

Strand Releasing presents

# SASHA

A film by Dennis Todorović

**Starring Saša Kekez, Tim Bergmann, Pedja Bjelac, Željka Preksavec,  
Ljubiša Grujić, Jasin Mjumjunov, Yvonne Yung-Hee, Arno Kempf**

**Country of Origin:** Germany/ In German with English Subtitles

**Aspect Ratio:** 1:2, 35 Scope

**Running Time:** 102 minutes

Not Rated

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## **SYNOPSIS**

Sasha, confronted with the everyday prejudice of his homophobic immigrant family, struggles with his urge to come out. When his beloved piano teacher Gebhard Weber plans to leave the city, the young man is heartbroken. The only person in whom he can confide his feelings is his best friend Jiao. After a failed audition, Sasha swears never to play piano again, but a consoling telephone call from Gebhard changes his mind – and causes a turn of events. The next morning all secrets are exposed and only his brother's intervention prevents Sasha's father Vlado from shooting Gebhard dead. But the gun still goes off...

## **DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT**

*Sasha* is my debut feature, a story I simply had to tell. My characters have a lot to do with my own family, even though none of them is simply dramatized reality, their traits of character, their approaches to life, their flaws and virtues, their moments of lesser and larger cultural shock are the ones I know from my own life. *Sasha*, has become my declaration of love to and criticism of my own migrational background.

I am serious enough about the topic to be able to tell this story as a comedy – be it a bitter-sweet one. Only through irony I was able to show the tragedy of the tense conflicts within the Petrović's family ties. In cinema, I always look for the humor in the characters and scenes.

The Petrovićs, but also the weight of the characters Gebhard and Jiao make *Sasha* an ensemble piece. With Sasha's impossible coming-out story being the core and spine of it, but all of the characters make a Step towards their own self-fulfillment.

With *Sasha* I hope for an international audience, as it touches a subject still widely tabooed around the world. There needs to be an accessible way for a large audience to tackle these subjects, a difficult or depressing film about Sasha's truly tough conflict would not help to get the film seen. In the countries of former Yugoslavia, where a serious debate about homosexuality is still in its infancy and marked with violence and ignorance there is a dire need for a film like this one.

My film is as little German as it is Bosnian, Serbian or Croatian, as I am telling a story from my own world which is a world in between countries. In a world full of migrants and their children, I believe this is what makes this story universal and valuable for an international audience. To me, film represents art, entertainment and reflection. As a writer-director, I do not believe in making films for myself, but films to communicate with.

## **CAST**

**SASA KEKEZ  
TIM BERGMANN  
PEDJA BJELAC  
ZELJKA PREKSAVEC  
LJUBISA GRUJCIC  
JASIN MJUMJUNOV  
YVONNE YUNG-HEE  
ARNO KEMPF  
PETRA NADOLNY  
STEFAN PREISS  
ROLF BERG  
MANUEL PFOH  
TEDROS TECLEBRHAN**

**Sasha  
Gebhard Weber  
Vlado  
Stanka  
Pero  
Boki  
Jiao  
Peter  
Frau Strattmann  
Herr Meyer  
Sammy  
Peer  
Amir**

## **CREW**

**Directed by DENNIS TODOROVIC  
Screenplay by DENNIS TODOROVIC  
Produced by EWA BOROWSKI  
Casting DANA CEBULLA  
Original Music by PETER AUFDERHAAR  
Sound Design PETER AUFDERHAAR  
Sound Mixing LOTHAR SEGELER  
Sound by CLAAS BENJAMIN BERGER  
Make-Up CLAUDIA SCHAAF  
Costume Designer SARAH RAIBLE, NINA ALBRECHT  
Production Design DANIEL CHOUR  
Production Manager ANNETTE SCHILLING  
Unit Manager LAURA EINMAHL  
Colorist DIRK MEIER  
Edited by BRITTA STRATHMIN BERGER  
Director of Photography ANDREAS KÖHLER**