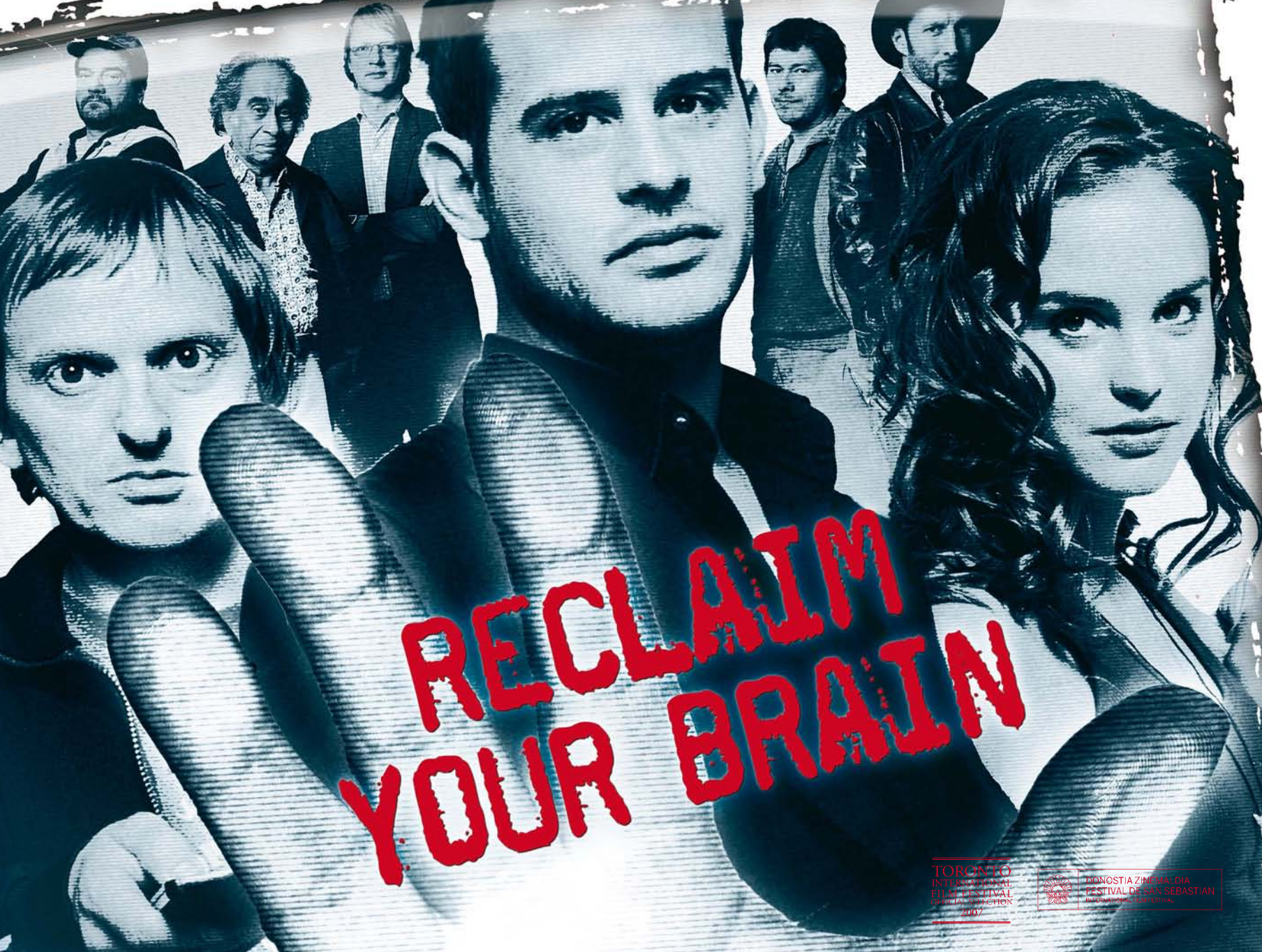




RECLAIM YOUR BRAIN

TORONTO
INTERNATIONAL
FILM FESTIVAL
OFFICIAL SELECTION
2007



64.ª MOSTRA ZINEVIÁLIA
FESTIVAL DE SAN SEBASTIÁN
INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL



THE MATCH FACTORY PRESENTS

RECLAIM YOUR BRAIN

A KAHUUNA FILMS PRODUCTION

IN COPRODUCTION WITH COOP99 FILMPRODUKTION

WITH BACKING FROM MEDIENBOARD BERLIN-BRANDENBURG,

BKM FILMFÖRDERUNG DES BUNDES, ÖSTERREICHISCHES FILMINSTITUT,

FILMFONDS WIEN, FFA FILMFÖRDERUNGSANSTALT

IN COOPERATION WITH ORF (FILM / FERNSEH-ABKOMMEN)

WITH MORITZ BLEIBTREU, ELSA SOPHIE GAMBARD, MILAN PESCHEL,
GREGOR BLOÉB, TOM JAHN, ANDREAS BRANDT, ROBERT VIKTOR MINICH,
RALF KNICKER, IRSHAD PANJATAN, SIMONE HANSELMANN

CINEMATOGRAPHY CHRISTINE A. MAIER

CASTING SIMONE BÄR, NADINE VON VOLKMANN, MARKUS SCHLEINZER

1ST AD SEBASTIAN FAHR-BRIX SOUND STEFAN SOLTAU

PRODUCTION DESIGN UDO KRAMER EDITOR ANDREAS WODRASCHKE

COSTUME DESIGN THOMAS OLÁH MAKE-UP MARTHA RUSS

COMPOSER ANDREAS WODRASCHKE, ADEM ILHAN SOUND MIX BERNHARD MAISCH

PRODUCTION MANAGER AUSTRIA BRUNO WAGNER LINE PRODUCER KARSTEN AURICH

PRODUCERS HANS WEINGARTNER, ANTONIN SVOBODA

SCREENPLAY KATHARINA HELD, HANS WEINGARTNER

DIRECTED BY HANS WEINGARTNER WORLD SALES BY THE MATCH FACTORY





SYNOPSIS



Successful TV producer Rainer has it all: big salary, luxurious penthouse, high life, hot car, even hotter girlfriend. The 30-something go-getter has reached the top by creating TV shows of the most stupid and vulgar kind. In his latest hit, a man gets the privilege of fathering a woman's child if his spermatozoid wins a microscopic race to fertilize an ovum!

One day, mysterious young woman Pegah vengefully drives full speed into Rainer's car. After this near-death experience, Rainer has a major change of heart and decides to produce a thought-provoking news show for his station's prime-time lineup. Devastated by the show's poor ratings, Rainer quits his job and embarks on an investigation of the audience measurement system that keeps intelligence-insulting programs at Number One.

Teaming up with the beautiful Pegah and a gang of unemployed social misfits, Rainer sets out to prove that a conspiracy surrounds the boxes used in select households to estimate audience percentage. Determined to fight television's dumbing down of society, Rainer and his new friends eventually go all the way with an intricate and ingenious plan to get the public interested in quality cultural programs. But the station execs who live off audience hunger for brainless TV are not willing to give up what they have ruthlessly built over the years ...





HANS WEINGARTNER DIRECTOR AND WRITER

Hans Weingartner strives for democracy as well as humour and positive thinking in his filmmaking. His popular second feature, *THE EDUKATORS*, was a 2004 Cannes competition entry and was later named Best First Feature by the German Film Critics Association. Weingartner's acclaimed 2001 debut, *THE WHITE SOUND*, won the prestigious Max Ophüls Prize and was named Best First Feature by the German Film Critics, as well as winning numerous awards for actor Daniel Brühl in the leading role as a young schizophrenic.

Austrian-born Weingartner studied neuroscience at the University of Vienna and graduated from the neurosurgical department at the University of Berlin's Steglitz Clinic. During his studies (1991–97), Weingartner also began working as a camera assistant. He did his post-graduate studies (1997–2001) in filmmaking at Cologne's Academy of Media Arts (KHM).

2007 *RECLAIM YOUR BRAIN* (Free Rainer) / 2004 *THE EDUKATORS* (Die fetten Jahre sind vorbei) / 2001 *THE WHITE SOUND* (Das weiße Rauschen)

"Our society is drifting apart. It seems like only the elite have access to knowledge and education, while the masses are dumbed down and kept quiet with trash TV. The ever-successful 'panem et circense' game has reached a dangerous level. People who are kept stupid are an easy target for populist rat-catchers that offer easy solutions. But true democracy is based on well informed, thinking individuals. I made *RECLAIM YOUR BRAIN* as a wake-up call for human values based on sensitivity, insight and consideration. It is not intended to be a lecture, but a thriller with a lot of humor. Is it real? Or is it a satire? What is real anyway? I think that we need to mingle genres; we need to blur borders."



DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS

4 hours per day – that's how much time the average European spends watching TV. When I read this figure one morning in the newspaper, I couldn't believe it. Let's do the calculation: 8 hours sleep, 8 hours work, 1 hour to get to work, 1 to get back home, 1 hour for ingestion and one for digestion, 1 hour for basic personal hygiene. That leaves five hours. That would mean that the average European spends 80% of his leisure time in front of a TV set! In other words: only 1 hour per day for living. I re-read the report. There it was in black and white. 4 hours per day. I immediately started thinking of pale zombies sitting in front of shiny blue television screens, sort of remote-controlled, only reminding us vaguely of human beings.



I thought this topic was old hat. We have internet now, new media – surely TV is dead. I was wrong. TV consumption is growing yearly. We thought we could get rid of this topic by not talking about it anymore, not thinking about it. Too bad it didn't work out that way.

I love conspiracy theories. Once I read in the newspaper about a soap opera scoring the top ratings of the day and I thought: This can't be! Then I thought: What if these ratings aren't correct at all? What if a conspiracy is trying to dumb us down on purpose? Why haven't I ever met anybody who has one of the black ratings boxes? Or at least somebody who knows someone that has one?

It bothers me that we're seeing the mental decay of society but we still don't do anything about it. On the contrary: It's becoming cool in my generation to have never read a book at all. Studies have been done that confirm that vocabulary is constantly decreasing among the general population. Letters from the early 20th century show that people used a more complex and rich language to express themselves. Even "common" people were more interested in complex subjects as politics or science.

During my research I found out that the ratings counting system has serious shortcomings. There are no boxes in households of foreigners. Those 20% of the Germans who don't pay the TV tax (GEZ) are not included either. If a household has more than one TV set, these secondary sets are only included to a very small part – so children and teenagers aren't counted for either. It's also a complete riddle to me why the advertisement industry accepts this without a word of protest. I have spoken to many responsible people in the industry, but the tenor is: it has always been like this, there is nothing else.







MORITZ BLEIBTREU AS RAINER

Already one of Germany's biggest stars, Moritz Bleibtreu first received international attention for his leading role in Tom Tykwer's RUN LOLA RUN. For his role as the sexually obsessed Bruno in Oskar Roehler's ELEMENTARY PARTICLES, Bleibtreu received Best Actor prizes at the German Film Awards and the 2006 Berlin Film Festival. Bleibtreu won much acclaim, as well as Best Actor prizes at the German Film Awards and the Seattle Film Festival, for his role as the troublemaking prisoner in Oliver Hirschbiegel's DAS EXPERIMENT.

Bleibtreu made his stage debut in 1992 at Hamburg's prestigious Schauspielhaus after studying acting in Rome, Paris and New York. Born in 1971, he is the son of actress Monica Bleibtreu and actor Hans Brenner. As a child, he appeared in several TV productions.

MORITZ BLEIBTREU ON RAINER

"Rainer is a character that in the beginning of the film is failing more or less himself. Deep inside, he probably knows exactly that everything he is doing is bullshit. But he convinces himself otherwise. He justifies everything he does. He knocks himself out with all of kinds of diversions: drugs, women, alcohol. But he is actually at the point in life where he doesn't question anything anymore – not himself, not his actions. Through the accident, by chance, he starts thinking about himself and others for the first time in his life. He goes through a radical change and begins to be interested in a lot of things that he didn't care for before at all."





MORITZ BLEIBTREU SELECTED FILMOGRAPHY

- 2007 THE WALKER (DIR. PAUL SCHRADER)
- 2007 LA MASSERIA DELLE ALLODOLE (THE LARK FARM)
(DIR. VITTORIO & PAOLO TAVIANI)
- 2006 LE CONCILE DE PIERRE (DIR. GUILLAUME NICLOUX)
- 2006 ELEMENTARY PARTICLES (ELEMENTARTEILCHEN) (DIR. OSKAR ROEHLER)
- 2005 MUNICH (DIR. STEVEN SPIELBERG)
- 2005 VOM SUCHEN UND FINDEN DER LIEBE (DIR. HELMUT DIETL)
- 2005 THE KEEPER (DIR. KAYVAN MASHAYEKH)
- 2004 THE FAKIR (DIR. PETER FLINTH)
- 2004 AGNES AND HIS BROTHERS (DIR. OSKAR ROEHLER)
- 2002 SOLINO (DIR. FATIH AKIN)
- 2001 LAMMBOCK (DIR. CHRISTIAN ZÜBERT)
- 2001 TAKING SIDES (DIR. ISTVAN SZABO)
- 2001 DAS EXPERIMENT (DIR. OLIVER HIRSCHBIEGEL)
- 2000 FANDANGO (DIR. MATTHIAS GLASNER)
- 2000 IN JULY (DIR. FATIH AKIN)
- 1999 LUNA PAPA (DIR. BAKHTJAR CHUDOJNAZAROW)
- 1998 RUN LOLA RUN (DIR. TOM TYKWER)
- 1997 KNOCKIN' ON HEAVEN'S DOOR (DIR. THOMAS JAHN)
- 1995 TALK OF THE TOWN (STADTGESPRÄCH) (DIR. RAINER KAUFMANN)
- 1994 SIMPLY LOVE (EINFACH NUR LIEBE) (DIR. PETER TIMM)





A FILM BY HANS WEINGARTNER

FEATURE FILM / 132 MINS /
GERMANY, AUSTRIA / 35 MM /
1:1,85 / COLOUR / DOLBY DIGITAL /
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE: GERMAN

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