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Publicity Contact: Shotwell Media

Sasha Berman

ShotwellMedia@gmail.com

## SYNOPSIS

Keith Jarrett's legendary performance in January 1975 nearly didn't happen. Based on a true story, *Köln 75* follows how the concert was conceived and orchestrated by the efforts of a teenage up and coming concert promoter, Vera Brandes, (played by German actress Mala Emde). Her enthusiasm set her to multitasking – from organizing the concert venue (the Cologne Opera House), promoting the event, and selling the tickets, to convincing Jarrett to perform when he almost dropped out when the Bösendorfer Imperial Grand piano he was promised was nowhere to be found. John Magaro plays Jarrett with his own intensity, a sublime counterpoint to Mala Emde's joyful portrayal of the enthusiastic and unstoppable Vera. *Köln 75* captures the compelling, entertaining and, until now, unknown back story about Jarrett's one-hour, entirely improvised concert, which became the best-selling solo album in jazz history.

## ABOUT THE PRODUCTION

Fifty years have passed since that legendary concert on January 24, 1975, at the Cologne Opera House. Keith Jarrett improvised alone on a grand piano — one that, as it later turned out, was a damaged Bösendorfer baby grand, not the Bösendorfer Imperial 290 he usually insisted on. The recordings from that evening were released by ECM under the title *THE KÖLN CONCERT* and became a bestseller. With more than four million copies sold, the double album, with its iconic white cover, remains the best-selling solo jazz album and solo piano recording of all time. This is all the more remarkable considering that both Keith Jarrett himself and ECM Records — the contemporary jazz label founded in 1969 by Manfred Eicher, Manfred Scheffner, and Karl Egger, based in Gräfelfing — have long distanced themselves from the release, regarding it as inferior.

In fact, the concert almost didn't happen, and over time, legends have grown around it. It was thanks to the persuasive skills of the then 18-year-old promoter Vera Brandes that it took place at all — that Keith Jarrett sat down at a baby grand piano whose flaws forced him to completely rethink his improvisation. By that time, Vera Brandes was already well known in Cologne: Born in 1956, she had organized her first tour at the age of 16 for British jazz musician Ronnie Scott. In 1974, she launched the „New Jazz in Cologne“ series, which had already featured performances by the group Oregon, Dave Liebman's Lookout Farm, the band Pork Pie with Charlie Mariano and Jasper van't Hof, and Gary Burton's quartet. Then she managed to bring Keith Jarrett to Cologne. It was her remarkable story that caught the attention of New York filmmaker and music aficionado Ido Fluk, who, in turn, brought it to the attention of his mentor and production partner Oren Moverman.

“For us, the project began in April 2019 with an email from Oren Moverman,” recalls Sol Bondy, founder and partner (alongside Fred Burle) of the dynamic Berlin-based production company One Two Films, known for acclaimed films like *THE HAPPIEST DAY IN THE LIFE OF OLLI MAKI* (2016) by Juho Kuosmanen, *THE TALE* (2018) by Jennifer Fox, and Cannes winner *HOLY SPIDER* (2022) by Ali Abbasi. In fact, the connection to the renowned filmmaker Moverman had been established through *THE TALE*.

Moverman had produced Ido Fluk's second film, *THE TICKET* (2017). At the time, Fluk had a two-page pitch paper outlining the third act of what would eventually become *KÖLN 75*. “After working on a series of international projects, we were looking for a German project that would be a good fit for us, but we hadn't found one,” says Sol Bondy. “Then this came along — material with a clear German DNA, a German story, but realized as a major international co-production with us as the lead production company. We were electrified. We immediately recognized what a unique opportunity this film represented.”

The name Keith Jarrett alone guarantees worldwide attention, but the nature of the story also suggested to the producers that they might be able to finance and complete the entire production from within Germany. “It was a no-brainer that we wanted to make this film,” Bondy states. His colleague Fred Burle adds, “A few compelling elements came together: a great story, a film filled with music, and a fascinating female protagonist who was far ahead of her time. From the outset, Ido wanted to tell the story of The Köln Concert from her perspective — not from the point of view of Keith Jarrett, the superstar, but through the eyes of Vera Brandes, the 18-year-old promoter at the heart of it all.”

The producers' first step was to reach out to Keith Jarrett's management. “The response came immediately: a polite but firm ‘Sorry, but no—ain't gonna happen,’” Bondy recalls. “That was the moment when most producers would have walked away. But we found the idea so compelling, so exciting, so unique that we decided to push forward anyway: Let's write the script first and try again later. *KÖLN 75* is a film that celebrates Keith Jarrett — his genius, his music.”

Meanwhile, Bondy had managed to track down Vera Brandes. During a phone call, he told her about the planned film project, in which she would be the central figure — if she agreed to it. “There was a long pause — probably much shorter, in reality, than it felt — but I knew that everything hinged on her answer,” Bondy remembers. “Then, after that long silence, she let out a deep sigh and said: ‘Finally!’”

He continues: “I immediately sensed how emotional this was for her. She started talking right away—and, in a way, she hasn’t stopped since. She became our rock, our unwavering ally — just as she must have been back then when she single-handedly organized jazz concerts in Cologne.” Soon, Vera Brandes was in direct contact with Ido Fluk, sharing every detail of what had happened in the early 1970s in a series of Skype conversations that lasted a total of eight hours. These discussions became the foundation for the script written by the New York- based filmmaker. “That’s why, at the very beginning of the film, you see the title card: „KÖLN 75 – as told by Vera Brandes herself.“ It is her story, her perspective — without question,” explains Fred Burle.

The script was outstanding from the start. Ido wanted to shape the storytelling in a way that felt like jazz itself — mirroring its essence, making it feel loose, as if the script itself were improvised.” Appropriately, the script’s cover page at the time read:

„KÖLN 75 – improvised into words by Ido Fluk.“ “We loved the spirit of it,” Burle says. “We immediately knew that producing this film would be a challenge. It seamlessly shifts from fiction to near-documentary, breaks the fourth wall, plays with narrative techniques, jumps through different timelines, embraces chaos — and then, at its core, it takes a radical turn, switching to a new setting and introducing a new protagonist. There was so much going on. We were completely hooked.”

It was during this period that ECM Records officially declined to be part of the project. “Strangely, that didn’t discourage us,” says Bondy. “If anything, it reinforced our conviction that we were on the right path by putting Vera Brandes at the heart of the story. Keith Jarrett is an important figure, but the real protagonist is Vera — and what she experienced in the early 1970s, culminating in The Köln Concert. She was the reason we wanted to make this film in the first place.”

If anything, the project now had an even sharper focus. The next step was securing financing — a challenge in an already difficult climate for filmmakers. This process went hand in hand with finding a filming location that could stand in for the Cologne Opera, where key scenes would take place. “This location was crucial,” explains Sol Bondy. “Once we knew where we could shoot these scenes, we’d have a final budget and could determine how to structure the financing beyond the usual funding institutions.” The producers quickly realized that filming at the real Cologne Opera was not an option. “It had been an ongoing construction site for years and would remain so for the foreseeable future,” says Fred Burle. “We simply weren’t allowed to shoot there.”

The main challenge in the search wasn’t the stages themselves — most historic opera houses are protected landmarks and look much the same as they did 50 years ago — but the backstage areas. “Every door, every window, every cable — nothing looked like the 1970s,” Bondy recalls. “And it was essential for Ido to move freely with the camera throughout the opera house — from backstage to the stage and back again. The unity of time and space was meant to heighten the ticking-clock tension as the concert approached.” The team explored countless options, even considering building a set at Studio Babelsberg. “Eventually, we had exhausted every possibility in Germany,” Bondy says with a shrug. “We went on multiple location scouting trips with Ido Fluk but couldn’t find the right place. So, we decided to expand our search abroad.”

The production eventually moved to Poland, turning KÖLN 75 into an international co-production — first with Poland and Oscar-winning producer Ewa Puszczyńska (IDA, THE ZONE OF INTEREST) and later with Belgium as a third partner.

Ido Fluk secured two major names for key roles: John Magaro, fresh off the success of PAST LIVES (2023) and SEPTEMBER 5 (2024), signed on to play Keith Jarrett. Michael Chernus, known from Apple TV’s SEVERANCE (2022-2025), joined as jazz journalist Michael Watts, a fictional character

who serves as the film's omniscient narrator. In Germany, the cast included Ulrich Tukur and Jödis Triebel as Vera Brandes' parents, Alexander Scheer as ECM Records founder Manfred Eicher, and Susanne Wolff and Marie-Lou Sellem as the older versions of Vera Brandes and her best friend Isa. The film's cinematography was entrusted to Jens Harant, best known for his work with Lars Kraume, while Jutta Freyer handled production design, Ola Staszko designed the costumes, and Anja Siemens took on editing.

The most crucial casting decision, however, was finding the right actress to play Vera Brandes. "We needed a young, fearless woman who could carry this film on her shoulders," recalls Ido Fluk. "I wasn't very familiar with the new generation of German actors, so I started watching everything Sol and Fred recommended. The first time I saw Mala Emde was in *303*. Her screen presence was disarming — authentic and strong. Then I saw

"*And Tomorrow the Entire World*" where she carried the entire film. It was incredibly impressive. We went through many rounds of casting, and she consistently won everyone over. When Mala walks into a room, the atmosphere shifts. You instantly feel that you're in the presence of a star."

Filming ultimately took place primarily in and around Cologne. "This turned out to be yet another major challenge," recalls Fred Burle. "There aren't many areas left in the city where you can still shoot historical scenes. And in those that remain, getting filming permits is nearly impossible." The highway scenes depicting the journey from Switzerland to Cologne were shot in Bavaria.

The opera house scenes were ultimately filmed in Łódź, Poland, at a historic theater that had previously hosted the annual Camerimage Festival. "We had an agreement that we could rehearse there for two weeks and then have another two weeks for shooting," says Burle. "Unfortunately, that didn't work out as planned, and we found ourselves in a situation that eerily mirrored the story of the film itself: we had to improvise nonstop."

Each day, the team had to reassess whether they could shoot on the stage, on one of the staircases, or behind the scenes. "It was like a continuous puzzle; we had to create a new shooting schedule every single day. It was frustrating, but in the end, it was also incredibly inspiring because the challenges forced us to bond as a team like never before.

# A conversation with writer-director Ido Fluk

## **Why Vera Brandes? Why the Cologne concert? Why a film with and about music?**

Ido Fluk: I have always been into music. For me, music is an integral part of making a film. I used to play in bands in New York, punk, indie, lo-fi, things like that. Music has always been there for me. In a way, this film was my counter reaction to a series of music films were released in recent years. They all felt very similar, told more or less the same story. When I read about Vera Brandes and the history of the Cologne concert, I saw an opportunity for a film that tells a story about music in a different way. It was an article in a magazine. I remember thinking immediately that this could be a film. So I got in touch with Oren Moverman here in New York, a good friend, partner, and mentor, to see if he would like to come on board as a producer. He connected me to Sol Bondi and Fred Burle at One Two Films in Berlin.

## **What were your first steps?**

Ido Fluk: First of all, we went to seek out Vera Brandes. We found her on a beach in Greece. Her first words were: Why did it take you so long? She had been waiting for years for someone to tell her story. From the first conversations with Vera it became very clear that her story could make a wonderful film. I wanted to do justice to Vera, I wanted to shine the spotlight on her role in this historic concert. I think that's important. In historical reflections on the concert on 24 January 1975 at the Cologne Opera, she does not get the credit she deserves for her role. There's a sense that she was written out of the story. So it became our mission to correct the historical record. Without Vera Brandes, the concert would not have taken place.

## **That would be the other approach for a music film you mentioned at the beginning.**

Ido Fluk: Most music films focus on the artists. I think that often the stories about the people behind the artists are more exciting. Isn't it the same with film? We talk a lot about the directors, we don't talk enough about the producers. KÖLN 75 is a film about a producer. A film about the person behind the scenes running the show and solving the problems. Because if she doesn't, the miracle doesn't happen. That really was attractive to me. I wanted to tell the story of this woman, and through her story, I wanted to tell something about how art is created, what it means. At the core of this story is a truth that is true for every work of art in human history: how obstruction and problems and obstacles shape the work. And how an artist must confront this to create good work. I've asked myself this question again and again – and I think that's what the audience of the film should ask: Would the Cologne concert sound like this, would it have turned out this way, if there hadn't been the wrong piano on stage? Things sound the way they do because of the circumstances under which they are created. As artists, we are constantly confronted with problems. We must learn to embrace them. Our problem-solving skills help us create something that's better, something new. Keith Jarrett played that night like no other night of his life because he played against the piano. He had to make do with the middle register because the top and bottom registers were faulty. The result was a sound that a large number of people could relate to. I also recognized my own experiences as a filmmaker in this story. As a filmmaker, you are confronted with such problems every single day. Not enough time, not enough money, not the right equipment, people don't arrive on time, something goes wrong or doesn't go as planned. And you must find a solution. That's filmmaking. That's how the magic happens. That's the job. All this is in the story of Vera Brandes and the Cologne concert. A perfect story about making art.

**And without being able to use the music it is about. Were you aware of that from the beginning?**

Ido Fluk: I had heard a few stories about Keith Jarrett. And even in the film you can see that he is not the easiest person in the world. But of course, we approached Keith's camp very early on in the process. They immediately signaled that they wanted no part of this. Keith doesn't like the concert. He thinks he's given much better concerts. For what it's worth, I agree with him on this. But I think, and here I beg to differ, that there is a reason why precisely this concert transcended into popular culture. I also think that the story of Vera Brandes deserves to be told. She was an important figure for the music that was played at that time. Vera Brandes organized the concert, she persuaded Keith Jarrett to perform. She didn't get a penny for it. No one thanked her.

**And you had to find a way to make a film about the Cologne concert without the music of the Cologne concert.**

Ido Fluk: I found it exciting. And stimulating. What I just said about resistance and problems and obstacles: They make art better because they force you to find creative solutions. Of course, I panicked for a moment. How was that supposed to work? But then I thought to myself: The effect of this music would never be able to unfold in a film. This is not like using a pop song. At best, one could reproduce a small excerpt. And it wouldn't say anything. It's the whole work or nothing. The Cologne concert is not a pop song. It is a long, ambitious, demanding piece of jazz music, which is best listened to in its entirety in peace. I suspect even Keith Jarrett would agree with me. It's more like watching the film and therefore you feel like listening to the concert at home. You go home and put on the record. Regardless of the film. Because KÖLN 75 is not about the concert. It's about Vera Brandes.

**How important was it to do justice to the times, to do justice to the music of the time, in order to make the story work?**

Ido Fluk: If you look at the music history of the seventies, you will find that a lot was happening in Germany. The Berlin Jazz Days, of course, one of the biggest stages for jazz in the world where everybody came and played. At the same time, the beginnings of electronic music in Germany take place in Düsseldorf with Kraftwerk. When we talk about protopunk and krautrock, there's CAN and Neu! – both are represented in our film. David Bowie and Iggy Pop and Lou Reed lived and were inspired by Berlin. I knew all that. But there's the other side of the 70s, the time of resistance, rebellion, student revolts, the RAF and terrorism, the death of the 1960s. I read countless books on all of this. But honestly, the best source was Vera Brandes. She was our guiding star; her word was law. She was very open and generous. She told me what it felt like in Cologne back then, how it felt to be young at that special time, about her parents and the difficult relationship with her father. After many hours, we finally got to the Keith story. But you could say that everything else she had told me before was just as important to the film. It was a window into time. No book in the world, no matter how well researched, can offer you that. Vera Brandes' very subjective reality is the film. There's a million stories that you could tell, this is the one about her Cologne.

As for period research, we had a wonderful music supervisor, Martin Hossbach who brought up a lot of music from the time like Floh de Cologne. Also, our archive producer, Christin Köppen, looked at period recordings, documents, and footage for us and always drew our attention to new things that were right for the time, for the story, for Vera. Little by little, we put together the world, which had to feel real, but above all coherent and truthful. For me, it was about distilling exactly what was important for the film from the eight hours of conversations with Vera Brandes. Of course, she told me a lot more. I never heard her say that something was off limits. My job was to distill all of that into a film.



### **How did you proceed?**

Ido Fluk: I wanted to make a film that wasn't so much about jazz, but rather one that felt like jazz. I kept thinking of Coltrane, who said: If you want to say something, you start in the middle and then go in both directions at the same time. It was a matter of sifting through and organizing all of Vera Brandes' stories. That was during Covid, a very internal time, locked up in my apartment. I played music and just started writing, without a plan, without a goal, without a sturdy outline. It was a completely free process, like improvisation. On the cover page of the first draft of the script that I sent to Sol and Fred, I wrote: „KÖLN 75. Improvised into words by Ido Fluk.“ It didn't even say written. I wanted the script to feel like what I wanted to show and say. It was very rhythmic, not written like a text, but like a piece of live music. Many people think of homework when they think of jazz. Yet it is such an alert and alive art form. This is also the reason jazz is currently experiencing a resurgence. Listen to artists such as Nala Sinephro or Jaimie Branch. Even Pharoah Sanders made an album with Floating Points. I don't see jazz as an art form from the past that is drifting towards its end. It lives, breathes, reinvents itself. Maybe my film can contribute to this.

### **An important role in your film is the music journalist Michael Watts, played by Michael Chernus – a fictional character, a kind of omniscient narrator.**

Ido Fluk: He is a composite character made up of several real music journalists. When I researched the concert, Keith Jarrett and his music, the time in which the music plays and how music was written and thought about back then, I always stumbled across the same journalists. I put together a mental picture of what they might have been like, what they looked like. I also liked the idea of having a character in the film who is representative of myself. A narrator who is also there himself, without playing a decisive role or taking himself too seriously. I saw it as an instrument to just bring a bit of fun into the thing. There is a French jazz journalist named François Postif, who was one of the first to interview Keith Jarrett. Reading such voices gave me the idea to create this character because he can tell us something about jazz, but he's also our ticket to the car in which Keith Jarrett and Manfred Eicher travel to Cologne, he is our way in.

### **Did you already know the actors?**

Ido Fluk: I did my homework and looked at everything that the actors we were thinking of had done. But I also knew what I was looking for. We searched for a very long time with the young actors, I think I really drove my casting agent Emrah Ertem crazy. We did a million rounds there. And then there were a few real stars who are also internationally known because they are really great. Basically, the question was whether they would trust me, as an outsider, enough to let me direct them. Fortunately, they did. I already knew John (Magaro) and Michael (Chernus), both were my first choices for their roles. John loses himself in the roles he plays. He's all about honesty. He is a magnet for good performances. He was perfect for Keith. He takes preparation very seriously. And that was the key to being able to play Keith Jarrett. He could already play the piano, but managed to move so that you couldn't distinguish him from the original. But it's also a live-wire act because Keith does so much with his body when he plays. It can easily become something that's over the top. John never let that happen. With Michael, I've been a huge fan since he had a small role in Oren Moverman's THE DINNER (2017). Since then, he has been great every time, whether he was in SPIDER-MAN (2017) or in a series like "Severance" (2022). I love watching him; I find him incredibly charismatic; his presence is undeniable.

### **And of course we have to talk about Mala Emde as Vera... Without her, there would be no film...**

Ido Fluk: We started by casting this role. We watched countless tapes. But the truth is that very early on I thought it could only be Mala Emde. She radiates such immense energy, there is a



pulse she gives off. During the casting, I kept saying: I'm not looking for an actress, I'm looking for a partner. Someone who does this with me and not for me. We had conversations and Mala was the perfect partner. She had the same film in mind that I did. When Mala walks into a room, you know she's there. She's a lion. You don't have to play any games. It was a wonderful collaboration. We worked together on the scenes, on the script, and she was always there. I told her: This is not my film, it's yours. You are Vera, run the show.

**So, did the film end up differently from what you imagined?**

Ido Fluk: Yes. And no. The film feels like the first idea I had. But the details are different, the nuances. I listened to ideas the actors had, I tried to give them a chance to improvise, within the limits imposed by shooting a period film. It is an endeavor that has taken years of my life. Of course, this is something that changes and transforms, which grows and shrinks, that develops and regresses and then develops again in a new direction. You have to allow that. You change yourself as a person during this time. The person who edits the film is not the person who wrote the script, and I was really lucky to work with editor Anja Siemens – she's the best drummer in the orchestra, she knows how to find the right rhythms. It is important that you don't lose your feeling for the material. As long as this feeling is there, you are on the right track. It is part of this story. One thinks about how this piece of music would have sounded if the right grand piano had been available. It's no different with film, it applies to every work of art. The evolution, the changes, the problems, the mistakes, the defects. That's what the work is all about. So, it's the film I had to make, and wanted to make. And yet it is completely different.

# BIOS

## Ido Fluk (Director & Screenwriter)

Described by Variety as "a talent to be watched", Ido Fluk was previously co-writer and director of the Tribeca competition title THE TICKET (2017) and the Edinburgh title NEVER TOO LATE (2011), which also won the Regard D'Or at FIFF. He is currently working on the HBO series EMPTY MANSIONS in collaboration with Joe Wright and the legal thriller 24 HOURS IN JUNE with James Schamus. Fluk is a graduate of NYU's Tisch School of the Arts and lives in New York, where he used to play in bands but no longer does.

## Mala Emde (Vera Brandes)

MALA EMDE, born in 1996, stood in front of the camera for the first time as a schoolgirl. She took on her first leading role in 2010 in the KiKa series "Krimi.de". Mala Emde attracted attention in the much-acclaimed docudrama "My Daughter Anne Frank" (2014) by Raymond Ley, for which she was awarded the Young Talent Award of the Bavarian Film Award. In the same year, Emde made her cinema debut in OFFLINE – LIFE IS NOT A BONUS LEVEL (2016) by Florian Schnell.

The feature film 303 (2015), shot in real time, for which Mala Emde worked with Hans Weingartner, attracted a lot of attention. She then appeared alongside Martina Gedeck and Matthias Brandt in the mystery thriller WIR TÖTEN STELLA (2017). In 2019, Mala Emde participated in the TV series "Charité" and in "Brecht", among others. She graduated from the renowned Ernst Busch Academy of Dramatic Arts Berlin in the summer of 2020. As part of her training, she also completed a semester abroad at the London Academy of Music and Dramatic Arts.

The first international project for Mala Emde was the ZDF thriller series "Shadowplay" (2020). She played the lead in AND TOMORROW THE WHOLE WORLD by Julia von Heinz premiering in Competition at the 77th Venice International Film Festival and garnering her the Bisato d'Oro prize for best performance awarded by the independent film critics.

From 2021 to 2023, Mala Emde was a member of the permanent ensemble of Theater Basel as well as starring in two seasons of the German Television Award-winning series "Oh Hell" (2022, 2024). Recent cinema appearances include Alex Schaad's AUS MEINER HAUT (2022), and the adaptation Barbara Albert's bestselling novel DIE MITTAGSFRAU (2023).

## John Magaro (Keith Jarrett)

JOHN MAGARO is a prolific actor in film, television, and theatre. Recent appearances include a leading role in Tim Fehlbauer's Oscar-nominated SEPTEMBER 5 (2024), which celebrated its world premiere in Venice and was nominated for a Golden Globe for Best Film. He just premiered in Sundance with OMAHA (2025) by Cole Webley. Maggie Gyllenhaal's Frankenstein story THE BRIDE! (2025), in which he stars alongside Jessie Buckley, Christian Bale, Jake Gyllenhaal, Penélope Cruz and Peter Sarsgaard, as well as Kelly Reichardt's THE MASTERMIND (2025) are forthcoming. He also has a role in the series "The Agency" (2024).

John's previous films include Celine Song's PAST LIVES (2023), THE SHALLOW TALE OF A WRITER WHO DECIDED TO WRITE ABOUT A SERIAL KILLER (2024) by Tolga Karaçelik, DAY

OF THE FIGHT (2023) by Jack Huston, LaROY, TEXAS (2023) by Shane Atkinson, BIG GEORGE FOREMAN (2023) by George Tillman Jr., Kelly Reichardt's SHOWING UP (2022) with Michelle Williams (Cannes 2022), and CALL JANE by Phyllis Nagy (Sundance 2022).

Magaro played a supporting role in THE MANY SAINTS OF NEWARK (2021), the prequel to the series "The Sopranos", which reunited him with David Chase. Magaro already worked with Kelly Reichardt on her FIRST COW (Telluride 2019 and 70. Berlinale). At the 2020 New York Film Critics Circle Awards, "First Cow" was named Best Picture, and the National Board of Review selected it as one of the ten best films of that year. Magaro was nominated for a Gotham Award for his acting performance.

Magaro also starred in Adam McKay's THE BIG SHORT (2015), whose ensemble was awarded by the National Board of Review and the Palm Springs Film Festival in 2015. As part of the ensemble, Magaro was also nominated for a Critics Choice Award and SAG Award.

Other titles in his filmography include THE FINEST HOURS (2016) by Craig Gillespie, CAROL (2015) by Todd Haynes, UNBROKEN (2014) by Angelina Jolie, NOT FADE AWAY (2012) by David Chase, which earned him the Hollywood Spotlight Award at the Hollywood Film Awards, LIBERAL ARTS (2012) by Josh Radnor, DOWN THE SHORE (2011) by Harold Guskin, MY SOUL TO TAKE (2010) by Wes Craven, THE BOX (2009) by Richard Kelly, LONG LEGS, SHORT LIES (2008) by Brett Simon, THE LIFE BEFORE MY EYES (2007) by Vadim Perelman and THE STRANGER IN YOU (2007) by Neil Jordan.

Magaro's television credits include "The Umbrella Academy" based on the comic book series of the same name by Gerard Way, the Amazon series "Tom Clancy's Jack Ryan" alongside John Krasinski and "Crisis In Six Scenes" alongside Rachel Brosnahan, Miley Cyrus, and Elaine May. He played recurring roles in series such as "Orange Is the New Black", "The Good Wife" or "Taking Chance" with Kevin Bacon. He has made guest appearances in "Law & Order: SVU", "Person of Interest", "Body of Proof", "Law & Order" and "Conviction".

On stage, Magaro was seen at The Public Theater as Joe Papp in "Illyria" by Richard Nelson. He made his Broadway debut in a remarkable supporting role in the new production of Scott Rudin's "The Front Page" directed by Jack O'Brien. He also played the male lead in the critically acclaimed "Tigers Be Still" by writer Kimberly Rosenstock and director Sam Gold for the Roundabout Theatre Company and was part of the ensemble of Rod McLauchlan's "Good Television" in a production by Bob Krakower for the Atlantic Theater Company.

## **Michael Chernus (Michael Watts)**

MICHAEL CHERNUS is best known for his role as Cal Chapman in the Netflix series "Orange Is the New Black". He also had popular roles in the superhero film SPIDER-MAN: HOMECOMING (2017) and the Apple TV+ series "Severance", the second season of which has just started. Chernus also starred in the 2023 thriller miniseries "Dead Ringers" starring Rachel Weisz, which won a Peabody Award. He can be seen as Dave von Ronk in James Mangold's Bob Dylan film A COMPLETE UNKNOWN (2024) starring Timothée Chalamet, Edward Norton, and Elle Fanning.

Chernus was born in Rocky River, Ohio. He is a graduate of the acting department at the Juilliard School. An accomplished stage actor, he won an Obie Award in 2011 and received a nomination for the Lucille Lortel Award for his performance in Lisa Kron's "In the Wake" at the Public Theater in New York City. On stage, he starred with David Hyde Pierce in the Manhattan Theatre Club's production of "Close Up Space" at New York City Center. He starred in the Second Stage Theatre's production of "Lips Together, Teeth Apart", alongside America Ferrera.

Chernus has appeared in films such as MEN IN BLACK 3 (2012), CAPTAIN PHILLIPS (2013), THE BOURNE LEGACY (2012) and JACK AND DIANE (2012). Other film appearances include ALOHA

(2015), THE DINNER (2017), THE MEYEROWITZ STORIES (2017), THE KINDERGARTEN TEACHER (2018) and WEREWOLVES WITHIN (2021). In addition, he has appeared in series such as "Manhattan", "Patriot", "Easy", "Tommy" and "Prodigal Son". He has been cast in the title role in the upcoming Peacock series "Devil in Disguise: John Wayne Gacy," which is scheduled to air later this year.

# CAST

Vera Brandes	MALA EMDE
Keith Jarrett	JOHN MAGARO
Michael Watts	MICHAEL CHERNUS
Isa	SHIRIN EISSA
Jan	ENNO TREBS
Fritz Brandes	LEO MEIER
Oliver	LEON BLOHM
Dr. Brandes	ULRICH TUKUR
Ilse Brandes	JÖRDIS TRIEBEL
Vera Brandes (50)	SUSANNE WOLFF
Ronnie Scott	DANIEL BETTS
Manfred Eicher	ALEXANDER SCHEER

# CREW

Director, Screenwriter	IDO FLUK
Producers	SOL BONDY FRED BURLE
Co-producers	EWA PUSZCZYŃSKA, DRIES PHLYPO, ERIK GLIJNIS, LEONTINE PETIT, ÉLENA DIESBACH, FABIEN ARSÉGUEL, TOBIAS LEHMANN
Executive Producers	OREN MOVERMAN, LILLIAN LASALLE, ZELENE FOWLER, MICHAEL FOWLER, ANNEGRET WEITKÄMPER KRUG, PAUL HUDSON, TALAAT CAPTAN, RAIN SHARING, TÖNU HIILAIID, BARBAROS ÖZBUGUTU, JULIANNE HAUSLER, JENNIFER FOX, CHRISTOPH LANGE
Cinematography	JENS HARANT
Production Design	JUTTA FREYER
Editing	ANJA SIEMENS
Costume design	OLA STASZKO
Make-up	WALDEMAR POKROMSKI & SABINE SCHUMANN
Music	HUBERT WALKOWSKI
Music,	MARTIN HOSSBACH
Sound design	FREDERIK VAN DE MOORTELE
Mix	GREGOR BONSE
Casting	EMRAH ERTEM
Broadcasters	WDR, SR & ARTE
World Sales	BANKSIDE FILMS

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