



PRESENTS

YOUNG GOETHE IN LOVE

A film by Philipp Stölzl

**Starring Alexander Fehling, Miriam Stein, Moritz Bleibtreu,
Volker Bruch, Burghart Klaussner, Henry Hubchen**

Screenplay by Christoph Müller, Philipp Stölzl, Alexander Dydyna

Producers Christoph Müller and Helge Sasse

Press information available at: <http://www.musicboxfilms.com/young-goethe-in-love>

Running Time: 102 Minutes/In German with English Subtitles. Unrated.

Press Contact New York
Sophie Gluck & Associates
Sophie Gluck
124 West 79th Street
New York, NY 10024
Tel: (212) 595-2432
sophie@gluckpr.com

Press Contact Los Angeles
Marina Bailey Film Publicity
Marina Bailey
1615 North Laurel Avenue
Los Angeles, CA 90046
Tel: (323) 650-3627
marina@marinabailey.com

About Young Goethe

Germany 1772 - the young and tumultuous Johann Wolfgang von Goethe aspires to be a poet; but after failing his law exams, he is sent by his father to a sleepy provincial court to mend his ways. Unsure of his talent and eager to prove himself, Goethe soon wins the praise and friendship of his superior Kestner. But then Lotte enters his life and nothing is ever the same. However, the young lovers are unaware that her father has already promised Lotte's hand to another man.

Director and co-writer Phillip Stölzl returns to the very wellspring of Romanticism, Goethe's loosely autobiographical masterpiece *The Sorrows of Young Werther*, and conjures up a beguiling and refreshingly innocent period romance.

PRODUCER'S NOTE - Christoph Müller

Goethe is Germany's most famous and important poet and philosopher, yet there has never been a relevant feature film about this extraordinary personality.

There's a reason for this, too: Goethe could do everything and was everything! He was handsome, came from a wealthy family, wrote successful novels, theater plays and poems, was an accomplished horseback rider and fencer, invented roller skates and discovered the pharyngeal bone, and he was a natural scientist, privy councilor, traveler, artist, minister, lawyer, and much, much more – all in all, a universal genius and thus a completely non-dramatic character for a feature film! But there was a time in young Goethe's life when he was tortured by self-doubt and self-discovery. A time when he almost died due to an unrequited love, and the only thing that rescued him was dealing with the episode by writing about it.

The film *YOUNG GOETHE IN LOVE* tells the story of this 23-year-old, who achieved his greatest artistic success as a result of his greatest love pangs: *The Sorrows of Young Werther*. The appeal of the story is that it shows Goethe was not always the mythical figure and all-round genius as portrayed in thousands of books, interpretations and theories, but rather a young man who loved and suffered.

-Christoph Müller

PRODUCTION NOTES

"What's exciting about the story of how *Werther* was created is that it was Goethe's most personal, almost autobiographic novel, a work he was the proudest of, along with 'Faust'," says producer and co-writer, Christoph Müller.

"What's also unusual about the publishing history of *Werther* is that the exciting story in the epistolary novel has always been, even back then, viewed in connection with the actual events in Goethe's life. Almost every reader knew Goethe had experienced the love story with Lotte himself," continues Müller. "The wave of suicides as a result of *Werther* was the first media phenomenon and had never been seen before. The young men who killed themselves after reading *Werther*, however, ignored, the fact that Goethe was able to rescue himself from his self-destructive mood by writing the book."

But not only unhappy lovers devoured the famous novel. "*Werther* was an immense catalyst of sentimental pessimism, yearning, and passion," says Müller. "At first I developed a cinematic story that dealt with the period after the success of *Werther* and Goethe's writer's block afterwards – until my brother Markus came up with the idea that it would be much more exciting to develop the story of the 'blissful and dangerous summer of 1772 in Wetzlar,' which led to the creation of *Werther*. We then worked on different constellations of this story for a long time, but it wasn't until Philipp Stölzl and our young co-author, Alexander Dydyna, came along that we finally managed to hit on the right concept for the script."

Director and co-writer Philipp Stölzl adds, "I thought the idea to tell the story about the young Goethe was great – about Sturm und Drang, about the period when he still wasn't the famous privy councilor, minister, and poet laureate. Goethe studies law, he writes poetry, he falls

unhappily in love, he fights with his father. This has elements of a young man's rebellion; this is a Goethe you want to see in the cinema."

Müller says about the celebrated director of *NORTH FACE*: "I thought working with Philipp was very inspiring; I like how precisely he handles language, timing, and direction. For me as the producer, working together on the screenplay is the ideal way to do it, because you can adjust extremely well to the director's work methods before you start shooting the film." Stölzl adds, "At the same time, financing the film worked out very well and happened very quickly. We only needed about a year, from the moment we started to write the script to the moment we began shooting the film. Goethe as the concept, Christoph as the producer, me as the director – that worked."

Müller continues, "A historical film is just as elaborate as a science fiction film; you have to create a completely new world, because you can't find locations that look the way things looked in the 18th century anymore."

New and familiar faces in front of the camera

"Alexander Fehling had already been in films, but I didn't know him," says Stölzl. "He was the first candidate to show up at casting for the role of Goethe, and I knew after a minute that he's our lead. He was 100% convincing. And then shooting with Alexander confirmed it completely. He's an absolutely exceptional actor. He can play the comical moments as well as the tragic ones; he has an unbelievable palette – everything you want from an actor. We were extremely lucky to find him. His precise performance is also the result of our close collaboration, as we worked on and tried many variations together to arrive at what would serve the role the best."

On casting Miriam Stein as Lotte, Müller explains, "It's very, very rare that you discover someone like Miriam. With Goethe and also with Lotte, we considered whether we should cast established stars, because with an elaborate costume film, in your mind you automatically see big names on the film poster. But we liked Miriam best for the role of Lotte. Though she had never been in a feature film before, she rewarded us with her unbelievably intense performance." Stölzl agrees, "As Lotte, with her tousled hair, young Miriam Stein is the right contrast to Goethe. Most of all, she's a convincing actress with a large emotional range, which enraptured me and made me proud."

Goethe is not the only one who falls in love with Lotte – his superior, court councilor Kestner, does, too. Moritz Bleibtreu plays this role. "Moritz feels at home in every genre, from drama to comedy," says Müller. "With his very perceptive performance in the difficult role of Kestner he resonates with the audience." Stölzl adds, "You could have also cast Kestner as grayer and more bureaucratic. But we also wanted to show him as an attractive man; the audience has to believe he wants to marry this girl at any cost. There's something touching about that. This means the two men trying to win over Lotte's heart have more or less the same chance. If you wanted to make the accents clear from the start, then over here you would have the young, good-looking wild one, and over there the plain, boring one, who can only offer the girl a long and dismal married life— but then there wouldn't be any tension. That's why I'm even happier now about how well the triangle works between the men and Lotte."

The ensemble includes two renowned actors as the fathers: Burghart Klaussner and Henry Hübchen shine with the qualities you want to have in these small yet decisive roles.

Goethe's World – Smoke and Patina

"As the audience, you know and fear the costume film, where the actors seem to be wearing costumes and you have the feeling any second now in the background a group of tourists is going to walk through the castle," says Stölzl. "That's usually because the filmmakers want to present history as being cleaner than it really was. So as our guideline, we used the fact that when Goethe was alive the toilet hadn't been invented yet. If you look at the historical paintings of German cities you realize that at that time they didn't have paved streets yet, just mud, and the buildings were crooked and warped, paint peeled off the facades, chickens ran around everywhere, sewage flowed through ditches in the middle of the street. At night it was pitch dark, as they only had candles for light."

"So we wanted to have realistic images: smoke and patina are perhaps the best words to describe it," adds Müller. "The streets back then were muddy and dirty, you sense that traveling was exhausting and you had to overcome hindrances; there were vapors, smoke, and noise. Appropriately, not one of our costumes looks like it was delivered by a costume warehouse that morning. All of the clothes in our film were artificially patinated so they look as if the characters in the film had already been wearing them for a long time. The audience shouldn't be amazed by museum-like images, but rather notice that they're watching a modern, entertaining and yet historical film. This impression is really important to us – that's why we make sure that the sets and costumes are accurate."

Stölzl continues, "The costumes of the period present a big problem for filmmakers. Many of the people at that time still wore wigs, and other people had already cut off their proverbial 'old pigtails' and wore their own hair short. When you see men in wigs and those knickerbockers they wore at that time they often look a little absurd, so we had big problems creating the costumes in such a way that they looked wholeheartedly convincing. But in the end we succeeded."

For the production design Stölzl notes, "I insist that everything look as authentic as possible. We researched the 18th century with the wonderful production designer Udo Kramer, who had already worked with me on NORTH FACE, and we used paintings by Canaletto as a starting point. What did the cities and buildings look like at that time? What kinds of different architecture existed? What did the interiors look like? We found most of the locations that suited our purposes in Eastern Germany, in Thuringia and Saxony. From a practical point of view, we also wanted to find as many locations as possible that were very close together. We always planned to use original locations, and we would then add elements to suit our purposes in individual cases. The film crew put everything that was missing into the existing spaces to round out the overall image. This 'mixture technique' was invented by Udo and it's what I prefer, because one hundred percent of studio sets always lack the last speck of authenticity, and if you use an original location then you often have the feeling you're in a museum because the filmmakers aren't allowed to change anything or adapt it for the camera. The mixture technique demands a lot of supplemental work from the set designer, but the result is more homogenous."

The main locations in the film are the courthouse in Wetzlar and the Buff family home. For the Buff home, the filmmakers selected Wasserschloss Tauchritz, a rather dilapidated castle with a moat, near Görlitz on the Polish border. The location was noticeably altered: stairs, a kitchen, and a fireplace were added. The patina was left on the walls, but a lot of paint was necessary to make it suitable as a film location. In general, sixty percent of the set was the original space, and forty percent was added by Kramer and his set design crew.

For the courthouse, the film team chose a Renaissance building in Görlitz that is normally empty.

Inside the building, the set crew used many of the actual walls and floors and added some interior decoration to attain the right composition. The scene of the poetry reading in the Rococo atmosphere was shot in Görlitz at the local museum. It was important to plan everything with the director of photography Kolja Brandt, because he couldn't move the walls for the best camera position like you can on a studio set.

"From the start, we selected the locations in such a manner that the camera could be moved freely. The jail cell was the exception, because it was too narrow," remembers Stölzl. "On the other hand, I don't really like to use the movable walls in a studio, because if you use them too much and the camera is positioned too far from the objects you get an artificial look like a 'studio.' Overall, you find yourself on thin ice very quickly with a costume film, because often the characters seem very artificial in their powdered wigs. I did research for a long time and watched a lot of films to make sure I avoided this. The questions concerning lighting are part of this, too. They only had candlelight at that time – and that's often too dark for the camera. How much light should you add? You have to find a middle ground to show how the world looked back then in a way that's as believable as possible. That's why we decided to shoot only in real buildings."

Fact and Fancy

"The film *YOUNG GOETHE IN LOVE* is based for the most part on actual events. But if a Goethe expert were to say that this or that scene never happened, that's the wrong way to approach our film. We were more concerned about showing truths, which are more important than pure facts. You can't get very close to historical characters with facts alone," says Müller. "It was like that with *AMADEUS* and *SHAKESPEARE IN LOVE*."

Müller mentions an example: "In reality, the duel between Goethe and Kestner in the film never took place. But it's been proven that Goethe wished Kestner would die. Of course, you can convey that with dialogue. But it's more cinematic to transcribe this motif into dramatic images, to express what was really affecting Goethe in this situation. The duel sequence expresses, so to speak, Goethe's true emotions. An extreme example of such a dramatic truth is the key scene in Schiller's play 'Maria Stuart,' when Queen Elisabeth I and Maria Stuart have an argument in a park, although these historical figures never met. Schiller's theatrical invention gets us closer to these two people than all of the facts rolled together ever could."

"In our film, we combine Goethe's actual life with his own reflections on his life in *Werther*, and this results in a new truth," says Müller. "We even express this theme in the film, when Lotte is asked, 'Did it actually happen this way? Is all of this true?' And she answers, 'It is more than the truth. It is poetry.'"

ABOUT THE CAST

Alexander Fehling - Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

Born in 1981 in Berlin, Alexander Fehling studied at the Hochschule für Schauspielkunst Ernst Busch in Berlin from 2003–2007. In 2006, he received the O.E. Hasse Award from the Akademie der Künste (a sponsorship award for new actors). A year later he won the German Film Sponsorship Award for his lead role in the film "Am Ende kommen Touristen."

Fehling appeared in Quentin Tarantino's "Inglourious Basterds." He also appeared in the films "The Art of Dying;" Andres Veiel's "Wer wenn nicht wir;" "13 Semester;" Hans-Christian Schmid's award-winning film "Storm;" and Heinrich Breloer's "Buddenbrooks." His performances onstage include Peter Stein's production of the Friedrich Schiller trilogy "Wallensteins Lager /Die Piccolomini /Wallensteins Tod;" "Die lustigen Nibelungen;" "Glaube Liebe Hoffnung;" and "Schneewittchen." Upcoming feature films include "If Not Us, Who?;" "The River Used to Be a Man" and "Niemandland."

Miriam Stein - Lotte Buff

In 1999 Miriam Stein received the German Television Sponsorship Award for her performance in "Das Mädchen aus der Fremde." Then followed roles in the television films "Tod durch Entlassung;" "Alles wegen Hulk;" "Liebe and Wahn;" "Jimmie;" and Hermine Huntgeburth's "Neue Vahr Süd!" She also appeared recently in the film "180° – Wenn deine Welt plötzlich Kopf steht." Stein will be seen in the upcoming "Der Verdingbub" and "Oma in Roma."

Moritz Bleibtreu - Albert Kestner

Moritz Bleibtreu, born in Munich in 1971, has appeared in over 30 films and is one of Germany's busiest actors. Bleibtreu studied acting in Rome, Paris, and New York and debuted onstage at Hamburger Schauspielhaus. He is the son of actors Monica Bleibtreu and Hans Brenner.

Bleibtreu's cinematic debut was in Peter Timm's 1993 drama "Simply Love." He has received rave reviews for his performances in Tom Tykwer's "Run, Lola Run" and Oliver Hirschbiegel's psycho thriller "Das Experiment." Bleibtreu received the German Film Award for his role in the latter and again in 2001 for his role in Fatih Akin's romantic film "In July." After "Agnes and his Brothers," he starred in an Oskar Roehler film. He received a Silver Bear for Best Actor at the 2006 Berlinale for his performance as a sexually disorientated teacher in "Elementary Particles."

Recently, Bleibtreu has been performing more and more in international productions, including Steven Spielberg's "Munich," along with German-language feature films including "The Baader Meinhof-Complex" (as Andreas Baader); Fatih Akin's "Soul Kitchen," which won an award at the Venice Film Festival; Bernd Eichinger's "Electro Ghetto;" "My Best Enemy" and Oskar Rohler's "Jew Suss: Rise and Fall" (as Joseph Goebbels).

Burghart Klaussner - Lotte's father

Born in Berlin, Burghart Klaussner began studying at the Freie Universität and in 1969 continued his studies at the Max-Reinhard-Schule Berlin. Since then he has performed on almost every important stage in German-speaking countries.

Klaussner made his cinematic debut in 1983 in director Dietrich Schubert's first feature film, "Ziemlich weit weg." He worked with director Hans-Christian Schmid on "23," "Crazy," and "Requiem," and was nominated for the 2006 German Film Award as Best Supporting Actor. Klaussner was presented with this prestigious award the year before for his performance as the

kidnapped manager in Hans Weingartner's celebrated Cannes entry "The Edukators." At the 2006 Locarno International Film Festival, Klaussner won the Silver Leopard as Best Actor for his leading performance in "The Man from the Embassy" by Dito Tsintsadze. Klaussner played the judge in the Oscar®-nominated adaption of the novel by the same name, "The Reader" (directed by Stephen Daldry). In 2009 Klaussner portrayed the priest in Michael Haneke's drama "The White Ribbon," which won the Golden Palm at the Cannes International Film Festival, a Golden Globe, the European Film Award, and was also nominated for a Best Foreign Language Film Oscar®. For his performance, Klaussner received the German Film Critic's Award and the 2010 German Film Award for Best Actor.

Henry Hübchen - Johann's father

Henry Hübchen, born in 1947 in Berlin-Charlottenburg, advanced to become one of the most sought after actors in East Germany upon finishing his studies at the Hochschule für Schauspielkunst Ernst Busch Berlin (after he dropped out from the Physics program at the HU Berlin). His performance in "Jakob, the Liar" (1974, directed by Frank Beyer), earned him an Oscar® nomination—the only nomination for an East German film. He also worked with stage director Frank Castorf at the Berlin Volksbühne.

Hübchen celebrated his greatest triumph to date in Dani Levy's theatrical hit "Go for Zucker!" (2005) and was the first Eastern German actor to win the German Film Award after reunification. He also played alongside Katja Riemann in "Ein Mann für jede Tonart" (1993), starred in Dieter Wedel's TV series "Der Schattenmann" (1996) and "Der König von St. Pauli" (1997), was one of the stars in Leander Haussmann's hit comedy "Sun Alley" (1999) and dazzled in Hans-Christian Schmid's drama "Distant Lights" (2003). He starred in "Age and Beauty" (2008), "My Words, My Lies – My Love" and the Andreas Dresen comedy "Whiskey with Vodka" (both 2009) and will be seen next in "Poinishe Ostern, " "Rat mal, wer zur Hochzeit kommt" and "Jesus Loves Me."

ABOUT THE FILMMAKERS

Philipp Stölzl - Director, co-screenwriter

Philipp Stölzl was born in 1967 in Munich and now lives in Berlin. His range as a director is vast, from feature films to commercials, music videos to opera productions. Stölzl began his career as a theatre set designer, then transitioned in his late 20s to directing music videos and soon became internationally successful. He worked with, among others, Mick Jagger, Dave Stewart, Madonna, Luciano Pavarotti, Garbage and Marius Müller Westernhagen. He later established himself as a director of commercials for corporations including BMW, Nokia and Sony. He returned to the theatre, directing and designing sets for classical operas, including productions for the Ruhrtriennale, the Salzburg Festival and the Deutsche Oper Berlin. YOUNG GOETHE IN LOVE is his third feature film; his feature film debut was "Baby" in 2002, followed in 2008 by "North Face," which won two German Film Awards. Upcoming is "The Expatriate," starring Aaron Eckhart.

Christoph Müller - Producer, co-screenwriter

Christoph Müller, born in 1964 in Wuppertal, graduated from the Hochschule für Film und Fernsehen in Munich and was a co-author of Dominik Graf's film "The Scorpion" and Helmut Dietl's "Late Show." He also executive produced Bernd Eichinger's "Just the Two of Us." Afterwards he founded Goldkind Film in Munich with Bernd and Sven Burgemeister. Following successful movies such as "Soloalbum," he produced the Grimme Award-winning "Wholetrain" and Marc Rothemann's "Sophie Scholl," which won many awards including the Silver Bear, the Bavarian Film Award, the German Film Award and the European Film Award. It was also nominated for an Oscar® as Best Foreign Language Film. From 2006 to 2009, Christoph Müller was managing director of Senator Film Production, where he produced, along with several co-productions, the successful comedy "Complete Idiot" with Oliver Pocher; the mystery thriller "The Door" starring Mads Mikkelsen and Jessica Schwarz; and the melancholic comedy "Whiskey with Wodka" by Andreas Dresen, starring Henry Hübchen and Corinna Harfouch.

Alexander Dydyna – Co-screenwriter

25-year-old Alexander Dydyna celebrated success as a stage actor at Schauspielhaus Hannover before distinguishing himself as a producer, director, author, and editor of several award-winning short films. After numerous projects for various Germany-wide film and television productions as a dramatic advisor, story consultant, and producer, he had his cinematic screenwriting debut with YOUNG GOETHE IN LOVE. Alexander Dydyna lives and works in Berlin.

Kolja Brandt - Director of Photography

In 2009, Kolja Brandt won the German Film Award for his spectacular panoramas in Philipp Stölzl's "North Face." In 2006 he won the Bronze Camera at the Brothers Manaki International Film Festival (a festival dedicated solely to the works of directors of photography) with Detlev Buck's "Tough Enough." Previously, he was involved in short films such as "Im Dunkeln" with Christoph Maria Herbst; "Drei Wünsche;" "Aus Liebe zur Gefahr;" and "Ferkel." Other productions include the academy film "Letting Go;" the television film "Tänze in der Nacht;" the television series "Boomtown Berlin;" numerous commercials and music videos; and most recently, documentary films. Brandt also served as DP on Philipp Stölzl's upcoming "The Expatriate."

Produced by Senator Film Produktion and Deutschfilm, in co-production with Warner Bros. Film Prod. Germany and SevenPictures Film, in co-production with Erfttal Film, Goldkind Film, HerbX Film, Magnolia Film, CC Medien, Summerstorm Entertainment.

CAST

Alexander Fehling	Johann Goethe
Miriam Stein	Lotte Buff
Moritz Bleibtreu	Albert Kestner
Volker Bruch	Jerusalem
Burghart Klaussner	Lotte's father
Henry Hübchen	Johann's father
Hans-Michael Rehberg	Judiciary President Kammermeier
Linn Reusse	Anna Buff

CREW

Director

Philipp Stölzl

Producers

Christoph Müller

Helge Sasse

Screenwriters

Philipp Stölzl

Christoph Müller

Alexander Dydyna

Co-producers

Anatol Nitschke

Stefan Gärtner

Joachim Kosack

Klaus Dohle

Sven Burgemeister

Michael Bully Herbig

Christian Angermayer

Nina Bohlmann

Babette Schröder

Matthias Triebel

Production Manager

Peter Hartwig

Director of photography

Kolja Brandt

Film editor

Sven Budelmann

Costume design

Birgit Hutter

Make-up

Kitty Kratschke

Heike Merker

Production design

Udo Kramer

Music

Ingo L. Frenzel

Locations:

Görlitz, Schloss Merseburg, Quedlinburg, Osterwieck, Wasserschloss Tauchritz, Fürst-Pückler-Park in Bad Muskau, Dresden, Creuzburg, and Krompach in the Czech Republic

ABOUT MUSIC BOX FILMS

Founded in 2007, Music Box Films has quickly established itself as one of the leading distributors of non-English language feature films in the US in theatres, on DVD/Blu-ray and via Video-on-Demand. Music Box's release of Guillaume Canet's TELL NO ONE was the most popular foreign-language film of 2008 and in 2010, the film adaptations of Stieg Larsson trilogy of international mega sellers dominated the foreign-language film market. The first in the series, THE GIRL WITH THE DRAGON TATTOO, with over \$10 million in US box office, was one the most popular international releases of the decade. Music Box Films is independently owned and operated by the Southport Music Box Corporation which also owns and operates The Music Box Theatre, Chicago's premiere venue for independent and foreign films.

###