Peccadillo Pictures Presents

THE SAMURAI

On the edge of a dark forest, where the fear of wolves prevents locals from straying too far from home, a young police officer, Jakob receives a package addressed to the ‘Lone Wolf’. As the night shift starts a mysterious caller claims the package belongs to him.

Venturing out alone, Jakob unknowingly delivers a samurai sword to a wild-eyed man in a wedding dress, who entices him to participate in a bloody crusade through the village.

As night wanes something hidden is unleashed to meet the first rays of daylight...

Till Kleinert’s genre debut pulsates with relentless intensity, The Samurai is a daring, outrageous and fascinating journey into the sexual heart of darkness.

“The Samurai has drawn you into its odd, half-Lynchian, half Company of Wolves dreamscape completely. This is excellent.”

Sci-Fi Now

On DVD & On-Demand: 13th April 2015


Extra Features: UK Exclusive Interview with Director & Cast, Audio Commentary and Making Of Featurette

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UK Trailer: http://youtu.be/hmgL1r22qoA
THE SAMURAI is a thriller that gradually shifts into nightmare territory as it progresses. The reality of a standard police procedure becomes derailed and overshadowed by the anarchic and irrational world that the Samurai inhabits.

Jakob's ever-growing exhaustion bridges the shift in key; from a certain point on, the film itself seems to take place in that grey area between being awake and dreaming. Even the excessive violence, in which the Samurai's frenzy eventually breaks loose, though bloody and shocking, has a strangely aloof and almost unreal quality within the context of the narrative.

The night brings forward the convergence between hunter and hunted; they are connected by the invisible bond felt by those who are awake while everybody else is sleeping. But there is a connection that runs deeper. Trying to keep the wolf away from the houses, yet, out of a sentiment unexplainable even to himself, unwilling to completely scare it away, Jakob has secretly been feeding it for weeks. It was the smell of the raw meat that has lured the Samurai out of the dark.

The Samurai's origin remains a mystery until the end. One could come to the conclusion that he has emerged from the woods as an incarnation of Jakob's fear of losing control, summoned by is unacknowledged sexual desires; a shadow whose sole mission seems to be to gleefully unhinge Jakob's small and orderly world and turn it on its head.

Yet, as frightening as that prospect might seem, it contains an appeal Jakob finds harder and harder to resist as the night progresses. The Samurai is an agent of the unconscious and the repressed, a messiah preaching the liberation of one's wild impulses by the means of the sword; and the more doggedly Jakob tries to defend his self-image against this philosophy of chaos, the more the subliminal urge to take the gift of his opponent, to give in and relish in his transgression, grows.

Together with Jakob we eventually cross the line of the familiar and the morally safe, entering uncharted territory. No one can say how high the price we have to pay for that transgression will be. Only one thing is certain: at the end of the night we will not be the same.

THE PLACE

Set and shot in a reclusive, rural East German area close to the Polish border, THE SAMURAI will be rich in local flavour, yet at the same time its themes and aesthetics relate to a larger, archetypical pool of motifs. The dense dark forest locations and uncanny encounters with the dark side of the self, originate from an abundant matrix of Grimm Fairy Tales, German Gothic Romanticism and Jungian psycho-analysis.

Although there is a long tradition of grim and psychological horror in German literature, sadly there are very few contemporary German filmmakers to mine it. Thus, THE SAMURAI also deviates from the muted, self-important pseudo-realism that has become the prevailing language of German
Cinema today, going on to direct its own course on an adrenaline rush adventure that encounters the bizarre and the fantastically absurd.

**GENRE**

As the name of the genre suggests, first and foremost, a thriller should thrill the audience. While the 'serious' genres usually approach phenomena like violence and mental distress from a rational meaning point of view, the thriller puts us right onto the battlefield. Giving up a clear moral vantage point in favour of effect, it allows us to relish in the thrill of fear.

Often enough our perspective watching a thriller is ambiguous, alternating in an almost sadomasochistic minefield between the victim's and the perpetrator's points of view. We are as much in danger of being eaten by Hannibal Lecter as we are witnesses and accomplices to his deeds – thus exploring our own destructive and anti-social impulses in the safe framework of watching a film.

You can't get much closer to 'evil' than you can when watching a thriller. In an enlightened age, thrillers and horror films are the last resort of the monstrous and the irrational in cinema. In those genres the unconscious, which in spite of all our wishes to control things still has such an enormous influence on our lives.
TILL KLEINERT – Writer, Director & Editor

From an early age Till was fascinated with visual storytelling, drew comics in his teens and at the age of fifteen started to make animated and live action video films with a group of friends. After finishing high school he wrote and directed several shorts before he started studying at the German Film and Television Academy Berlin (DFFB) in 2004. The short films he made during his studies, *Hundefutter* (2007), *Cowboy* (2008), *Kokon* (2009) and *Boys Village* (2011) have played successfully at many film festivals, including the German Fantasy Film Fest, the Leopards of Tomorrow section in Locarno and the Kurzfilmtage Oberhausen, and won several awards, most notably the German Academy Short Film Award for *Kokon* in 2009.

Thematically his films so far have been concerned with rites of passage and the liberation from self-inflicted constraints. There is a strong current of atmospheric storytelling running through his films, as well as a fascination with the uncanny and the horrific.

Kleinert is part of the filmmaker’s collective Schattenkante.

CAST

JACOB Michel Diercks  
SAMURAI Pit Bukowski  
HORVATH Uwe Preuss  
GRANDMA Ulrike Hanke-Hänsch  
KARO Kaja Blachnik

CREW

PRODUCTION Schattenkante GbR & German Film and Television Academy Berlin GmbH (dffb)  
WRITER, DIRECTOR, EDITOR Till Kleinert  
DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY Martin Hanslmayr  
PRODUCER Anna de Paoli  
PRODUCTION MANAGER Jolanka Höhn  
SET DESIGNER Tomoko Okada & Sandra Fleischer  
COSTUME DESIGN Malena Modéer & Vivien Waneck  
MAKE-UP ARTIST Sophie Ilg & Jenny Marolf

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