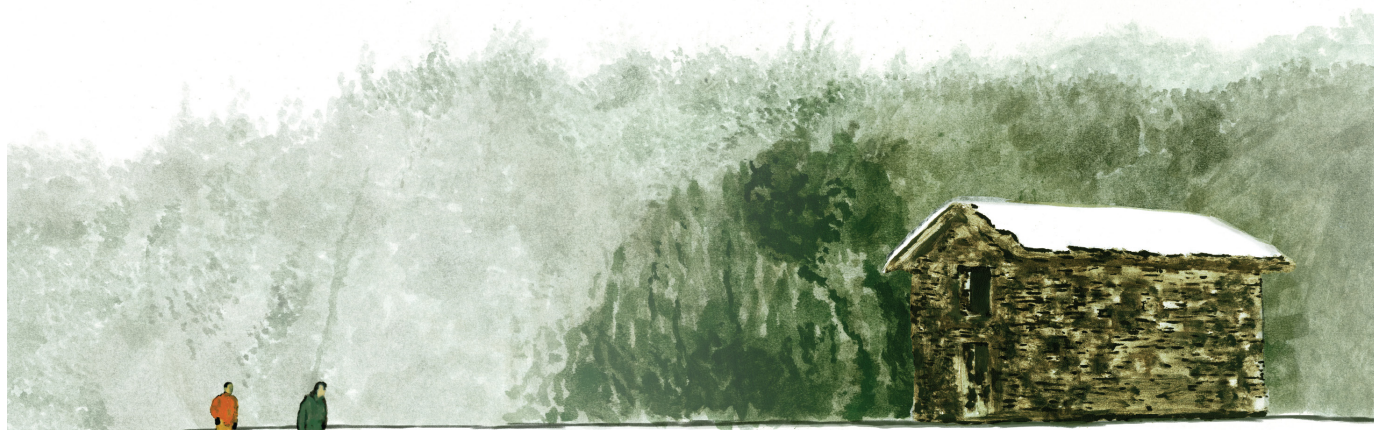


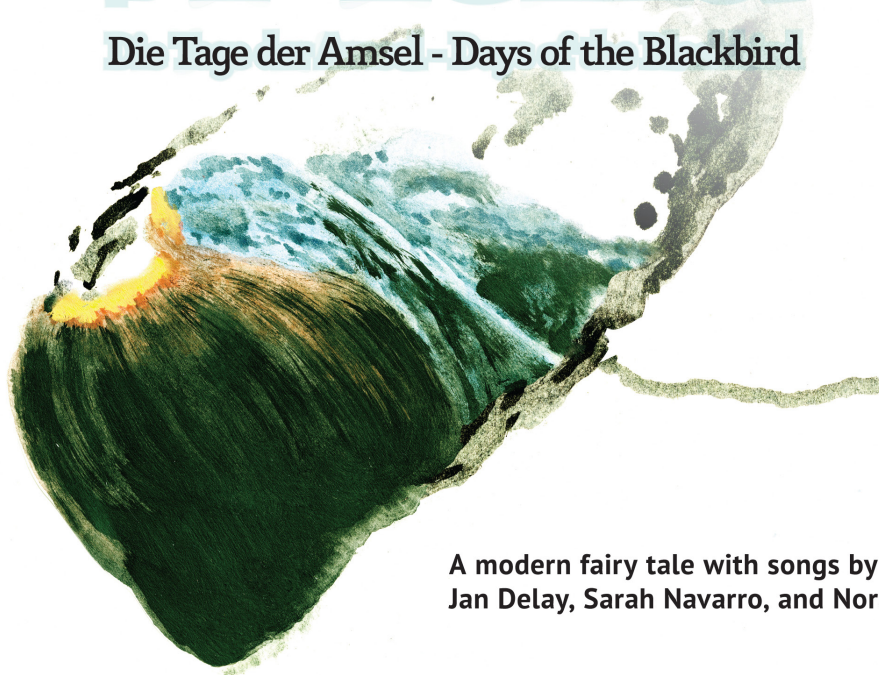
A DIEGO BRENTANO & NIKLAS LEIFERT FILM



Giorni della Merla



Die Tage der Amsel - Days of the Blackbird



A modern fairy tale with songs by
Jan Delay, Sarah Navarro, and Nora Born.

SIG Pictures PRESENTS A Diego Brentano & Niklas Leifert FILM Niklas Leifert Diego Brentano
"Giorni della Merla" Moss Kabaka Stephanie Müller-Hagen Natalie Kathmann Sarah Navarro Angelo Navarro
Petra Gerstorfer Benjamine Moser CASTING Diego Brentano & Niklas Leifert MAKE-UP ARTIST Stephanie Metzner ORIGINAL SCORE Manfred Plessl
"JIBRIL'S" PIANO PLAY Dave Scherler COSTUME DESIGNER Benjamine Moser PRODUCTION DESIGNERS Benjamine Moser, Sarah Mangelberger
AND Mourad Keller POSTER CONCEPT & TITLE DESIGN Christian Fillies ORIGINAL POSTER ARTWORK Jonas Bechstein SOUND RECORDING & EDITING Mourad Keller
EDITORS Diego Brentano & Niklas Leifert DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY Nora Born PRODUCED BY Diego Brentano & Niklas Leifert
WRITTEN & DIRECTED BY Diego Brentano & Niklas Leifert



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www.giorni-della-merla.com

Synopsis



Once upon a time, not so long ago, upon the days of the blackbird that are known as the coldest days of the year, the paths of two young men cross – one a traveling business man, the other a lonesome hotelier who lives in his own mysterious world. Both grew up without the guidance of a father, beyond this they have nothing in common, or so it seems... But when they stumble upon an old postcard, trouble arises, as their past plays a trick on their future.

Giorni della Merla is the debut feature film of Diego Brentano and Niklas Leifert, two young actors, who have assembled an ambitious team to bring this low-budget German/Swiss co-production to life.

Clemens, an impatient business man, returns from a bad trip to Finland and is on his way to Italy with his girlfriend Gina. Their goal: to make Gina's dream of opening her own fashion boutique come true. On a stopover in Hamburg Clemens meets up with Edoardo, an old friend of his mother's. Much to Gina's dismay, Clemens is mesmerized by Edoardo's charming daughter Francesca. As they continue their road trip through Europe, disharmony sets in. And Gina has yet to discover that there is something fishy about his trunk...

A lonesome hotelier leads an unhurried, yet mysterious life in a small village close to the Swiss-Italian border. His leisurely routine gets interrupted when he suddenly receives his first guests. One of the two can't talk. Instead he expresses himself through the language of music and the art of cooking. The other one can't see. Still, she enchants the hotelier with her looks. But why does he try to pull the wool over her eyes at their gourmet dinner?

Diego Brentano und Niklas Leifert tell the stories of two very different young men whose worlds collide. At once, an old postcard appears and forces them to confront their past. A scratchy old vinyl record suddenly sounds as good as new and the two protagonists discover that their fatherless journey through life does not seem to be over yet. Just as the legend of the *Giorni della Merla* proclaims: The colder the days of the blackbird, the warmer the coming spring will be.

The Making of *Giorni della Merla*

When a Swiss and a German make a promise and shake on it, that promise is etched in stone – so they say. Half way through their three year acting degree at the Bern University of the Arts, Diego Brentano and Niklas Leifert decided to realize their first feature film. In August 2009 the story took shape and the production team fell in place. After 3 weeks of filming in Astano, Ticino, 5 days in Hamburg, and countless hours spent in the studio, they kick off their professional careers with the 2011 release of *Giorni della Merla – Days of the Blackbird*.

The 75 minute low-budget feature film combines atmospheric images (director of photography: Nora Born) with strong musical elements (score by Manfred Plessl and songs of Jan Delay, Sarah Navarro, and others). Credit for writing the original screenplay, directing, producing, casting and editing, as well as portraying the two protagonists goes to Diego Brentano and Niklas Leifert. They had a crazy idea and the guts to bring it to life – without any professional filmmaking background they learnt the ropes as they went along. To support the release of this film – and others yet to come – they have founded *SIG Pictures*. The production house will not limit itself to any genre, but aims to combine entertainment and poetry in all its projects.



The Cast

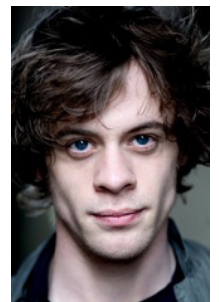
Clemens



Niklas Leifert, born in 1983, grew up in Hamburg, Geneva and Washington D.C. After completing his civil service he studied International Business Administration and obtained a diploma in Aviation Management. In 2006 he then decided to follow his creative passion and study acting in Germany, Austria and in Switzerland at the Bern University of the Arts, from where he graduated in 2011.
<http://www.niklasleifert.com>

Dino

Diego Brentano was born in 1984 in Bern and grew up in Brugg in the Swiss Canton of Aargau. After completing high school in Baden, in 2008 he began his studies at the Bern University of the Arts, from where he graduated with a bachelor in theatre in 2011. He further pursues a masters degree at the same university. His key interests lie in film and theatre, in particular in acting, directing, and writing for stage and screen.



The Cast (cont'd)

Jibril



Moss Kabaka was born into an Ishan tribe in an ancient town of the old Benin kingdom, called Esan Novbimwen by the Benin monarch. Today it is known as Benin-city in Edo state, Nigeria. Moss left Nigeria as a teenager to begin a new phase in his life – in what is called the western world. Diego Brentano and Niklas Leifert spotted Moss in 2009 and wrote the role of Jibril specifically with him in mind. Moss is a cool headed, easy going human being. He can be found throughout the city of Bern, rehearsing his film and music scripts.

See <http://www.cdbaby.com/mossperaries> for his music.

Gina

Stephanie Müller-Hagen, born in Hamburg in 1982, began her acting career at theatres in Hamburg and Berlin. She then studied acting at the Bern University of the Arts, completing her degree in 2010. She now works out of Hamburg and can currently be seen in the Jerry Suen film *Within the Tides* and on stage in the Marburg Theatre production of *Don Juan*, as Donna Elvira.



Iris



Natalie Kathmann was born in the beautiful city of Dresden, Saxony, in Germany. However, Saxony should not remain the only benefactor of Natalie's creative thirst for knowledge. She went on to feed her creative desires with Swabian Spaetzle, English Tea, dirty plates at a restaurant in Paderborn, greek dances, sunrises in Berlin – and passionately channels all of these experiences on stage at the Bern University of the Arts since 2009.

Francesca

Sarah Navarro was born in 1982 in Hamburg, Germany. Her interest in music is not exactly an accident – it is shared by her Portuguese mother and Italian father. After years of practice in church choirs and schoolbands, Sarah wrote and produced four demo songs in 2002 and began her career as a singer/songwriter with performances in clubs. She was soon discovered by a producer and released her first album *Game Over* in 2004, on which she sings in Italian.

In 2005 Lead Recording Studio in Rome engaged her to sing at a number of high profile events in Italy. In 2006 *Scegli Me* was released in Italy as a single from Sarah's second album *Movin On*. The song became a huge hit. Since 2011 Sarah is working on new songs in Portuguese and English. In *Giorni della Merla* Sarah plays a singer and performs a live version of her song *Scegli Me*.



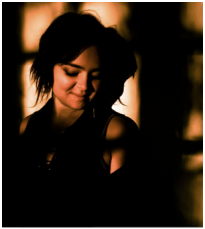
Please visit **www.giorni-della-merla.com** for the complete cast list.

The Crew

Directors, Original Screenplay, Producers, Casting, Editors

Diego Brentano & Niklas Leifert, two actors, both students at the Bern University of the Arts, class of 2011, decided to follow their dream and formed an ambitious team to realise their first feature film: *Giorni della Merla – Days of the Blackbird*.

Director of Photography



Nora Born, born and raised in Basel, has dedicated the last ten years to music and film. She currently studies Process Design and Facilitation at the Institut HyperWerk (FHNW) and, as part of her graduation thesis, is lead organiser of the two day festival *Trauer Feier*. Besides composing, giving concert performances, and launching her debut album, she has also worked on several documentaries and feature films. <http://www.noraborn.com>

Sound Recording and Editing

Mourad Keller was born in Zurich in 1986. In 2009 he graduated from the SAE Institute Zurich and begins his career as sound engineer on various short films. For *Giorni della Merla* he is not only responsible for sound recording on set, he further oversaw the editing of sound and the recording of a part of the soundtrack.



Original Score

Manfred Plessl is an Austrian composer and musician. Since 2004 he is violist in the renowned Acies Quartet. Since 1999 he has composed music for a number of films. Manfred Plessl is responsible for the magical score of *Giorni della Merla*.



Jibril's Piano Play

Dave Scherler is a versatile composer and musical arranger. His inimitable style includes elements of jazz, classical music and many other genres. He recently composed music to the animated short film *Nachkriegszeit* (directed by Valentin Kemmner) that won the Bern Film Funding's 1st prize in the category New Talent.

Costume Design

After studying Philosophy, Art History and Ethnology, **Benjamin Moser** worked as a journalist. In 1995 she opened a studio for fashion design in Bern and has since then organized various art exhibitions. She currently writes novels and poetry. She generously supported this project with countless hours spent gathering costumes and props for *Giorni della Merla*.



Please visit **www.giorni-della-merla.com** for the complete crew list.