with Ben Affleck and Scott Caan and Sam Raimi's "The Gift" with his HEAVEN co-star Cate Blanchett. He also won effusive praise from critics for his performance as the brother of murderer Gary Gilmore in Agnieszka Holland's television version of Mikal Gilmore's true-crime novel "Shot in the Heart." Ribisi will next be seen in Shane Edelman's "According to Spencer," with a screenplay by his sister Marissa Ribisi.

Ribisi's most memorable performances to date were his portrayal of a mentally retarded boy in "The Other Sister," opposite Juliette Lewis, and as a young medic in Steven Spielberg's World War Two epic "Saving Private Ryan." In 1999, Ribisi also appeared in the film version of the television series "The Mod Squad" with Claire Danes and Omar Epps.

The actor also drew attention in David Lynch's cinematic nightmare "Lost Highway," Tom Hanks's directorial debut "That Thing You Do!," Kevin Costner's apocalyptic thriller "The Postman," and in a

recurring role as Frank Jr. on the hit series "Friends." After he earned his first rave reviews in Richard Linklater's film version of Eric Bogosian's piece "Suburbia," Ribisi was also seen in films such as "First Love, Last Rites," "Phoenix," and Sofia Coppola's celebrated directorial debut "The Virgin Suicides."

Remo Girone (Filippo's Father)

Born in 1948, Remo Girone has been working as an actor since the early 1970s. After university studies in economics and business, he made his debut in 1973 in Miklos Jancso's "Roma Riuole Cesare." His breakthrough came two years later with Marco Bellochio's "Il Gabbiano" (1975). Girone subsequently took on roles in Pasquale Squitieri's "Corleone" (1978), Beppo Cino's "Diceria Dell'Untore" (1989), Ettore Scuola's "Il Viaggio Di Capitan Fracassa" (1990), and Véra Belmont's "Marquise" (1997), in which the lead role was played by Sophie Marceau.

Girone became well-known outside Italy when he appeared in the third through seventh seasons of "Alone Against the Mafia." He was also seen in Lamberto Bava's mini-series "Fantaghiro 5." On stage, the actor took on roles in plays such as "Romeo and Juliet," "Mirra," "Orestes," "Uncle Vanya," and "Death of a Salesman." Girone most recently appeared as Detective Giovanni Volterro in the TV-movie "Morte Di Una Ragazza Per Bene."

Stefania Rocca (Regina)

Stefania Rocca, born in 1971, is an experienced Italian actress who has drawn attention not just in Italian projects but in English-language ones as well. Her most prominent roles were in Anthony Minghella's "The Talented Mr. Ripley" (1999), Kenneth Branagh's "Love's Labors Lost" (1999), and Gabriele Salvatore's "Nirvana" (1997). She was also seen in Mike Figgis's "Hotel" (2001). Stefania Rocca was awarded the Grolla d'Oro as best actress for her work in the film "Rosa E Cornelia" by Giorgio Treves. Other films in which she has appeared include "Poliziotti" (1995), "Inside/Out" (1997), "Correre Centro" (1997), and "Senso Unico" (1999).

Since making "Heaven," she has stepped before the cameras in two major two-part TV-movies: "Risurrezione" by the Taviani brothers and Roger Young's "Dracula," which will also feature Kai Wiesinger, Muriel Baumeister, and Hardy Krüger, Jr. She has also appeared in television productions such as "The Bible," "Lourdes," "Ombre," and "Voci Notturne."

On stage, Stefania Rocca has had roles in "Polygraphe" by Robert Lepage, "Totem," "Angelo E Beatrice," and "Exyle."

Mattia Sbragia (Major Pini)

Mattia Sbragia can look back at a career in film, television, and theater that has spanned nearly thirty years. His debut film was Franco Rosetti's "Nipot Miete Diletti" (1974), and since then he has appeared in numerous Italian productions such as Tonino Cervi's "Ritratto Di Borghesia In Nero" (1977), Mauro Bolognini and Pasquale Festa Campanile's "La Dame Aux Camélias" (1981), Franco Castellano's "Il Burbero" (1987), Ruggero Deodato's "Ragno Gelido" (1988), Pupi Avati's "Storia Die Ragazzi E Ragaze" (1989), and Ricky Tognazzi's "Cadaveri Eccelenti" (1998). Sbragia has also acted in international productions such as "The Year of the Gun" (1991) by John Frankenheimer, "Only You" (1994) by Norman Jewison, and James Ivory's film version of "The Golden Bowl" by Henry James (1999).

Sbragia has also appeared countless times on television, in productions such as Damiano Damiani's TV-movie "The Train" and a new version of "The Count of Monte Cristo." On stage, he has had roles in works such as "The Tempest," "Orestes," "Faust," and "The Iliad." Sbragia himself has staged theatrical productions of "Madame Bovary," "Padrone Del Mondo," "La Poltrona," "Ore Rubate," and other plays.

Stefano Santospago (Vendice)

Stefano Santospago has been an integral part of Italy's theater and television scene since the late 1970s and 1980s. His accomplishments include co-founding a cultural center in Rome, for which he has produced plays by Beckett and Brecht. He himself has appeared on stage in works such as "Lear," "As You Like It," "Largo Desolato," "Moby Dick," "Orgia," and many more. His television roles have been numerous as well: they include "Per Amore e per Vendetta," "Il Processo," "Un Cane E Un Poliziotto," "L'ispettore Guisti," "Il Clendestino," and "Il Santo."

Santospago's career on the big screen came later—"Heaven" marks his film debut. Since appearing in this work, he has filmed two other projects: Mark Roper's "The Sea Wolf" (2001) and Ivano De Matteo's "Ultimo Stadio" (2002).

Alberto Di Stasio (Public Prosecutor)

Alberto Di Stasio received his training at the Accademia d'Arte Drammatica. His first film roles came in the mid-1980s, among them in Piero Schivazappa's "La Signora Della Notte" (1985), Marco Bellocchio's "Il Diavolo In Corpo" (1986) with Maruschka Detmers, and Cesare Ferrario's "Il Mostro Di Firenze" (1987). Since then, he has also appeared in "Il Tempo Del Ritorno" (1993), "Festival" (1997), "Elvjs E Merilijn" (1998), and "Femmina" (1998).

Along with his numerous television appearances, which include one season of the hit series "Alone Against the Mafia," di Stasio has enjoyed his greatest successes in the theater. His stage work includes roles in such plays as "Medea," "Euripides," "Kafka," "Antigone," and "The Idiot." Di Stasio has also taken on the role of director in productions such as "Salomé," "Orestes," "The Oresteia," and "Oedipus Rex."

ABOUT THE FILMMAKERS

Tom Tykwer (Director)

Tom Tykwer was born in Wuppertal, Germany in 1965. He made his first Super 8 films when he was an eleven-year-old movie buff, and began working in repertory cinemas in 1980. He took over responsibility for programming at Berlin's Moviemento theater in 1988. To make ends meet, he combined this job with work as a script-reader and made television profiles of various directors. After making two short films ("Because" and "Epilog") he made his first feature film, 1993's "Deadly Maria."

In 1994, Tykwer joined forces with Stefan Arndt, Wolfgang Becker, and Dani Levy to form the production company X Filme Creative Pool, which made fourteen films over the next seven years. They included "Life is All You Get," for which Tykwer and Wolfgang Becker wrote the screenplay in 1995. He then made his second feature film, "Winter Sleepers" (1996/97).

This was followed by 1998's "Run Lola Run," which became X Filme's first major international success. In Germany, where it was made, the film was the biggest German hit of the year, and it had spectacular box office sales throughout the world. In the United States alone, the film became one of the most successful foreign films ever shown there. Tykwer's fourth film was "The Princess and the Warrior," in which he once again worked with "Lola" star Franka Potente. This film marked the successful debut of the newly founded distributor X Verleih AG. "The Princess and the Warrior" was first screened before an international audience at the 2000 Venice International Film Festival, and it has since played in over twenty countries. In 2001, the film also won a silver "Lola," the German Film Award for best picture.

Krzysztof Kieslowski (Screenplay)

Four years after his death on March 13, 1996, Krzysztof Kieslowski is still one of the most prominent and influential European filmmakers. HEAVEN is his last screenplay, left unfilmed at the time of his death, and the first part of a planned trilogy entitled "Heaven, Hell, and Purgatory."

Kieslowski was born on June 27, 1941, in Warsaw. He received his degree in directing from the University of Theater, Film, and Television in Lodz in 1969. Initially, the focus of his work was documentary films. His first foray into dramatic material came in 1973, with the TV-movie "Przejscie Podziemne." Two years later, he directed his first film, "Personel." Until 1980, the up-and-coming filmmaker continued to make both feature films and documentaries at the same time.

From 1979 to 1982, Kieslowski taught in the film and television department at Silesian University in Katowice. He was also vice-president of the Association of Polish Filmmakers from 1978 to 1981.

In the mid-1980s, Kieslowski and his author Krzysztof Piesiewicz came up with the idea of making an unusual version of the Ten Commandments: ten sixty-minute films for television, brought together under the name "Dekalog," that told stories of daily life in Poland. Two feature-film versions of the groundbreaking work, "Krotki Film O Zabijaniu" (1987) and "Krotki Film O Milosci" (1988), finally brought Kieslowski international recognition.

"Le Double Vie de Veronique" (1990) was the first film Kieslowski made outside Poland: portions of the film, which featured Irène Jacob, were shot in France. Paris was also the birthplace of his much-admired

trilogy “Trois Couleurs”–“Bleu,” Blanc, and “Rouge.” At the Berlin International Film Festival, Kieslowski declared that his career as a filmmaker would end when the trilogy was completed; he later changed his mind. However, he never again worked as a director. At the age of 54, Kieslowski died unexpectedly of a heart attack on March 13, 1996, in Warsaw.

Krzysztof Piesiewicz (Screenplay)

Krzysztof Piesiewicz was born in Warsaw in 1945. After studying law at the local university, he became an attorney in the Polish capital. He still works as an attorney. Specializing in criminal law, he has served as defense attorney in many important criminal cases. Piesiewicz represented Solidarity in the political trials that took place between 1981 and 1987.

Krzysztof Piesiewicz has been writing screenplays since 1983. Together with Krzysztof Kieslowski, he co-authored the Kieslowski films “Bez Konca” (1984), “Krotki Film O Zabijaniu” (1987) and “Krotki Film O Milosci” (1988) as well as the ten-part miniseries “Decalog” which served as a basis for the latter two films. He also co-authored “Le Double Vie de Veronique” (1990), and the “Trois Couleurs” trilogy “Bleu,” “Blanc,” and “Rouge.”

In 1990, Piesiewicz was awarded the Golden Lion at the Gdansk Festival and the Premio Flaiano in Pescara for “Krotki Film O Zabijaniu” and “Krotki Film O Milosci.”

Anthony Minghella (Executive Producer, Mirage Enterprises)

Anthony Minghella was born in 1954 on the Isle of Wight, as the son of Italian ice-cream makers. Before beginning his work as an author in 1981, he lectured at the University of Hull and dreamed of a career as a musician. In 1984, he won the London Theatre Critics award for the year’s most promising playwright for his plays “A Little Drowning,” “Love Bites,” and “Two Planks and a Passion.” In 1996, the same critics’ association awarded him the prize for the year’s best play for his piece “Made in Bangkok.”

After a decade spent working successfully as a writer for theater and television, Minghella made his debut as a director of feature films with 1991’s “Truly, Madly, Deeply.” With Alan Rickman and Juliet Stevenson in the lead roles, the film (for which he also wrote the screenplay) won a number of major awards, including a BAFTA award and prizes from the Writers Guild of Great Britain and the Australian Film Institute. Minghella directed his second film, “Mr. Wonderful,” in 1993; Matt Dillon and Annabella Sciorra starred.

Fortune smiled on the director in 1996: Minghella’s three-hour adaptation of the bestseller “The English Patient” by novelist Michael Ondaatje, featuring Ralph Fiennes and Kristin Scott Thomas won nine Oscars and became a hit in theaters around the world. Since then, the director has been considered one of the world’s leading filmmakers. With his most recent directorial project, 1999’s “The Talented Mr. Ripley” featuring Matt Damon, Gwyneth Paltrow, Jude Law, and “Heaven” star Cate Blanchett, Minghella cemented his reputation as a filmmaker who almost effortlessly reconciles high artistic standards with commercial movie-making.

In addition to making his own films, Minghella has worked for several years as a creative consultant for Jim Henson Productions, for which he also wrote all nine episodes of the Emmy-winning television series “The Storyteller.” He is currently at work on pre-production for his next film project, an adaptation of the novel “Cold Mountain.”

Maria Köpf (Producer, X Filme)

Maria Köpf was born in Munich in 1962. She studied American Literature and Film and TV Studies in Berlin and New York. Since the late 80's, she has committed herself to the production and marketing side of film-making in positions such as distribution executive, production manager and program director and manager of the Berlin art-house movie theater "Sputnik" (together with Stefan Arndt).

She has continuously worked for X Filme creative pool since 1995, starting as post-production supervisor for "Silent Night". Since 1996 she has been working with Tom Tykwer, initially as line producer (Wintersleepers), executive producer (Run Lola Run) and then producer ("The Princess And The Warrior" in 2000 and "Heaven" in 2002). She also produced the award-winning debut "Paul Is Dead" by Hendrik Handloegten for television and the feature film "Never Mind The Wall" by Connie Walther, which was nominated for Best Film at the German Film Awards 2002.

Maria Köpf is Co-Manager of X Filme creative pool.

At the moment she is producing Hendrik Handloegten's second feature "Learning To Lie" and is in post-production with Tom Tykwer's short film "True", which was shot for the international compilation film "Paris, Je t'aime".

William Horberg (Executive Producer, Mirage Enterprises)

William Horberg was born in Chicago and studied flute at the Berkeley College of Music. In 1979, he founded the Sandberg Theatre in Chicago, a repertory cinema that has since become extremely well-known. A year later he established an independent television production firm, for which he made several films about important blues musicians such as Muddy Waters, Albert King, and Junior Wells.

Horberg joined Sydney Pollack's production company, Mirage Enterprises, in 1992. Since then, he has been responsible for producing films such as "Sliding Doors" (1997), "Searching for Bobby Fisher" (1993), "The Firm" (1993), "Sense and Sensibility" (1995), and "Sabrina" (1995). Horberg most recently produced "The Talented Mr. Ripley" (1999), Paddy Breathnach's "Blow Dry" (2001), and Philip Noyce's "The Quiet American" (2002).

Prior to that, Horberg worked for Paramount, where he handled productions such as "The Addams Family" (1991), "Dead Again" (1991), "Regarding Henry" (1991), "The Naked Gun 2½: The Smell of Fear" (1991), "The Godfather, Part III" (1990), and "Ghost" (1990).

Stefan Arndt (Producer, X Filme)

Stefan Arndt was born in Munich in 1961. With Tom Tykwer, Dani Levy, and Wolfgang Becker, he is a founder and partner of the creative collective X Filme creative pool and always serves as producer of the company's films. In addition, he is a co-founder and board member of X Verleih. In his capacity as producer, he participated in the creation of Dani Levy's "Silent Night" (1995) and "Meschugge" (1998), Wolfgang Becker's "Life is All You Get" (1997), Sebastian Schipper's "Absolute Giganten" (1999), Connie Walther's "Wie Feuer und Flamme" (2001), Michael Klier's "Heidi M." (2001), and Tom Tykwer's "Winter Sleepers" (1997), "Run Lola Run" (1998), and "The Princess and the Warrior" (2000). Along with "Heaven," Arndt is currently working on Becker's "Goodbye, Lenin!," Levy's "Väter," and Horst J. Sczerba's "Herz."

Arndt, who is self-taught, co-founded Berlin's Sputnik Collective in 1984, and in 1992 he took over as managing director of Sputnik Film. Later that year, he and Tom Tykwer founded the production company Liebesfilm. One year after that, Liebesfilm produced Tykwer's directorial debut, "Deadly Maria."

Manuela Stehr (Producer, X Filme)

After completing her education (1984–1991), Manuela Stehr, an attorney, was responsible for producing the following films in Berlin: “Va Banque” (1986), Diethard Küster; “Man Kann Ja Nie Wissen” (1987), Gerhard Hostermann; “Das Andere Ende der Welt” (1988), Imogen Kimmel; “Geschichten Aus Einer Anderen Welt” (1991), Ivan Fila. From 1992 to 1999, she held the position of director of production support at Filmstiftung Nordrhein-Westfalen; beginning in 1997, she was also an authorized signatory and deputy managing director. Since January 2000, she has been a co-managing director and producer at X Filme Creative Pool GmbH. She became a board member of X Verleih AG in October 2000. Since that time, she has served as producer of the films “Heidi M.” (2001), Michael Klier; “Herz” (2001), Horst Sczerba; “Heaven” (2001), Tom Tykwer; “Väter” (to be completed in 2002), Dani Levy.

Frank Griebe (Cinematographer)

Frank Griebe is considered one of Germany’s best cinematographers. He was awarded the German Film Award in 1998 for his work on “Winter Sleepers” (1997) and “Zugvögel...Einmal Nach Inari” (1998). Last June, he won the accolade for the second time for his work on “Run Lola Run” (1998). “The Princess and the Warrior” (2000) was his fourth outing as director of photography of a Tom Tykwer film, and it won him a nomination for the 2001 European Film Award. He was also the cinematographer on Sebastian Schipper’s directorial debut, “Absolute Giganten” (1999).

Griebe began his career by apprenticing as a film duplication specialist. From 1984 to 1986, he trained as a government-certified camera assistant. For the next seven years, he worked in that capacity with cinematographers such as Herbert Müller, Michael Teutsch, Jürgen Jürges, and Erling-Thurmann Andersen on film and television productions, documentaries, and promotional films.

Griebe has been active behind the camera since 1991. His work includes Tom Tykwer’s short films “Because” (1991) and “Epilog” (1992), all of Tykwer’s feature films, Gregor Schnitzler’s “Im Namen des Gesetzes” (1995), Thomas Stiller’s “Die Brennende Schnecke” (1994), Christoph Eichhorn’s “Der Mann Auf Der Bettkante” (1995), and Peter Lichtefeld’s “Zugvögel...Einmal Nach Inari” (1998). In addition, he was the second-team cinematographer for Dani Levy’s “Silent Night” (1995).

For “Deadly Maria,” he won the Kodak Prize in 1993, the German Camera Award in 1994, and the student award at the Manaki Brothers Camera Festival in Bitola.

Mathilde Bonnefoy (Editor)

Mathilde Bonnefoy, born in Paris in 1972, worked with Tom Tykwer as editor of his earlier films “Run Lola Run” (1998) and “The Princess and the Warrior” (2000).

In 1991, Bonnefoy abandoned her university studies in philosophy in order to move to Berlin. After various other jobs, she worked as an assistant editor at a digital film and video editing company from 1995 to 1996. She edited a variety of music videos for acts such as Rammstein, Udo Lindenberg, and Bobo in White Wooden Houses as well as the soundtrack for Claudia Prietzel’s TV-movie “Kinder ohne Gnade”. Later on, she handled the Avid editing on “Das Leben Ist Eine Baustelle” (1997). Working on the latter project, she met Tom Tykwer. “Run Lola Run” marked her debut as lead editor of a feature film, for which she was also honored with the German Film Award in 1999.

Uli Hanisch (Production Designer)

Prior to his work on “Heaven,” Uli Hanisch joined Tom Tykwer as set designer on “Winter Sleepers” (1996) and “The Princess and the Warrior” (2000). He is considered one of the top people in Germany in his field. He was most recently responsible for designing “Das Experiment,” for which he received a German Film Award for set design.

Hanisch was born in Nuernberg in 1967. After university studies in visual communications in Duesseldorf, he started his career as a graphic designer for a number of advertising agencies. In 1987, he began his collaboration with Christoph Schlingensief. He took part in production of Schlingensief’s films “Das Deutsche Kettensägenmassaker” (1990), “Terror 2000” (1992), and “United Trash” (1994). Hanisch was involved as a set designer and prop master on a variety of TV-movies, series, and “Die Harald Schmidt Show.” Along with German productions such as “00-Schneider–Jagd Auf Nihil Baxter” (1994), “Praxis Dr. Hasenbein” (1996), “Aimée & Jaguar” (1998), and “Schlaraffenland” (1999), Hanisch was also active as a designer on large-scale European productions such as “The Baby of Macon” (1992) and “Tykho Moon” (1995). In addition, he has collaborated with Andrea Kessler continually since 1994.

Rated R for “a scene of sexuality”
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