

ARRI Media World Sales
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Senator Film Köln GmbH (Germany) and
View Master Productions S.A. (Greece)
in co-production with **ARRI Media GmbH**, **BVG Filmproduktion** and **BR/Arte**

ONE BREATH

A Christian Zübert Film

Starring

JÖRDIS TRIEBEL
CHARA MATA GIANNATOU
BENJAMIN SADLER

Produced by

ULF ISRAEL
COSTAS LABROPOULOS

Length: 110 minutes

World Distribution

ARRI Media World Sales
A Department of ARRI Media GmbH
Tuerkenstrasse 89
80799 Munich - Germany
Phone: +49(89) 3809 1288
Email: worldsales@arri.de
www.arriworldsales.de

Press Agency

ClutchPR
2083 Davenport Rd. Unit 1
Toronto, Ontario M6N 1C9
Canada
Phone: +1 416-319-3511
Email: info@clutchpr.com
www.clutchpr.com

For press material and photos go to:

ftp.arri.de
User: onebreath
Pw: fcbOLEole

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THE CAST

Tessa
Elena
Jan

Jördis Triebel
Chara Mata Giannatou
Benjamin Sadler

THE FILMMAKERS

Writer & Director
Producer
Line Producer
Director of Photography
Sound
Costumes

Makeup

Film Editor
Casting
Music

Christian Zübert, Ipek Zübert
Ulf Israel
Ralf Zimmermann
Ngo The Chau
Michael Busch
Susan Bolling
Sarah Raible
Delia Mündelein
Marcus Michael
Mona Bräuer
Suse Marquardt
Julian Maas
Christoph Kaiser

ONE BREATH is a co-production of Senator Film Köln GmbH (Germany) and View Master Productions S.A. (Greece) in co-production with ARRI Media GmbH, BVG Filmproduktion and BR/Arte, with the financial support of the HessenInvestFilm, Film und Medienstiftung Nordrhein-Westfalen, Deutscher Filmförderungsfonds (DFFF), Filmförderungsanstalt (FFA), and MEDIA PROGRAMM of the European Union.

TECHNICAL DATA

Length: 110 Min.
Format: DCP / 1:1,85
Sound: 7.1 Dolby surround

LOGLINE

ONE BREATH is the story of two women from different backgrounds but with the same desire: happiness. Elena, young, well-educated and with no perspective in her native Greece is trying to pursue a better life, away from her family and country. And Tessa, a thirty-something wife, mother and successful manager in Germany, is torn between happiness as an individual and a mother. These two women meet and the encounter changes both their lives forever.

SYNOPSIS

Two women. One journey to their selves. A child lost and one breath that unites both women.

One is the troubled and loving mother searching for her child. The other is an expectant mother running away from accountability. Two women who couldn't be more different are driven to the limits of human existence and yet they are indelibly linked by one breath that is all-decisive.

TESSA, 37, seems to have a perfect life. She and her husband JAN (a successful banker) and their 18-month-old daughter LOTTE live in a penthouse apartment in Frankfurt. Her relationship with Jan, however, is strained. Suppressed conflicts have been smoldering for some time, especially since Tessa went back to work and a nanny, ELENA, has been looking after Lotte.

ELENA, 27, is from Athens. She reacts to the crisis in her country with courage and confidence and goes to Germany to make money, true to her belief that everything will turn out for the best. But life turns out to be more complicated when she unexpectedly becomes pregnant and is suddenly responsible for more than just herself.

The Story

ELENA, 27, and COSTAS, 32, have seen many of their friends leave Greece because of the financial crisis. And there is no improvement in sight. Instead of living in their own place, they live in Costas' childhood bedroom at his parents'. Elena has to do menial work in a hotel and is fired. Costas works in construction and in addition is a part-time Athens tour guide. Any hope for improvement? No way. DESPINA, a friend of Elena's who lives in Frankfurt, can get her a job in a club so she decides to try her luck in Germany. Costas can't persuade her to stay and she can't convince him to go along. So she sets out on her own, plans on working for a few months, save some money, improve her German and return to Athens and move into an apartment with Costas.

Elena's hopes are dashed in Frankfurt. She discovers that she's pregnant, which she initially conceals from Costas, and can no longer work the bar at the club. To keep her dream alive, she needs money for an abortion. Despina gets her a job as a nanny for TESSA, 37, who, after parental leave, has gone back to work. Everything Elena sees at Tessa's corresponds to her idea of the perfect life she envisions for Costas and herself. Tessa and her husband Jan both have careers, they seem to be financially well off and they have a beautiful apartment. Dealing with Tessa, however, is difficult. She is always pent-up, aggressive and is a control freak. Still, Elena's job as a nanny soon becomes more than just a way to make money. She grows very fond of Lotte, begins to understand Tessa better and begins to question her decision to have an abortion. It becomes clear to Elena that she wants to live in Germany and have her child there. This time, Costas is persuaded by her optimism. He wants to give Germany a shot with her. Everything seems perfect – until one brief moment when Elena inadvertently loses Lotte...

Tessa is unhappy with her life. She doesn't come up to her own expectations - as a senior project manager in the marketing agency she works for, as a mother and as a wife. Her life is getting increasingly out of whack. But just when she stops believing in her relationship with Jan, he starts fighting for her love, for a fresh start. This short-lived period of intimate togetherness and happiness between Tessa and Jan is destroyed by the disappearance of Lotte and Elena, who is nowhere to be found. Tessa begins to hate her as well as herself. The police investigation leads nowhere and Tessa loses hope. This destroys her fragile relationship with Jan as well as her own psyche. Her concern for Lotte drives her crazy. Feeling totally helpless, Tessa sets out for Athens to find Elena in the desperate hope that she might find something, anything about the possible whereabouts of her daughter. In the Greek capital, she totally loses control of herself and is drawn into a vortex of hate and self-hatred and is just about to destroy, not just her own life, but Elena's as well. In one breath, she decides whether or not she can forgive Elena and herself.

Director's Notes

by Christian Zübert

I wanted to make a film about people. A film that focuses on their emotions, a film that presents audiences with a slice of truth about these people, that stirs them up, makes them laugh and cry and sometimes even shocks them.

The topics the film addresses, the North – South conflict in Europe, the roles of men and women in society, guilt and forgiveness, are dealt with, not by preaching at audiences but by arousing their emotional bonds with the characters, and by having them think about these issues. And the more people have felt with the characters in the film, the more they have identified with them, the more they think about them - and about themselves.

To achieve the maximum of emotional bonding with the characters I decided to tell the story consistently from subjective perspectives. ONE BREATH is the story of a lost child seen from the point of view of TESSA, the German mother, but also from the perspective of ELENA, the Greek nanny. Initially, these perspectives are shown totally separately.

The first block is told from Elena's perspective – how she comes to Germany, how she strives for a future for herself and her unborn child. The second block is told from Tessa's perspective – how she deals with the disappearance of her daughter and is overwhelmed by guilt and recriminations. The last block merges the two perspectives and takes the story to its climax. This strict separation is more than just a stylistic device. It ensures that viewers identify emotionally as much as possible with the respective character and it helps make it possible to root for each of the women because in this story involving guilt there are no wrongdoers. Both women are victims of the circumstances of their lives and the equal terms of the narrative perspectives bolster this feeling.

ONE BREATH is the story of two women who both deserve our compassion. Tessa and Elena are both victims and offenders and neither one of them does anything deliberately wrong. It is left up to viewers to judge them, if they desire to. The film does not.

To achieve this ambivalence, the camera always had to take the point of view of the respective protagonist. When we tell Elena's story, for example, there were no POVs of other characters and when we go or leave a location we always do so with her. Naturally, the same goes for Tessa.

Camera movements, composition and the frequency of the editing also underline the emotional status and world view of the respective protagonist. Elena's energy and impulsiveness, for example, are demonstrated by the dynamic use of a hand-held camera whereas with Tessa the order she strives for is shown by the use of stringently composed shots. But, as her world gets more and more out of whack as the story progresses, the images lose a lot of their precision and become rawer, the editing faster, and rapid pans and zooms illustrate her swaying closer and closer to the edge of her personal abyss.

ONE BREATH is a drama. But drama alone – nothing but sorrow, pain and depression – drains audiences. Sooner or later, they lose their emotional bond with the protagonists and disengage. That's why this film has light, warmhearted moments, scenes in which viewers can chuckle or enjoy life with the characters. These moments in ONE BREATH are very important to me because once you've laughed with a character, you're all the more willing to accompany them when tragedy strikes.

Just as I try to make the characters, their motivation and emotions authentic and understandable, it's important to me to give the film a larger visual and acoustic dimension – Elena's journey to Germany, the child's disappearance, Tessa's breakdown in Athens, the two women breathing as one – these are all larger than life movie moments that are made even stronger by the use of vibrant cinematography and a vivid soundtrack.

ONE BREATH is a big picture - a universal story about guilt, forgiveness and redemption.

ABOUT THE CAST

Jördis Triebel (Tessa)

A native Berliner, she studied at the Hochschule für Schauspielkunst Ernst Busch. After graduating, she acted for the Bremer Theater (as it was called then) in productions such as Ibsen's "The Master Builder" and Shakespeare's "Romeo and Juliet". At the end of her first season there, she was awarded the coveted Kurt-Hübner Prize. Other guest roles followed at the Schauspielhaus Zürich and in Cologne. 2005/2006 she acted in "Europa für Anfänger" in Cologne under the direction Eric Gedeon. In 2006, Jördis Triebel made her film debut in Sven Taddicken's EMMA'S BLISS, which won numerous awards, including Triebel's winning the German Cinema Young Talent Award in the best acting category for her performance as an unconventional pig farmer. She also received the Undine Award in the category Best Young Actress in a feature film. In 2007, she was also awarded the Prix d'interprétation féminine for EMMA'S BLISS and was nominated for the German Film Award as Best Actress. Other awards followed – nominations for the Bavarian Film Prize and a Goldene Kamera for her performance in the TV movie A GOOD MOTHER (2007). Her portrayal of police officer Maria Hernandez in the award winning series KDD - KRIMINALDAUERDIENST brought her widespread attention among television audiences. She appeared in Max Fäberböck's A WOMAN IN BERLIN (2008), in Hans-Christoph Blumenberg's WAITING FOR ANGEKINA und Sönke Wortmann's POPE JOAN (both 2009). The latter brought her another German Film Award nomination in 2010. Further television productions followed such as, among others, the two-part DIE FAMILIE (ZDF), FREILAUFENDE MÄNNER (ARD) and A GOOD SUMMER (ARD). More recent feature films include Vanessa Joop's DER FAST PERFEKTE MANN and WOLF CHILDREN by von Rick Ostermann. In 2014, the versatile actress acted both on the stage and in MY SISTERS by Lars Kraume and Christian Schwochow's WEST for which she received the German Film Award in the Best Actress category.

Selected Filmography:

2006 EMMA'S BLISS	Sven Taddicken
2007 A GOOD MOTHER (TV)	Matthias Glasner
2008 A WOMAN IN BERLIN	Max Färberböck
2009 POPE JOAN	Sönke Wortmann
2009 THIS IS LOVE	Matthias Glasner
2010 THE HAIRDRESSER	Doris Dörrie
2013 MY SISTERS	Lars Kraume
2013 WEST	Christian Schwochow
2014 DIE LEBENDEN UND DIE TOTEN	Matthias Glasner
2015 ME AND KAMINSKI	Wolfgang Becker
2015 ONE BREATH	Christian Zübert

Benjamin Sadler (Jan)

Born in Toronto, Benjamin Sadler grew up in Germany and studied at the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art in London. The bilingual actor has appeared in numerous film and television productions since 1995. In 2000, Sadler won the DAG Television Award in Gold for his lead role performance in ROSENZWEIG'S FREEDOM. Roles followed in films such as the German-Italian co-production MARIA MAGDELENA in which he played John the Baptist alongside Maria Grazia Cucinotta and Danny Quinn. In LUTHER, he acted with, among others, Joseph Fiennes and Sir Peter Ustinov. In international TV productions such as THE APOCALYPSE he worked with Richard Harris and in IMPERIUM: AUGUSTUS he played young Augustus (Peter O'Toole played the older Caesar Augustus). In 2006, Sadler appeared in the two-part TV movie DRESDEN. About the bombing of Dresden in February of 1945, it won several prestigious awards in Germany. That same year, Sadler also acted in THE LOSS OF THE PAMIR, directed by Kaspar Heidelberg, with whom he had worked in 2003 on the prizewinning two-part A LIGHT IN DARK PLACES. In November of 2007, another two-part TV movie, CONTERGAN, featured Benjamin Sadler as an attorney and the father of a child impaired by a pharmaceutical company. For that performance, Sadler was awarded a special Bambi award and was nominated for the German Film Award as best leading actor. He played Dolochov in WAR AND PEACE in 2008. He played the part of Alfried Krupp von Bohlen und Halbach in the family chronicle KRUPP – A GERMAN FAMILY in 2009, was nominated for the Bavarian Film Prize as best leading actor and along with Iris Berben received the Bambi Audience Award. He appeared in four episodes of the CRIME SCENE set in Hannover, worked with Ulrich Tukur on ROMMEL in 2012, as well as with Mario Adorf on PINOCCHIO and on THE JERUSALEM SYNDROME. His work on feature films includes Sherry Hormann's THE PURSUIT OF UNHAPPINESS, Jeanine Meerapfel's German-Argentine co-production EL AMIGO ALEMÁN, Andres Veiel's much acclaimed WHO, IF NOT US? and Eckhards Preuß' BOCKSPRÜNGE. He recently starred with Nina Kunzendorf and Alwara Höfels in the TV miniseries THE PROGRAM and in Niki Stein's DAS DORF DER MÖRDER.

Selected Filmography:

2010 IF NOT US, WHO?	Andreas Veiel
2011 THE PURSUIT OF UNHAPPINESS	Sherry Hormann
2012 PASSION	Brian de Palma
2013 BOCKSPRÜNGE	Eckhard Preuß
2015 ONE BREATH	Christian Zübert

Chara Mata Giannatou (Elena)

Berlin born Chara-Mata Giannatou grew up in Athens, where she recently graduated from the Athens Drama School of National Theater. Her most important roles to date were in Heinrich von Kleist's "Penthesilea" directed by Akillas Karazisis and in "The Woman of Troy" directed by Bernhard Stengele. German actor Harald Leipnitz was Giannatou's grandfather. ONE BREATH marks her feature film debut.

Selected Stage Productions:

2011 ALAFROISKIOTI	Maritina Passari
2013 PENTHESILEA	Akullas Karazisis
2013 INSENSO	M. Marmarinos
2013 GOLFO	N. Karathanos
2014 THE WOMEN OF TROY	Bernhard Stengele

Filmography:

2015 ONE BREATH	Christian Zübert
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ABOUT THE PRODUCTION

Christian Zübert (Writer-Director)

Christian Zübert was born in Würzburg in 1973. He initially majored in German studies. He began working as a screenwriter for the TV series THE CLOWN (1998-2001) and wrote 20 episodes.

Zübert's first feature film productions were the cannabis comedy LAMMBOCK (which he wrote and directed – based, as he claims, on his own experience) starring Moritz Bleibtreu, Lucas Gregorowicz and Wotan Wilke Möhring and director Dennis Gansel's feature debut GIRLS ON TOP, which he co-wrote. Both films were surprise box office hits in 2001. LAMMBOCK went cult. In 2005, he wrote and directed TREASURE OF THE WHITE FALCONS, a film for adolescents which won numerous awards, such as the Audience Award at the Hamburg film festival and best film for young people in Lünen as well as an award from the children's jury in Chicago and a nomination for the German Film Prize in 2006.

He wrote and directed the buddy movie HARDCOVER (2008), a comedy starring Wotan Wilke Möhring and Justus von Dohnányi as well as the heartwarming tragicomedy THREE QUARTER MOON starring Elmar Wepper, which won the Bavarian Film Award for Best Screenplay in 2011 and was nominated for the German Film Prize. That same year, Zübert was honored twice with the prestigious Adolf Grimme Prize, one for his screenplay NEUE VAHR SÜD (directed by Hermine Huntgeburth) and one as the director of NIE WIEDER FREI SEIN, an episode of the German TV series CRIME SCENE.

His film TOUR DE FORCE with Florian David Fitz, Julia Koschitz and Jürgen Vogel opened in October, 2014, in German cinemas. His many screenplays include COMPLETE IDIOT (2007, directed by Tobi Baumann), which he co-wrote with the author of the novel, Tommy Jaud, RED ZORA (2008, directed by Peter Kahane), and most recently, DAMPFNUDEL BLUES, based on the novel by Rita Falk.

Selected Filmography:

2001 LAMMBOCK	Writer-director
2005 TREASURE OF THE WHITE FALCONS	Writer-director
2008 HARDCOVER	Writer-director
2011 THREE QUARTER MOON	Writer-director
2014 TOUR DE FORCE	Writer-director
2015 ONE BREATH	Writer-director

Ulf Israel (Producer)

Ulf Israel has headed the production subsidiary of Senator Film since 2010, at first with Helge Sasse, currently with Max Sturm. In this time, the Senator Group was able to significantly expand and diversify its production activities. In addition to German feature films (such as DAS LEBEN IST NICHTS FÜR FEIGLINGE, ONE BREATH, BECK'S LAST SUMMER) Senator has intensified its role in family entertainment (PETTSON AND FINDUS) and international co-productions including the international box office hits 2 DAYS IN NEW YORK and A MOST WANTED MAN. A further step to becoming more internationally oriented was the merger with Wild Bunch. Senator Film also plans on producing even more for television. A new mini-series is currently in an advanced stage of development with Network Movies.

Before joining Senator, Ulf Israel headed 3L Filmproduktion and was responsible for productions such as the worldwide arthouse hit 2 DAYS IN PARIS and Paul Schrader's ADAM RESURRECTED starring Jeff Goldblum and Willem Dafoe. A former freelance producer for, among others, the leading Swiss production company Condor Communications AG, from 1998 until 2002 he was substantially involved on a management level with the expansion of X Filme Creative Pool GmbH and its distributing branch X Verleih AG.

Ulf Israel is a graduate of the Berlin University of the Arts with a degree in communications management.

Selected Filmography:

2004 GATE TO HEAVEN	Veit Helmer
2006 DIE AUFSCHNEIDER	Carsten Strauch
2007 2 DAYS IN PARIS	Julie Delpy
2008 ADAM RESURRECTED	Paul Schrader
2009 SAVIORS IN THE NIGHT	Ludi Boeken
2009 HANGTIME	Wolfgang Groos
2009 LAURA	Ben Verbong
2011 2 DAYS IN NEW YORK	Julie Delpy
2012 MISERERE	Sylvain White
2012 DAS LEBEN IST NICHTS FÜR FEIGLINGE	André Erkau
2013 00 SCHNEIDER	Helge Schneider
2013 THE COOK	Ralf Huettnner
2015 ONE BREATH	Christian Zübert
2015 DOKTOR PROKTORS ZEITBADEWANNE	
2015 PETERSSON & FINDUS: DAS SCHÖNSTE WEIHNACHTEN ÜBERHAUPT	

Senator Film Produktion GmbH

The firm was founded in 1987 and is one of Germany's leading film production companies. Its goal is to make high quality films that combine first-rate entertainment, social relevance and commercial potential. It has branches in Berlin, Cologne and Munich.

Its most important films over the past few years include GOETHE!, LESSONS OF A DREAM, 2 DAYS IN NEW YORK, MR. MORGAN'S LAST LOVE and BELOVED SISTERS.

In 2014, Senator Entertainment AG merged with the French company Wild Bunch.

Selected Filmography:

2011	2 DAYS IN NEW YORK Co-production with Polaris Film Production & Finance, Saga Films S.A., Protozoa Pictures, Tempête sous un Crâne, CC Medien	Julie Delpy
2012	DAS LEBEN IST NICHTS FÜR FEIGLINGE Co-production with Riva Film	André Erkau
2012	MR. MORGAN'S LAST LOVE Co-production with Bavaria Pictures, Kaminski.Stiehm.Film, ScopePictures, Eberhard Müller Filmproduktion, Elzevir Films Sidney Kimmel Entertainment (USA)	Sandra Nettelbeck
2013	DOCTOR PROKTOR'S FART POWDER Co-production with Tradewind Pictures, Maipo AS (Norwegen)	Arild Fröhlich
2013	00 SCHNEIDER	Helge Schneider
2013	QUE CARAMBA ES LA VIDA Doris Dörrie Co-production with Flying Moon Pictures	
2013	THE COOK Co-production with C-Films, Network Movie	Ralf Huettner
2014	DOKTOR PROKTORS ZEITBADEWANNE Co-production with Tradewind Pictures, Maipo AS (Norwegen)	Arild Fröhlich
2015	ONE BREATH	Christian Zübert
2015	THE DANISH GIRL	Tom Hopper