

DAS VERLANGEN



THE LONGING - LE DÉSIR

an Iain Diltthey film

GOLDEN LEOPARD / LEOPARD D'OR LOCARNO 2002

F I L M A K A D E M I E
B A D E N - W Ü R T T E M B E R G

in co-production with
Bayerischer Rundfunk / SWR (german television)

www.dasverlangen.de

SYNOPSIS

THE LONGING – a story of an exemption

DAS VERLANGEN (The longing) tells the story of Lena, the minister's wife delivered from the bleak prison of her marriage through her forbidden and quietly burgeoning love for Paul.

It is set in a dreary village in the Schwabian-Frankish Forest where the seemingly reserved Lena lives with her tyrant of a husband, Johannes, in a loveless marriage. Johannes is the village's spiritual leader and Lena is his faithful, ever-ready-to-serve wife. Lena's daily life is characterized by grinding monotony, a life narrowly circumscribed by nursing, organ playing and the duties of the marriage bed.

The mysterious murder of a village girl suddenly knocks this humdrum existence off its tracks. In the wake of these events Lena discovers the affection and tenderness for which she has always longed in Paul, the village mechanic. This encounter is the start of an emancipation that leads her not to reveal Paul's secret regarding the girl's murder, for fear of losing her newly won piece of happiness. In turn it means she has to remain silent, as she has always done in her many years of marriage.

So it is that this love ultimately turns Lena herself into a fallen angel.

LE DÉSIR - Voici l'histoire d'une libération.

DAS VERLANGEN (le désir) est l'histoire de Léna, la femme d'un pasteur qui se libère de la prison de son mariage grâce à l'amour balbutiant mais interdit qu'elle ressent pour Paul.

L'histoire se déroule dans un triste village de la forêt souabe-franconienne: c'est là que vit Léna, une femme apparemment renfermée et solitaire, mariée par raison à un époux despotique. Johannes est le pasteur du village et Léna est sa femme, toujours dévouée et soumise. La vie de Léna est monotone - le train-train morne et sans histoire de la vie quotidienne dans un petit village: une vie partagée entre les soins donnés aux malades, le service d'orgue au temple et les devoirs conjugaux.

Pourtant le meurtre mystérieux d'une jeune fille vient sortir le village de sa torpeur, amenant un peu de changement dans la monotonie du quotidien. C'est alors que Léna fait la connaissance du mécanicien du village, Paul vers lequel elle se sent attirée... y trouvant le réconfort et une tendresse qu'elle n'a jamais connue avec son mari. Cette rencontre est le début d'une émancipation qui entraîne Léna à ne pas dévoiler le secret de Paul en ce qui concerne le meurtre. Elle se tait, comme elle l'a toujours fait, pendant toutes les années de son mariage. Par peur de perdre son nouveau petit coin de bonheur, elle ne dénonce pas le meurtrier. C'est ainsi que finalement, par amour, Léna devient un "ange noir".

REVIEWS

„The magic of "The Longing" is more in the smaller details than the larger canvas, whose plain, austere surfaces recall late helmers like R.W. Fassbinder. Surprise winner of the Locarno fest's Golden Leopard amply confirms U.K.-born, German-based Iain Dilthey as a special talent, following his short feature, "I'll Wait on Your Hand and Foot" (2000). ...

Shot in sequence, with often lengthy takes, well-cast film has none of the semi-improvisatory, semi-docu looseness of the 64-minute "Wait." Only the characters are similar -- basically lonely people in search of a suitable medium (family, lover) through which to express their hidden tenderness.

First act draws the slow, repetitive rhythms of Lena's life with an exactitude that would be tedious if not for many small touches. As in "Wait," but here in a more stylized way, Dilthey shows a talent for drawing characters whose words don't always match their faces, and vice versa. Lena's actions may be those of a pastor's dutiful wife, but her eyes burn with a greater ambition and -- when she meets the right man -- love. In one marvelous scene, shot in a single take on a forest path, she morphs from shy wife to spirited lover, temporarily overwhelming Paul's tentative emotions.

More concretely, Dilthey often adds a small physical detail to a scene to give it some tension beneath the often bland dialogue: a perilously full bowl of soup, a coffee cup poised on the edge of a car. And on a broader level, the script device of having the village anxious over a series of local murders gives an unsettling feel to the otherwise pedestrian story.

A legit actress-director here making her screen debut, Wrage is superb, making Lena neither too dowdy nor too pretty and expressing her metamorphosis largely through facial reactions. In Wrage's strong and also enchanting perf, Lena is neither victim nor angel: At every stage, she appears a woman driven by her own desires. All other cast are fine, with east German thesp Manfred Kranich, who's worked on most of Dilthey's pics, particularly memorable as a cop who knows more than he lets on.

Blowup from 16mm looks sharp and clear on the bigscreen, with autumnal colors; other tech credits are pro.“

Reviewed at Locarno Film Festival (competing), Aug. 7, 2002. Running time: 90 MIN.

VARIETY, Derek Elley, Posted: Tue., Aug. 13, 2002

“The winner of this year's Golden Leopard in Locarno, *The Longing* (*Das Verlangen*), a low-budget film school graduate work by the Scottish-born, German-bred director Iain Dilthey, presents a redoubtable marketing challenge. With its sombre subject and heavy debt to traditional European art cinema, in particular Fassbinder, Bergman and Dreyer, this is rigorous, uncompromising fare that today looks perversely uncommercial. Its small but doubtless appreciative audience will be confined to ardent cinephiles, but daring specialist distributors may want to throw in their lot with an extremely promising new talent at the start of his career.

Das Verlangen wears its cinematic influences a little over-visibly. The Fassbinder touch also shows in Dilthey's preference for medium close shots and characters framed in windows or doorways, as well as in the timbre of the language and performances. Another reference point is Dreyer's *Day Of Wrath* (1943), whose lead actress bears a strong resemblance to Wrage and which is also about a pastor's wife embroiled in a taboo love affair.

However, there is also plenty of evidence here that Dilthey has a highly distinctive vision controlled technical accomplishment on all levels. An economical script tells the story with precision framing, effective use of colour, minimal camera movements and almost wordless scenes. Meanwhile Justus Pankau, a cameraman with 50 years' experience, ensures that the 16mm to 35mm transfer always looks great. Performances are stylised but striking across the board, with Wrage radiating a fierce wordless intensity that commands the screen throughout.”

SCREEN INTERNATIONAL, Sheila Johnston in Locarno, 13 August 2002

“The best film won.”

Der Blick, Switzerland, 12.08.02

“The appalling silence of a protestant minister’s marriage is played out with devastatingly asceticism in Iain Dilthey’s THE LONGING, a brooding northern tale of the apocalyptic release of pent-up desire. Dilthey’s technique of extreme languor and muteness accompanies the metamorphosis of a woman’s professional caring duties into a naïve maliciousness like a noiseless and eerie portent.”

Abendzeitung, 06.07.02

“With a stylisation reminiscent of Peter Haneke, Dilthey graphically illustrates the destructive passion of a pastor’s wife for Paul the village mechanic that culminates in searing catastrophe. Susanne Wrage as the catatonic woman is one of the discoveries of the Munich film festival.”

Blickpunkt Film, Germany 24.06.02

“Iain Dilthey has shown us a way to escape the treadmill of predictable and traditionally worthy subject matter: first love, first rebellion, the misery of puberty and the yearnings of consumer society and insider milieus. Dilthey’s work is at the same time low-key and inescapable. His outsider’s razor eye relentlessly slices open a hermetically sealed world, its deliberately anachronistic feel lending the film an intentionally oppressive and archaic mood, portraying with muted meticulousness a woman and her world in extremis.”

Prof. Martin Wiebel, at the Baden-Württemberg Screenplay Awards ceremony, Feb. 2002

TRILOGY OF YEARNING

1999 SOMMER AUF HORLACHEN (SUMMER AT HORLACHEN)

Premiere at Hof Film Festival 1999

2000 ICH WERDE DICH AUF HÄNDEN TRAGEN

(I’LL WAIT ON YOU HAND AND FOOT)

Premiere at Hof Film Festival 2000

Young Talent Award, Biberach Filmfestival 2001

Film school award in Gold: International Festival of Film Schools, Munich 2001

Student Camera Award: International Festival of Film Schools, Munich 2001

Best Actress, Gijon Film Festival 2001

54. Festival Internazionale del Film Locarno 2001: official competition

2002 DAS VERLANGEN (THE LONGING)

Baden-Württemberg Screenplay Award 2002

Munich (Filmfest 2002 : national premiere) - **55. Festival Internazionale del Film Locarno**

2002 : GOLDEN LEOPARD - Montreal (World Film Festival 2002: World Greats) –

Quebec City (Int. Film Festival) - Ghent (Flanders Filmfestival) - Budapest (10th Titanic

Filmfest) - Sao Paulo (Int. Filmfestival: Competition) - Pusan (Int. Filmfestival, South Korea) -

Gijon (Int. Filmfestival: Competition: **BEST DIRECTOR**) – Bratislava – Saarbrücken -

Göteborg – Trieste (Alpe Adria Cinema) - Angers (Premiere Plans: **BEST ACTRESS**

for Susanne-Marie Wrage) - Berlin – Belgrad – Sofia – Cleveland - Hong Kong – Bermuda -

Buenos Aires – Istanbul – Jerusalem – Stuttgart – Cairo – Bergen – New York, ...

GERMAN CINEMA screenings in Paris, Lyon, London, Edinburgh, Moskau, Berlin, Genua

THE LONGING marks the third and last part of the Trilogy of Longing that began with SUMMER AT HORLACHEN in 1999 and continued with I'LL WAIT ON YOU HAND AND FOOT. All three films portray women searching for their own small piece of happiness. In the process their unusual paths inevitably bring them full circle back to themselves.

SUMMER AT HORLACHEN tells the story of the naïve and slightly backward Anna, who lives in an incestuous relationship with her taciturn father on a remote farm. Only after she falls in love with Hans the drainage worker does Anna learn to question the insidious bond with her father and, in a futile attempt to gain her freedom, plans an act of retribution against him.

By contrast, in I'LL WAIT ON YOU HAND AND FOOT Ramona the Viennese orphan girl bears a child as the product of her fleeting affair with Toni, the love of her life. Taking her child with her she undertakes the journey to Germany to find him again, but Toni is not at all pleased. He has to take care of his father, and anyway he's in love with Lana, a Russian emigrant. But Ramona clings to her futile dream of a real family. Things could be worse... and by the end Ramona has in fact lost everything. If the family doesn't want her, then they're not going to get her baby. Ramona transforms into a mute, latter-day Medea and in a corrupt world succeeds in preserving her dignity and honour.

All the characters of the trilogy operate inside the personal microcosms in which they have established themselves. They are able to exist in this world for as yet it has not been questioned, making them mute prisoners while at the same time lending protection. They all have their niches and hiding places from which they themselves are loath to venture. Only an encounter with another person leads Lena, Ramona and Anna to a bonfire of emotions, which none of them can begin to quantify, oppose or come to terms with.

The characters are not called to account for their lives and actions. Once in motion, they are left to their own devices, without being released from their situation at the end. The action concludes at its emotional high point.

More so than the two preceding films, THE LONGING deals with the subject of loneliness. It explores the emotional barrenness and isolation of Lena's life. Whereas, in SUMMER AT HORLACHEN and I'LL WAIT ON YOU HAND AND FOOT, the protagonists stood on the edge of a world from which they were barred, all of the characters in the third film are settled in a world of their own and seem lost there without hope. The people in this film are more inscrutable. They are withdrawn, apparently without values and superficial characteristics. They are reserved in each other's presence, keeping their gaze averted, searching for appreciation, yet always careful not to get too close.

While the first two films centred on people struggling to get a step closer to the family of their dreams, the last part of the trilogy is set in the world of the family itself. This film explores the structure of the family and its psychological aspects. It tells of the search for a way of living with one another. In its complexity, the family is the last battlefield of our times. Nowhere else are friendship, dependency and love more fought for. Nowhere else are people so vulnerable, so fragile and naked as in this microcosm. For an outsider, it is almost impossible to orientate himself in such a group, but for its members, their survival is at stake. The family may represent longing, friendship and intimacy, but it cannot hide how closely interwoven it is with lies and pain.

No holds are barred in the search for appreciation and love. The smallest deviation is enough to upset this structure, leaving each to fend for himself. They have lost everything. Instead of confronting problems, they say nothing and look after their own interests. They join together only in deluding themselves. For a while, this too seems to work, because it does not ask too much of anyone. It keeps the family going, but the individual can only break out by confronting this lie. Then comes the search for appreciation, for intimacy and stability. The family and life together ultimately lead people to find themselves.

PRODUCTION NOTES

THE LONGING was developed at the Film-akademie Baden-Württemberg in the Script Writing Department. The screenplay was written and developed, like SUMMER AT HORLACHEN and I'LL WAIT ON YOU HAND AND FOOT, by Iain Dilthey and Silke Parzich. The film was produced by Till Schmerbeck, also a student at the Film Academy. It was filmed over three weeks by a small film team in Prevorst, a village in the Schwabian-Frankish Forest, in available sets that in essence were scarcely altered.

Also in the third part of the series an informal *modus operandi* was favoured and became the basis for all further work. A large proportion of the actors already knew one another from the first two parts of the series. This enabled a more intimate and immediate method of working.

The technology utilised was limited to the absolute essential. The film was made in chronological order in 16mm, enabling a natural and spontaneous method of working. The shooting ratio was kept to an absolute minimum for financial reasons. Working chronologically helped in this regard, and thus the first and last scenes are in fact made in that order. The limited resources meant that whole scenes were shot in one take rather than having to be done in several different set ups.

The scenes were filmed strictly according to the script, in contrast to the first two films in the series. Thus a large proportion of the scenes in the script are identical with what appears on screen. The introverted nature and muteness of the characters did not allow any other method of working. The improvisation seen in the other films was no longer appropriate. Filming was not in the least clinical, reserved or unpleasant. Using the area around Prevorst as the only location where all sets could be reached on foot, where the team was cut off from the outside world, and where the silence and inactivity of late autumn only further assisted the filming process.

It tells the story of people who stand apart from the events of the world and because of their speechlessness and imprisonment, experience their private lives in utter solitude. The directness and clarity of the script is thus preserved. Their mute story is told in an unfolding of unspectacular and silent scenes.

CREW

screenplay	Iain Dilthey, Silke Parzich
director	Iain Dilthey
camera	Justus Pankau
lighting	Tanja Häring
sound	Hamid Tavakoliyan
production design	Eva Stiebler
film editor	Barbara Hoffmann
music	Johannes Kobilke
sound design	Markus Böhm, HanseWarns
producer	Till Schmerbeck

Iain Dilthey

was born in 1971 in Scotland. From 1992-1997 he studied chemistry and pharmaceutics in Marburg and Mainz. He then worked as a screenplay writer, director's assistant and production assistant on a number of different documentaries and short films. From 1997 to 2002 Dilthey studied Directing at the Filmakademie Baden-Württemberg with Tom Toelle, Nico Hofmann, Christian Wagner, Lutz Konermann and Michael Verhoeven. His films comprise: ES WAR EINMAL EIN KIND (1995), GEGEN DIE STILLE (1996), BERGPREDIGT (1998), JOSEPH 98 (1998), PARTISANEN! (1999), SUMMER AT HORLACHEN(1999), and I'LL WAIT ON YOUR HAND AND FOOT (2000). THE LONGING, his first feature film was his graduation film.

Silke Parzich

studied graphic design in Munich before completing studies in animation at the Filmakademie in Ludwigsburg from 1992 to 1996. Her graduation film FRÜHLING won many awards at international film festivals. From 1996 to 2001 she worked at the Film Academy as a production manager and assistant in the experimental film department. In 1998 she met Iain Dilthey and since then they have worked closely together on developing screenplays. Silke Parzich is the co-writer of the Trilogy of Longing and producer of the first two parts. Together with Iain Dilthey she this year won the Baden-Württemberg Screenplay Award for THE LONGING.

Justus Pankau

has been working as cameraman since 1952. He began his long career with the Neuen Deutschen Wochenschau, to finish by working with Southern German Radio in Stuttgart. Justus Pankau is co-founder of the Stuttgarter School and in 1970 won the German Film Prize in Gold for MALATESTA. In addition to his professorship at the German Film and Television Academy Berlin from 1972 to 1987 Pankau filmed a variety of feature films and documentaries, among them MONTY PYTHON'S FLYING CIRCUS (1972) and CHRISTIANE F - THE CHILDREN OF BAHNHOF ZOO (1981). Justus Pankau is co-founder of the Baden-Württemberg Film Academy, where he has been a teacher in the camera department since 1991.

Till Schmerbeck

born 1969 in Munich. In 1995 he established D.A.V.E., a specialist store for professional audio and video systems in Berlin. He ran the company as partner and managing director before becoming joint owner of the Berlin sound studio "White House". Since September 2000 he has studied film production at the filmacademy Baden-Württemberg, specializing in the area of creative producing in feature films and tv-series. Schmerbeck continues to work as a music producer and music supervisor on his film projects. At the "Filmakademie" he made a number of short films and two videos for the music channel VIVA, before producing THE LONGING, his first feature film, in 2001/ 2002. His graduation film "HELDEN IN GUMMISTIEFELN" was just finished for SWR/arte broadcast.

CAST

Lena	Susanne-Marie Wrage
Johannes	Klaus Grünberg
Paul	Robert Lohr
Martha	Heidemarie Rohweder
Griesbacher	Manfred Kranich
Huber	Peter Lerchbaumer
Choir master	Wolfgang Packhäuser
Shop assistant	Eva Löbau
Woman in Shop	Sigrid Skoetz

Susanne-Marie Wrage

studied acting at the Fritz-Kirchhoff-Schule in Berlin. She was engaged in acting from 1988 to 2000, playing among other things Charlotte in Wahlverwandtschaften, Gretchen in Faust/Imperial Motel, Bérénice in Racine's play, and Titania in A Midsummer Night's Dream. In 1991 she won the Best Actress Award of the state of North Rhein Westfalia. At the Neumarkt Theatre in Zürich in 1998, together with the ensemble and the director she was awarded with the Culture Prize of the city of Zurich and from 1998 to 2000 was employed by the Theater Basel. Since 2000 she has been working as a freelance actor and director, directs in Zurich and Basel, and, at present at the Maxim-Gorki-Theater in Berlin. In 2001 she played the role of Lena in THE LONGING – her first feature film.

Klaus Grünberg

has been working as a film actor since 1968 in Germany, France, Italy and the United States, where he also had a studio contract. In 1969 he played in the film MORE by Barbet Schroeder. Following that, along with many other productions in Germany and abroad, AUFDERMAUER (1982), MARTHA UND ICH (1990), DIE POLIZISTIN (1998) and the role of Johannes in THE LONGING.

Robert Lohr

was engaged as an actor at the Maxim Gorki Theater in Berlin from 1994 to 2001, where among other things, he performed in THE GLASS MENAGERIE and DEATH OF A SALESMAN. In 1998 he acted in the television film DER LADEN, directed by Jo Baier. Then followed STURMZEIT (1999) and BERLIN IS IN GERMANY (2000), the graduation film by DFFB student Hannes Stöhr; which won the Public's Award at the Berlin Film Festival 2001. In 2001 he played the role of Paul in THE LONGING.

Manfred Kranich

worked as an actor at theatres in Chemnitz and Halle, was active in radio and television broadcasting in the former GDR and at the DEFA film studios in Babelsberg. Together with Peter Vogel he made the films ALPTRAUM (1981) and ICH BIN JOOP VAN DER DALEN (1982). 1982 Manfred Kranich left the GDR and worked as actor and director in Bochum, Zurich and Wiesbaden. Together with Sigrid Skoetz he founded the Walhalla Theaterproduktion in Wiesbaden. Since 1997 he has worked together with Iain Dilthey on, among things, the films PARTISANEN ! (1999), SOMMER AT HORLACHEN (1999), I'LL WAIT ON YOU HAND AND FOOT (2000) and THE LONGING.

Heidemarie Rohweder

has acted in numerous television productions in the last few years, among them DAS MÄDCHEN ROSEMARIE (1996), TUT MIR LEID and WEGEN GESTERN (1997). Under the direction of Ottokar Runze she performed in the 1999 film DER VULKAN from the Klaus Mann novel of the same name. In 2001 she acted in the film THE LONGING under the direction of Iain Dilthey.

DAS VERLANGEN (THE LONGING)

feature film, Germany 2002, 90 min

A production of Filmakademie Baden-Württemberg GmbH

in coproduction with

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SAMPLES & FRAMES

