

NIKOLAUS GEYRHALTER MARKUS GLASER MICHAEL KITZBERGER WOLFGANG WIDERHOFER PETER HEILRATH  
PRESENT



60<sup>th</sup> Internationale  
Filmfestspiele  
Berlin  
Competition

ANDREAS LUST

FRANZISKA WEISZ

# THE DODDER THE RUBBER

A FILM BY

BENJAMIN HEISENBERG

BASED ON MARTIN PRINZ'S NOVEL

Starring ANDREAS LUST FRANZISKA WEISZ MARKUS SCHLEINZER PETER VILNAI JOHANN BEDNAR MAX EDELBACHER

Written by BENJAMIN HEISENBERG MARTIN PRINZ Based on a novel by MARTIN PRINZ Directed by BENJAMIN HEISENBERG Director of Photography REINHOLD VORSCHNEIDER Production Designer RENATE SCHMADERER  
Costume Designer STEPHANIE RIESS Make Up by WILTRUD DERSCHMIDT Sound by MARC PARISOTTO Casting by MARKUS SCHLEINZER Edited by ANDREA WAGNER BENJAMIN HEISENBERG Music by LORENZ DANGEL

Sound Design by VERONIKA HLAWATSCH Sound Mixing by BERNHARD MAISCH Production Manager GERHARD HANNAK Executive Producer MICHAEL KITZBERGER

Produced by NIKOLAUS GEYRHALTER MARKUS GLASER MICHAEL KITZBERGER WOLFGANG WIDERHOFER PETER HEILRATH - NIKOLAUS GEYRHALTER FILMPRODUKTION GMBH and PETER HEILRATH FILMPRODUKTION E. K.

NIKOLAUS GEYRHALTER FILMPRODUKTION AND PETER HEILRATH FILMPRODUKTION PRESENT



ANDREAS LUST  
FRANZISKA WEISZ

**THE ROBBER**  
**DER RÄUBER**

A FILM BY

BENJAMIN HEISENBERG

BASED ON MARTIN PRINZ' NOVEL „ON THE RUN“

AUSTRIA / GERMANY / 2010 / 97' / COLOUR / 35MM / SCOPE / DOLBY SRD

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## SYNOPSIS

Benjamin Heisenberg's thriller DER RÄUBER (THE ROBBER), recently awarded with "Best Newcomer" in the director category at the Bavarian Film Awards, is based on Martin Prinz' novel which tells the story of the spectacular criminal escapades of Austria's infamous "Pump-gun Ronnie". Johann Rettenberger (Andreas Lust) a misfit in the world he's been released into and driven by his endorphin addiction embarks on a spellbinding journey to run marathons and rob banks.

DER RÄUBER (THE ROBBER) is Benjamin Heisenberg sophomore feature film following the successful SCHLÄFER (SLEEPER), and is based on the true story of "Pump-gun Ronnie" which Martin Prinz used as source material for his eponymous novel. The film tells the story of Johann Rettenberger (Andreas Lust) a restless misfit whose anarchistic worldview leads him into an unavoidable conflict with the society which suffocates his free spirit.

Heisenberg portrays the robber as a top level athlete an "endorphin-junkie" who is driven by an inexplicable desire to stay in motion. Motivated by the pure beauty of the criminal campaigns he executes, he is both cool and calculated whilst also fast and resourceful in the frenzied intensity of his criminal exploits.

Rettenberger's emotional indifference to rehabilitation is shattered the moment Erika steps back into his life during a chance meeting at the job centre. She offers him refuge and a place to stay, however the dark secrets he hides from her and his probation officer soon overwhelm him.

Misguided in his dual search for love and freedom, the authorities finally begin to close in on the robber. Moved by an over-powering inner energy he attempts to flee the largest deployment of police forces in Austria's modern history, but will his wit and athleticism give him the opportunity for one last escape.

DER RÄUBER (THE ROBBER) is a thriller about reckless bank robberies, heart-pounding marathons, ill-fated love and dramatic escapes.





## INTERVIEW WITH BENJAMIN HEISENBERG

*Benjamin Heisenberg, "The Robber" is based on a book by Martin Prinz, which in turn is a literary reworking of an actual Austrian criminal case about the man known as "Pump-gun Ronnie". How did you come across this project?*

At the beginning of 2006, producer Michael Kitzberger of Geyrhalter Filmproduktion called me and asked whether I would be interested in a bank robber story which they had the rights for. At the time I was living in Munich and read the book "The Robber" by Martin Prinz on the flight to the Berlinale. I was immediately hooked. I met Michael in Berlin and, after some consideration, made a firm commitment.

*Did any images come to mind as you were reading the book?*

The images were there straightaway. I had already been very fascinated by the bank robber as a character. When I was quite young, I made a short film about a bank robber as he was about to do a robbery. It dealt with a bank robber that did his robberies on a pushbike. At the time there was already one aspect I particularly liked: bank robbery as a sporting challenge. That took me away from the typical thriller, where there is usually a complicated plan for the robbery which is made well in advance. The pathologies of the Rettenberger character said a lot to me, too – I see him as a kind of natural phenomenon, driven by an inner energy which drives him to take bank robbery and running to their extremes. On the other hand, he also had a need for life, love, human contact and relationships. They contradict each other dramatically with a tragic outcome.

*How much did you fall back on the book by Martin Prinz, which in turn went back to the original case of Johann Kastenberger, called Rettenberger in the film?*

Martin wrote his book based on articles that appeared in the newspapers and developed a literary narrative from it. He even knew Kastenberger from his running career and met him once at a major event. In writing the screenplay, we familiarised ourselves with the existing sources and at the same time even collected new information about the real person. So a character emerged which I think says a lot about the real "Pump-gun Ronnie".

*Rettenberger is a man with little personality, so the character's motives for a criticism of society is not there, as he does not rob to get rich, or use his criminal activities to overcome a disadvantage.*

I believe it closely corresponds to the real character of Kastenberger, that the robber is a social outcast. It is also assumed that he was well educated. It was his character which made him a robber, not his background.

We shot the film in the year when Vienna had the most bank robberies. If my information is correct, by the summer there had been 78 bank robberies. The shortest lasted for only 19 seconds. Besides, the banks lost some credibility during the financial crisis, and so it follows that the money is not really significant to the robber, it is just about "doing" as many banks as possible. The man is a sportsman, so it is not about getting rich. He never uses the money; it just sits in a plastic bag under his bed.

*The character of Erika (Franziska Weiss) is also striking in this context. She lives in a tenement flat in the film which she inherited from her family, but she seems to have no past.*

Erika has, so to speak, been left behind. She is the last survivor of a family which was living comfortably in Vienna. This family had slowly crumbled and died out unremarkably. That is why Erika is now working at the job centre simply to earn money; she is no longer working in a job that fits her "class" and education. In that respect, she is relatively undemanding, but she is also completely self-determined and as a result, she is free to do exactly what she wants. At this point, she is open to someone like Rettenberger who, with his strong energy, promises the freedom she is looking for.

*The keyword is energy, because of the main character; the film is almost constantly on the move. What problems did that create?*

The shoot was a real challenge for everyone involved, as so much movement and relatively extreme situations had to be shown in the film. To be able to do that, for example, during the first production period we had to be in 44 different locations in three weeks, based on that you can work out how often we had to change locations every day. That was a real challenge for all of us. On top of that, we sometimes shot complicated scenes in public places such as the Vienna Marathon, on the motorway or in the Prater Park. That pushed the crew, the actors, the production team and me to the limits of our abilities. On the other hand, this method suited a film about a high performance sportsman and I think you get a sense of the spirit of the shoot from watching the film.

What was interesting for me was the juxtaposition between the "action" themes. My ideal was to create a form that was true to the story, so you can follow the characters easily but it is still told dynamically and attractively. That explains why we often change the perspectives in the film; however, the narrative generally remains with Rettenberger. This reinforces the fascination which his running and his performance generally holds for the audience and you get a kind of kick out of the movement.



*The Robber is an unusual story. How did the producers approach it? Were they ready to take all the risk from the very beginning?*

The producers were very open-minded and contributed important elements to the film. Geyhalter Film, which produced the majority of the film, specialises in documentaries and, as a result, brought a very open, exciting approach to this narrative feature film. Peter Heilrath, on the German side, had already co-produced "The Sleeper" and therefore we had a very close working relationship.

*In a key scene, Rettenberger runs in the Vienna Marathon – how was that actually shot?*

Firstly, I think it's an interesting aspect to the project that within this bank robber story we are also giving a very accurate depiction of the ordinary training and competitions that a semi-professional marathon runner goes through every day. Even while I was writing I learnt a lot about running and thought that it may be very exciting to those people watching the film who are interested in running and marathon runners.

The Vienna Marathon was one of our most difficult shoots, because it was about showing a runner who keeps out in front with the best sportsmen. That day, a total of over 20 camera operators provided footage of the route for the film. On top of that, we spent weeks working out a down-to-the-minute shooting schedule. We manoeuvred with a small convoy of cars and two motorbikes with mobile cameras through the marathon and so we were able to repeatedly use the same runners again and again. When we did this, naturally we always had to take care to stay out of the way of the real marathon. The speed of the top group is faster than you can imagine. The best athletes run a kilometer in three minutes or less, which means you have to be highly trained to run along with them even for just one or two kilometres. As you can imagine, on that day Andi Lust needed to deliver an excellent physical performance, something which he had spent months training for.



*How did Andreas Lust get this role?*

I knew Andreas from his performance in "Revanche" by Götz Spielmann, in which he was very good. That is why we invited him to the casting session. Generally, for principal roles I look at quite a lot of people and do extended casting sessions with Markus Schleinzler, Martina Poel and Carmen Lolei. Throughout this process, Andreas always remained one of our favourites. In the end, we had three candidates. We worked very closely with these three on the acting and did running tests with a professional trainer. In the end, Andreas understood the role so well, interpreted it in such a compelling way and was also incredibly physically fit that the choice was not a difficult one to make.

*How were things with Franziska Weiss?*

I knew Franziska from "Hotel" and "Dog Days" and we had also got to know one other in person. Although I found her compelling from the start, we cast in the usual way, and she played Erika in the casting session so well that I was already very enthusiastic. In a case like that, however, I tend to gravitate towards one person for the entire process of the casting session to be sure that I have not left out anything I want to be clear on. Working like this from the casting session alone, we find out a lot about the character, and you can think of it as a worthwhile preliminary pre-shoot process.

*The cameraman, Reinhold Vorschneider, is often associated with the Berlin school, therefore with quiet, meditative films and not with a thriller such as "The Robber".*

For Reinhold it was a challenge, as it was for me, to make a film which is so constantly on the move. On the one hand, he was unable to shoot everything himself because we used several cameras and often shot with steadycam. On the other hand, we had to accept taking chances - much more than our first film together "The Sleeper" - which was dictated by the movement, and particularly the fast working method. For our steadycam operator, Matthias Biber, it was also often like being on a rough sea crossing, following this fast runner upstairs, downstairs, through the narrowest passages, over meadows and through undergrowth. Nevertheless, Reinhold's clear vision and his incredible sensitivity for light and people within space can quite clearly be seen in the film.

*The soundtrack has two levels: a classic score and numerous numbers from the radio, mostly only used briefly.*

The radio was already there in the screenplay. I didn't think Rettenberger was someone who watched TV. In cars he stole, he just turned up the radio, and didn't spend a lot of time looking for a station, but just listened to what came on. Even when writing, I found juxtaposing this very subversive character with the pop world very interesting. In the film, they are hits that you can really belt out. This produces a lot of comedy and drives the story. If you are on the run after a bank robbery and you hear "We don't need Guitars" by the 'Chicks on Speed' at full pelt, then that is just brilliant.

*So the actual film score takes a bit of a back seat because of this?*

I have been working with Lorenz Dangel for a while. He is a very old friend of mine and writes amazing film music. I originally conceived a complete score for the film and Lorenz actually wrote 200 minutes of very compelling music and recorded it with real instruments as a layout track. Now only about ten minutes of score are in the film, not because something was wrong with the music, but because in my opinion and that of my editor the film and the character of Rettenberger, resisted music. It was as if this was jinxed and as a result was the reason for

many arguments in the cutting room between Lorenz and us. The current solution, which we only found late in the day, suits all of us very well. Only at certain points, now, do you hear the orchestra music that was written. Where it does emerge the score gives this really surprising emphasis and forcefulness to the story. In "The Sleeper" I had already used music so this decision simply came from nowhere. These were moments where it was like an afterburner and suddenly made the film a different kind of experience altogether.

*How do you explain the ending, which is very different from a classic showdown?*

The ending gradually emerged while I was writing. The real Kastenberger was finally pursued on the motorway in the end. He drove through a road block, was shot once from behind and shot himself before the police got to him. We thought about this ending for a while. Having the character end his life with a suicide did not seem right to me. Martin Prinz had said from the beginning: the book and also the film deal with arrival. This person who always had to be on the move found peace in death. This is also a resolution and a kind of moment of happiness, sad as it is. He finds a resolution that he could not find in love. And that is also how it was produced. Rettenberger managed to hold off the police and ended up in the drizzle somewhere on the motorway in Lower Austria. It was like taking a deep breath and then slowly releasing it.



## INTERVIEW WITH THE LEADING ACTOR ANDREAS LUST

### "I RAN FOR MY LIFE"

*Andreas Lust, can you remember "Pumpgun Ronnie"?*

I can remember coming across the story as a child, how the police had been on his trail for weeks. Afterwards, I had the feeling that at the time there was a kind of Robin Hood atmosphere to it. You get pulled in and carried along.

*How did you approach the film project?*

First of all I read the screenplay and then the novel. For me the real challenge was to become less preoccupied with the personality, but to go through it in an abstract way. I did look through the material on Kastenberger and spoke to eyewitnesses and friends of his, but it was not about building a psychological profile or even recreating scenes from his childhood. Benjamin Heisenberg told me from the very beginning: we are making a wildlife documentary; we are observing a puma in its natural habitat. He is also aimless: he has to because he can. Rettenberger channelled energy into time and distance. I found this abstraction a great challenge, in any case, because I tend to fill out characters with content. Meanwhile, I saw Rettenberger not so much as a character or as a figure, but as a metaphor for pure energy.

*Did you have to attend a casting session? What was tested there?*

We tested dialogue scenes extensively during the casting session, but the physical component was very important too, even at that early stage. It was important not only to be able to play a marathon runner but to become one.

*How did you train for it?*

Martin Prinz was my running trainer. We not only worked on fitness but particularly on the running style. We had to move from jogging and get closer to certain marathon steps which are longer and more economical. But there is always that part of proper running you cannot force with all the will in the world, and you can only achieve by running, running and more running. That's something that you can't fake.

*How did you find the day you did the Vienna Marathon shoot?*

I really reached my limit there. I was very uptight on the day because everything depended on me. The logistical expense was considerable, because we had to go in at various points of the route again and again and run along for one or two kilometres. The last bit from the Opera to Heldenplatz was the greatest challenge. We found a gap in the runners and joined the race. I couldn't let the distance between me and the runners in the race get any shorter and ran the last 300 metres to the finishing line in front of 30,000 spectators who cheered as the announcement came: «Johann Rettenberger for Austria». It gave me goose-bumps and I ran for my life.





## BENJAMIN HEISENBERG

SELECTED FILMOGRAPHY

- 2010 **DER RÄUBER (THE ROBBER)**
- 2005 **SCHLÄFER (SLEEPER)**, director and screenwriter  
*Official Selection "Un certain Regard" Festival de Cannes (2005)*  
*First Step Award (First Steps Award, Germany 2005)*  
*Prix Cinéma Tout Ecran (Geneva Cinema Tout Ecran 2006)*  
*European Special Jury Award (Angers European First Film Festival 2006)*  
*Max Ophüls Award & Screenplay Award (Max Ophüls Festival 2006)*
- 2004 **DIE GELEGENHEIT (short)**
- 2001 **AM SEE (AT THE LAKE) (short)**
- 2002 **MILCHWALD**, screenwriter, (directed by Christoph Hochhäusler)
- 2000 **DER BOMBENKÖNIG (short)**

## ANDREA LUST

SELECTED FILMOGRAPHY

- 2010 **DER KAMERAMÖRDER** by Robert Adrian Pejo
- 2009 **DER RÄUBER (THE ROBBER)** by Benjamin Heisenberg
- 2008 **BALKAN TRAFFIC – ÜBERMORGEN NIRGENDWO** by Vilan B. Puzic and Markus Stein
- 2008 **REVANCHE** by Götz Spielmann
- 2005 **MUNICH** by Steven Spielberg
- 2003 **LE TEMPS DU LOUP (TIME OF THE WOLF)** by Michael Haneke
- 2001 **ALL THE QUEENS MEN** by Stefan Ruzowitzky
- 2001 **FINNLANDIA** by Eleni Ampelakiotou and Gregor Schnitzler
- 1998 **SUZIE WASHINGTON** by Florian Flicker
- 1997 **DER UNFISCH (THE UNFISH)** by Robert Dornhelm
- 1997 **IN SCHWIMMEN ZWEI-VÖGEL (AT SWIMM TWO-BIRDS)** by Kurt Palm
- 1995 **AUF TEUFEL KOMM RAUS (COME HEAVEN OR HELL)** by Wolfgang Murnberger
- 1994 **ICH GELOBE (FOR GOD AND COUNTRY)** by Wolfgang Murnberger

## FRANZISKA WEISZ

SELECTED FILMOGRAPHY

- 2010 **HABERMANN** by Juraj Herz
- 2009 **RENN, WENN DU KANNST** by Dietrich Brüggemann
- 2009 **DER RAUBER (THE ROBBER)** by Benjamin Heisenberg
- 2009 **DAS VATERSPIEL (KILL DADDY GOOD NIGHT)** by Michael Glawogger
- 2004 **HOTEL** by Jessica Hausner
- 2004 **CROOK** by Pepe Danquart
- 2001 **HUNDSTAGE (DOG DAYS)** by Ulrich Seidl



## CAST

IN ORDER OF APPEARANCE

Johann Rettenberger	ANDREAS LUST
Probation Officer	MARKUS SCHLEINZER
Hostel clerk	ROMAN KETTNER
Bank cashier	HANNELORE KLAUBER-LAURSEN
Young girl in the supermarket	TABEA WERICH
Labour exchange attendant	NINA STEINER
Erika's colleague	JOSEF ROMSTORFFER
Erika	FRANZISKA WEISZ
Erika's clients	WOLFGANG PETRIK, FLORIAN WOTRUBA
Physiotherapist	JOHANNES HANDLER
Sports doctor	KATHARINA HÜLLE
Shoe salesman	TONY NAGY
Kidnapped woman	MICHAELA CHRISTL
Jogger	GEORG MLYNEK
Stolen car owner	ALEXANDER FENNON
Strong-room employees	ALEX SCHEURER, FRIEDRICH STINDL
Chasier	WALTER HUBER
Treasurer with weak attack	LEOPOLD BÖHM
Switchboard operator without key	GERDA DRABEK
Man at cash dispenser	MARCUS BAUER
Police unit	HANNES IPIROTIS
	ROBERT MÜLLNER
	CHRISTIAN BUCHMAYR
Leading marathon-runner	MARTIN PRINZ
Nurse	JÜRGEN KÖLLNER
First aid attendant	KARIN KÖLLNER
Fireman	MICHAEL STEINBRECHER
Commissioner Lukac	JOHANN BEDNAR
Commissioner Seidl	MAX EDELBACHER
Cobra-application forces	COBRA
Commissioner Welz	MICHAEL WELZ
Policeman in the woods	ERWIN REICHEL
Older man	PETER VILNAI
Man and woman at roadside parking	BERND-CHRISTIAN ALTHOFF
	SWINTHA GERSTHOFER



## CREDITS

Director	BENJAMIN HEISENBERG
Screenplay	BENJAMIN HEISENBERG
	MARTIN PRINZ
Producers	NIKOLAUS GEYRHALTER
	MARKUS GLASER
	MICHAEL KITZBERGER
	WOLFGANG WIDERHOFER
	PETER HEILRATH
	REINHOLD VORSCHNEIDER
	GERHARD HANNAK
	MICHAEL KITZBERGER
	RENATE SCHMADERER
	STEPHANIE RIESS
	WILTRUD DERSCHMIDT
	MARC PARISOTTO
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	BURKHARD ALTHOFF / ZDF - DAS KLEINE FERNSEHSPIEL
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Director of photography	
Production manager	
Line producer	
Production designer	
Costume designer	
Make-up artist	
Sound designer	
Casting director	
Editors	
Dramaturgy (dramatist)	
Music	
Sound design	
Sound mixer	
Running coaches	
Production companies:	
With the support of	
In collaboration with	
Co-produced with	
in collaboration with	
Commissioning editors for ORF, ARTE and ZDF	
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