

ESTER.REGLIN.FILM 

# WE MONSTERS

A film by Sebastian Ko

tiff.40 toronto  
international  
film festival  
OFFICIAL SELECTION 2015



## Presskit

**WDR** 

**PLUTO**  
FILM

**arte**

**Film und Medien  
Stiftung NRW**

### WORLD SALES

Pluto Film Distribution Network GmbH  
Patricie Pouzarova, Jana Wolff  
fon +49 (0)30 – 8430 6166  
info@plutofilm.de  
www.plutofilm.de

### Production Company:

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## ..... Credits

Film Title: WE MONSTERS / WIR MONSTER  
Production: Ester.Reglin.Film in co-production with WDR and ARTE,  
with backing from Film- und Medienstiftung NRW  
Genre: Drama  
Technical details: DCP / 16:9 / 5.1 / 95 Min. / Germany 2014  
German premiere: 36. Filmfestival Max Ophüls Preis 2015  
World sales: Pluto Film Distribution Network GmbH (www.plutofilm.de)

### **CREW**

Director ..... Sebastian Ko  
Screenplay..... Marcus Seibert & Sebastian Ko  
Producer ..... Roswitha Ester & Torsten Reglin  
Editorial staff WDR / ARTE ..... Frank Tönsmann / Birgit Kämper  
Production Manager ..... Andreas Jupe  
Casting ..... Clemens Erbach  
Cinematographer ..... Andreas Köhler  
Production Design ..... Cora Pratz  
Costume Design ..... Elisabeth Kraus  
Make up ..... Elke Hahn  
Editing ..... Nicole Kortlüke  
Sound ..... Constantin Bömers  
Sound mixing ..... Falk Möller (Torus)  
Music ..... Dürbeck & Dohmen  
Postproduction-Supervising ..... Erhard Giesen (Farbkult)

### **CAST**

Mehdi Nebbou ..... as Paul  
Ulrike C. Tscharre ..... as Christine  
Janina Fautz ..... as Sarah  
Marie Bendig ..... as Charlie  
Ronald Kukulies ..... as Kuszinsky  
Britta Hammelstein ..... as Jessica  
Daniel Drewes ..... as Michael

..... **Synopsis**

Paul and Christine know: Their teenager daughter Sarah, thrown off track by their separation, is capable of anything, including killing her best friend. Wanting to protect their daughter they thus decide to hide the crime. Their joined guilt forces the family back together creating a web of lies and deadly intentions with no way out.



..... **Press Release**

What are you willing to sacrifice for the most important thing in your life? This is the terrain between unconditional love and care and one's own spiritual abyss that this neo-noir drama explores. WE MONSTERS shows us children who in their search for stability push their parents to the edge, and parents who abandon their values to protect their children. We experience the seemingly safe construct of the family as an absurd rampage. The rigorous plot of WE MONSTERS finds its counterpart in the elegantly unsettling tableaux, which shed a new light on the image of the modern family.

WE MONSTERS is the first feature film by the director and film journalist Sebastian Ko. Together with author Marcus Seibert he developed the bleak story that meanders between drama and ambiguous thriller. The director of photography Andreas Köhler (SASHA; FAREWELL, HERR SCHWARZ) is responsible for the cinematographic aesthetics.

The leading roles as helplessly loving parents in this anti-family drama are played by the German-French actor Mehdi Nebbou, who gained international recognition for his parts in Steven Spielberg's MUNICH and Ridley Scott's BODY OF LIES, and Ulrike C. Tscharre (IN THE FACE OF THE CRIME). They are strongly complemented with the vulnerability and severity of Janina Fautz (THE WILD GUYS 4 & 5; THE WHITE RIBBON).

WE MONSTERS is a production by Ester.Reglin.Film in cooperation with WDR and ARTE. The screenplay development and production were supported by the Film- und Medienstiftung NRW.

.....**The idea behind WE MONSTERS**

The idea for WE MONSTERS, tells director Sebastian Ko, came up sometime during a conversation on the balcony with an old friend. His daughter, 13 years old, had just smashed a glass door in an adolescent fit of rage, and they quickly arrived at the subject of “unpredictable teenagers”. What if one’s own child was even to kill in the heat of the moment, how would the parents react, especially if they were the only witnesses?

From the thought that many relationships are only held together by the mutual concern for the children it was just a small step to the story of a family that reunites because of a shared guilt, even though the parents know they are a mismatch. When the disaster occurs they don’t trust anyone else but each other. No institution and also not their new partners. When they, out of an apparent concern for their child, even cross the borders of reason, morals, and law themselves – it is too late: After the loss of their own good fortune and of innocent life the nuclear family ultimately remains as an empty and meaningless entity, fueled by nothing else than the shared guilt.



“I wanted to narrate WE MONSTERS as a simple story. Straight forward. Without frills. But WE MONSTERS isn’t a family drama in the usual sense. Neither are Paul,

Christine, and Sarah a functioning family, nor is there a message restoring the concept of 'family' in any way. Perhaps 'anti-family drama' is the right description.

At the beginning the story descends in broad, slow circles, then it accelerates. The circles become increasingly tighter and smaller, gradually spiraling to a point of no return.

In the end there is no mercy, no forgiveness, no salvation. Before us the abyss of desperate options wherever Paul and Christine turn. After all, they only wanted to protect their daughter. 'Their own fault,' some will say. 'They could have...' and 'I never would have done that.' They might be right, and I can only respond: 'I would have.' Like Paul, I would be ready to do anything for my daughter. With open eyes I would run into my own demise. There is something heroic about it, something selfless – in short, something ideological. Because who would say they wouldn't do anything for their child? Which parents wouldn't give their lives for their child? And this is contrasted by everyday reality. Half of the marriages in Germany end in divorce. And likely the separation rate of unmarried couples isn't much lower. To say the least, children rarely experience the separation of their parents as positive. But also here: What shall we do? Stay together just because of the children? At one point in the film Paul says: 'What should we have done then? Stay together because of her?' And Christine answers: 'We should have separated much earlier.' She's probably right."



**Mehdi Nebbou as *Paul***



FILMOGRAPHY

- 2014        **WIR MONSTER (WE MONSTERS)** – Dir.: Sebastian Ko  
              VOGUE LA VIE (F) – Claire de la Rochefoucauld
- 2013        SEIN LETZTES RENNEN – Dir.: Kilian Riedhof  
              HAPPY HOUR – Dir.: Franz Müller
- 2012        ENGLISH VINGLISH – Dir.: Gauri Shinde  
              DIE FEINEN UNTERSCHIEDE – Dir.: Sylvie Michel-Casey
- 2011        COOKIE (F) – Dir.: Léa Fazer
- 2010        FORCES SPÉCIALES, (F) – Dir.: Stéphane Rybojad  
              SWITCH (F) – Dir.: Frederic Schoendoerffer
- 2009        DOUCE FRANCE (F), TV – Dir.: Stéphane Giusti  
              (Franz. Emmy Award 2009 – Best Actor)
- 2008        BODY OF LIES – Dir.: Ridley Scott  
              BERLIN CALLING – Dir.: Hannes Stöhr
- 2006        DER LEBENSVERSICHERER – Dir.: Bülent Akinci  
              (Berlinale 2006 - Perspektive deutsches Kino – Best Movie)  
              MUNICH – Dir.: Steven Spielberg  
              TERESAS ZIMMER – Dir.: Constanze Knoche  
              (First Steps Award - Bester Actor 2007)
- 2005        SCHLÄFER (SLEEPER) – Dir.: Benjamin Heisenberg  
              (Cannes 2005 - Sélection officielle - UN CERTAIN REGARD)
- 2004        FOLGESCHÄDEN (SEEDS OF DOUBT) – Dir.: Samir Nasr  
              (San Francisco Film Festival 2006 - Golden Gate Award – Best Movie)
- 2000        MY SWEET HOME – Dir.: Filippos Tsitos  
              (Berlinale 2001 – Competition)



**Ulrike C. Tscharre as *Christine***



**FILMOGRAPHY**

- 2014           **WIR MONSTER (WE MONSTERS)** – Dir.: Sebastian Ko
- 2013           DIE REICHEN LEICHEN, TV – Dir.: Dominik Graf  
BREZELN FÜR DEN POTT, TV – Dir.: Matthias Steurer  
BRETONISCHE VERHÄLTNISSE, TV – Dir.: Matthias Tiefenbacher  
HELEN DORN, TV – Dir.: Matti Geschonneck  
EIN REIHENHAUS KOMMT SELTEN ALLEIN, TV – Dir.: Titus Selge
- 2012           MORD IN EBERSWALDE, TV – Dir.: Stephan Wagner  
STILLER ABSCHIED, TV – Dir.: Florian Baxmeyer
- 2011           WENIGER IST MEHR, TV – Dir.: Jan Ruzicka  
LÖSEGELD, TV – Dir.: Stephan Wagner
- 2009           EINES TAGES (ONE DAY) – Dir.: Iain Dillthey
- 2008 - 2009   IM ANGESICHT DES VERBRECHENS (IN THE FACE OF THE CRIME), TV-  
Series – Dir.: Dominik Graf
- 2008           CRASHPOINT: BERLIN, TV – Dir.: Thomas Jauch
- 2006           HILFE! HOCHZEIT! - DIE SCHLIMMSTE WOCHE MEINES LEBENS,  
TV-Series – Dir.: Isabel Kleefeld
- 2004           SCHÖNE FRAUEN (BEAUTIFUL WOMEN) – Dir.: Sathyan Ramesh

**Janina Fautz as Sarah**



**FILMOGRAPHY**

- 2014           **WIR MONSTER (WE MONSTERS)** – Dir.: Sebastian Ko
- 2013           HIN UND WEG (TOUR DE FORCE) – Dir.: Christian Zübert
- 2012           V8 - DU WILLST DER BESTE SEIN – Dir.: Joachim Masannek
- 2010-2012     ALLEIN GEGEN DIE ZEIT (13 HOURS: RACE AGAINST TIME), TV-Series –  
Dir.: Andreas Morell, Stephan Rick
- 2010           EINER WIE BRUNO (SOMEONE LIKE HIM) – Dir.: Anja Jacobs
- 2008           DIE WILDEN KERLE 5 (THE WILD GUYS 5) – Dir.: Joachim Masannek
- DAS WEISSE BAND (THE WHITE RIBBON) – Dir.: Michael Haneke
- 2007           DIE WILDEN KERLE 4 (THE WILD GUYS 4) – Dir.: Joachim Masannek
- 2005           DER WEIHNACHTS-EKEL – Dir.: Joseph Vilsmaier

**Britta Hammelstein as Jessica**



**FILMOGRAPHY**

- 2014           **WIR MONSTER (WE MONSTERS)** – Dir.: Sebastian Ko

- 2014 DAS ZEUGENHAUS, TV – Dir.: Matti Geschonneck  
 2014 TATORT – KOPFGELD, TV – Dir.: Christian Alvert  
 2013 VERBRECHEN, TV – Dir.: Hannu Salonen  
 HELMUT SCHMIDT, TV – Dir.: Ben von Grafenstein  
 2012 FREIER FALL (FREE FALL) – Dir.: Stephan Lacant  
 2011 HANNAH MANGOLD UND LUCY PALM, TV – Dir.: Florian Schwarz  
 2007 THE BAADER MEINHOF COMPLEX – Dir.: Uli Edel  
 2006 BLINDFLUG – Dir.: Ben von Grafenstein

**Daniel Drewes as *Michael***



**FILMOGRAPHY**

- 2014 **WIR MONSTER (WE MONSTERS)** – Dir.: Sebastian Ko  
 2013 DIE LÜGEN DER SIEGER (THE LIES OF THE VICTORS) – Dir.: Christoph Hochhäusler  
 1001 GRAM – Dir.: Bent Hamer  
 2011 QUELLEN DES LEBENS (SOURCES OF LIFE) – Dir.: Oskar Roehler  
 DER BLAUE TIGER (MODRY TYGR) – Dir.: Peter Oukropec  
 2010 EINE INSEL NAMENS UDO – Dir.: Markus Sehr  
 BASTARD – Dir.: Carsten Unger  
 2009 RENN WENN DU KANNST (RUN IF YOU CAN) – Dir.: Dietrich Brüggemann  
 2006 DIE ANRUFERIN (THE CALLING GAME) – Dir.: Felix Randau  
 2005 PRINZESSIN (PRINCESS) – Dir.: Birgit Großkopf  
 2004 ALLEIN (ALONE) – Dir.: Thomas Durchschlag

Ronald Kukulies as *Kuszinsky*



FILMOGRAPHY

- 2014**      **WIR MONSTER (WE MONSTERS)** – Dir.: Sebastian Ko
- 2013      ALS WIR TRÄUMTEN (AS WE WERE DREAMING) – Dir.: Andreas Dresen
- 2012      DIE VERMESSUNG DER WELT (MEASURING THE WORLD) – Dir.: Detlev  
Buck
- 2010      BITTERE KIRSCHEN (THE PATH TO THE PAST) – Dir.: Didi Danquart
- 2007      UNSCHULD – Dir.: Andreas Morell
- MONDKALB – Dir.: Sylke Enders

## .....Director



**Sebastian Ko**, born in 1971 in Walsrode, High School, completed a degree in theater, film and television studies in Cologne, various jobs from the driver to the assistant director across all film trades. First short films, then he studied directing at the Academy of Film and Television "Konrad Wolf "Potsdam Babelsberg.

Since 2008 film critic for WDR 1Live. **WE MONSTERS** is his first feature film.

### FILMOGRAPHY as Director

- 2014        **WIR MONSTER (WE MONSTERS)** – (Co-Writer: Marcus Seibert)
- 2013        WAHRE RECORDS (Shortfilm)
- 2009        MATTHEW DE GENNERO (Music Video)
- 2006        SCHONZEIT (Shortfilm)  
              LADYBUG
- 2003        BADEN BADEN (Shortfilm)
- 2001        RESONANCE (Shortfilm, Documentary)

## ..... Screenplay



**Marcus Seibert**, born 1964 in Aachen, studied philosophy, art history and German literature in Aachen, Cologne and Paris. He worked as a screenwriter for several television series in 2008 and has co-edited the film magazine *Revolver*. Currently he lives and works as a screenwriter, novelist and translator in Cologne.

### FILMOGRAPHY (Screenplay)

#### *Movies*

- 2014        **WIR MONSTER (WE MONSTERS)** – (Dir. & Co-Writer: Sebastian Ko)  
2009        15 METER (Kurzfilm) – Dir. & Co-Writer: Erkan Gündüz, Filmfestival  
              Max Ophüls Preis Saarbrücken  
1999        NADOLIG LLAWEN (Co-Writer: Gareth Evans, TV-Movie for S4C  
              Bracan TV, Wales)  
tba         WITTGENSTEIN – with Raouf Khanfir (Fieldrecording)  
tba         ZURÜCK AUF LOS – Dir.: Christoph Hochhäusler, in Development

#### *TV-Series:*

- 2006 - 2012 LINDENSTRASSE (ARD)  
ROTE ROSEN, ALLES WAS ZÄHLT, VERBOTENE LIEBE, DIE WACHE

#### *Books:*

Pierre Gras: *Good Bye, Fassbinder! Der deutsche Kinofilm seit der Wende*, Alexander Verlag, Berlin/Köln 2014 (Hrsg. und Übersetzer)

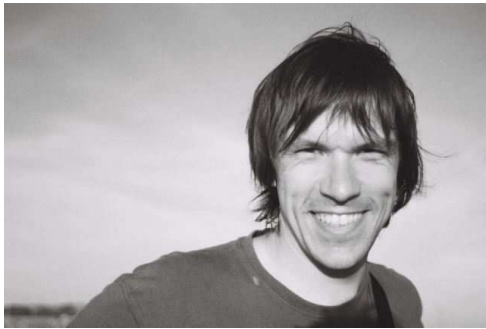
*Vater, Mutter, Kind*, Erzählung, amazon kindle singles, 2013

Michel Cieutat und Philippe Rouyer (Hrsg.): *Haneke über Haneke*. Alexander Verlag, Berlin/Köln 2013. (Übersetzer)

Eric Rohmer: *Elisabeth*. (Roman) Rogner und Bernhard, Hamburg 2003. (Übersetzung und Vorwort)

Eric Rohmer: *Der Geschmack des Schönen*. (Filmaufsätze) Verlag der Autoren, Frankfurt am Main 2000. (Herausgeber und Übersetzer)

## .....Cinematographer



**Andreas Köhler** was born in 1974 in Wernigerode. He studied law at the University of Potsdam and completed a course of study for film and camera at the FH Dortmund. 2012 Andreas Köhler was awarded the German Camera Award.

### FILMOGRAPHY

#### *Fiction:*

- 2014        **WIR MONSTER (WE MONSTERS)**, HD – Dir.: Sebastian Ko
- 2010        EINES TAGE... (ONE DAY...), HD – Dir.: Iain Dilthey
- 2009        SASCHA (SASHA), HD – Dir.: Dennis Todorovic
- 2008        DIE DINGE ZWISCHEN UNS (THE THINGS BETWEEN US), HD –  
Dir.: Iris Janssen
- 2007        PIETAS, S16mm b/w – Dir.: Matthias vom Schemm  
(Nominated for German Camera Award 2007, Nominated for First Steps  
Award 2008, Kölner Designpreis 2008)
- 2006        STILLEBEN, S16mm – Dir.: Marcel Ahrenholz  
(Nominated for German Camera Award 2006)
- AMOR FATI, 35 mm – Dir.: Dennis Todorovic  
(Nominated for German Camera Award 2006)
- MARIA AN CALLAS, S35mm – Dir.: P. K. Wagner

#### *Documentary:*

- 2012        IN BETWEEN – DER KÜNSTLER RICHARD DEACON, HD – Dir.:  
Claudia Schmid
- SCHNEE VON GESTERN (FAREWELL, HERR SCHWARZ), HD – Dir.:  
Yael Reuveny
- TOUR DU FASO, HD – Dir.: Wilm Huygen
- 2011        ENDZEIT – Dir.: Wilm Huygen
- 2009        TALES OF THE DEFEATED, HD – Dir.: Yael Reuveny
- 2008        NOBODY'S PERFECT, HD – Dir.: Niko von Glasow  
(Deutscher Filmpreis 2009 for Best Documentary)

## ..... Production Company

*Ester.Reglin.Film* was founded in January 2008 by Roswitha Ester and Torsten Reglin. We specialize in film and TV development and production and are not afraid of pushing established format boundaries – be it TV series or larger film productions.

### FILMOGRAPHY

- 2014            **WIR MONSTER (WE MONSTERS)** – Screenplay: Marcus Seibert & Sebastian Ko, Dir.: Sebastian Ko  
*Filmfestival Max Ophüls Preis 2015*  
ALLEINE WAR GESTERN, TV – Screenplay: Beatrice Meier, Dir.: Dagmar Seume  
*Biberacher Filmfestspiele 2014*
- 2013            SCHÖNEFELD BOULEVARD – Screenplay & Dir.: Sylke Enders, a Co-Production with credo:film Berlin  
*Filmfest München, FILMZ 2014, Kinofest Lünen 2014*
- 2012            ABSEITSFALLE (OFFSIDE TRAP) – Screenplay: Beatrice Meier, Dir.: Stefan Hering  
*Hofer Filmtage 2012, Kinofest Lünen 2012 (Winner of the „Berndt-Media-Preis“), Internationales Filmfest Emden-Norderney, Festival des deutschen Films Ludwigshafen 2013 (Winner „Best Screenplay“)*
- 2011            SONNY BOY – Screenplay & Dir.: Maria Peters, a Co-Production with Shooting Star Filmcompany Amsterdam  
DANN KAM LUCY, TV – Screenplay: Michael Meisheit, Dir.: Christoph Schrewe  
*Biberacher Filmfestspiele 2011*
- 2010            EINES TAGES... (ONE DAY...) – Screenplay: Karin Kaci, Dir.: Iain Dilthey  
*Bozener Filmtage 2011, Filmfestival Max Ophüls Preis 2011, Kinofest Lünen (Winner of the „Lüdia 2010“), Biberacher Filmfestspiele 2010, Internationales Filmfest Emden-Norderney 2010, Montreal World Film Festival 2010*