

To Life!

A Film by Uwe Janson



U.S. Distribution:

Menemsha Films

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Fate Introduces the ageing cabaret singer Ruth (played by Hannelore Elsner, the Grande Dame of German cinema) and the confused Jonas (Dashing German actor Max Riemelt).

Ruth is running from her past and Jonas from his future but the two of them together manage to reaffirm life for each other in this moving drama.

Synopsis:

Jonas – a young man on the run – arrives in Berlin just in time to save Ruth's life. Evicted from her apartment, the sarcastic but warm-hearted Ruth – an ageing Jewish cabaret singer – saw no other way out than suicide. Jonas, meanwhile, is driven by a secret, and fleeing from his love and his future. As Ruth recovers, she and Jonas begin to form a deep bond. Age-old Jewish culture and music are brought into the light of day as she tells him the story of her own impossible, tragic love for a non-Jewish man in post-WWII Germany, a love burdened by the legacy of the horrors perpetrated by Nazi Germany. As Jonas discovers Ruth's past and takes part in her present, his attentions and the passionate, lusty Yiddish songs of her youth help her find the way back to life. And, upon learning of Jonas' incurable illness, it is she who will help Jonas find the strength to tackle his fears, to stop fleeing, and to forcefully propose "L'Chaim – To Life!"



"To Life!", which translates into German as "Auf das Leben!" and into Hebrew as "L'Chaim!", is a popular Jewish toast that symbolizes the atmosphere of this film. In the subtle and always intense interplay between Hannelore Elsner ("No Place To Go", "Cherryblossoms"), the grande dame of German cinema, and versatile young star Max Riemelt (soon to be seen in a lead role in new Netflix original series "Sense 8", also known for "The Wave", "Napola", "Before the Fall"), director Uwe Janson weaves a tale that effortlessly shifts between World War II, the post-war generation and today. It features intensely moving renditions of Jewish music classics that have been re-recorded and newly interpreted for this film, and that suffuse the film with the palpable feel of a culture of defiance and life.



Specifications

Format:	Color
Genre:	Fiction / Drama
Country:	Germany
Language:	German (with English subtitles)
Running Time:	86 Minutes
Website:	www.MenemshaFilms.com

Cast and Crew

Director
Uwe Janson

Starring
Hannelore Elsner
Max Riemelt
Aylin Tezel
Sharon Brauner
Andreas Schmidt
Catherine Flemming
Mathieu Carrière
Timothy Peach
Markus Maria Profitlich

Produced by
Alice Brauner

Written by
Thorsten Wettcke

Director of Photography
Peter Joachim Krause

Produced by
CCC Filmkunst GmbH



Filmmakers

Story – Stephen Glantz

For the past 25 years, Mr. Glantz has enjoyed a wide-ranging career as a writer for film, television and books.

His 2011 film, *Wunderkinder*, has won over 13 awards, including Best Screenplay at Copenhagen and three awards at Giffoni, the largest festival for children's films in the world. *The Last Train* (2007), was considered "The most important film of the fall..." "Die Bild" and was universally honored by the German press. "Truly moving..." "Told with...seat gripping intensity... and heart rending despair...", "...a monument...makes history come alive in moving way", "...told with cinematic magic" were just a few of the reviews that distinguished the film. The film was also honored with a special presentation at the Berlin Film Festival and has been placed in Harper Collins published *Clara's War*, co-authored with Clara Kramer and based on her Holocaust diary in April of 2009. Translation rights have been sold to 21 countries. The American Library Association in 2010 named the book

Mr. Glantz has written over 10 feature films for Warner's, Disney, Paramount, Tri-Star, MGM, Universal, HBO and New Line Cinema working with directors such as Bruce Beresford, Steven Gyllenhall and Sidney Poitier, among others. Four of his television movies have been produced. *Murder So Sweet* for NBC, starring Harry Hamlin and Helen Shaver, directed by Larry Peerce (*GOOD-BYE COLUMBUS*); *For the Love of my Daughter* for CBS, starring Cybil Shepard and Tim Matheson, directed by Ivan Passer, the award winning Czech director; *To Live Again*, starring Bonnie Bedelia and Anabeth Gish, also for CBS; and *The Watsons Go To Birmingham*, based on the Newberry Award winning novel by Christopher Paul Curtis and directed by Kenny Glantz has worked extensively in Europe with legendary German producer Artur Brauner (250 films including *The Garden of the Finzi Continis* and *Europa Europa*). With Mr. Brauner and Alice Brauner, Glantz has several scripts in development, including *The Golem* to be directed by Domink Graf and *Crescendo* to be directed by Markus Rosenmuller, who also directed *Wunderkinder*.

His current projects include two more scripts about the Holocaust. *A Jewish Girl in Shanghai* based on the Chinese graphic novel of the same name for producers Thomas Leong and Kearie Peak (*Dear God*, *Death of the Electric Car*, and *American History X*) and *The Best of All Possible Worlds* for producers Patti Gribow and Kim Waltrip (*The Disappearance of Eleanor Rigby*, *Him*, *Her* and *Their* trilogy). Glantz's play, *A TANGLEWOOD TALE*, co-authored with Juliane Hiam, premiered at Shakespeare and Company in Lenox, Massachusetts. The play details the homoerotic friendship of Herman Melville and Nathaniel Hawthorne during the period in their lives when Melville was writing *MOBY DICK* and Hawthorne *THE HOUSE OF THE SEVEN GABLES*.

Glantz was a Scholar in Residence at Brandeis Institute of Brandeis University in 2008 and 2010 and has also taught at Williams. He currently teaches screenwriting and a course on Genocide and the Media at Emerson College. His Holocaust films are part of the

permanent collection of the new Visual Hall at Yad Vashem Holocaust Museum in Jerusalem and are shown worldwide by the Goethe Society.

Producer – Dr. Alice Brauner

Dr. Alice Brauner was born in Berlin January 12th, 1966.

Following her career as a writer and journalist, Dr. Brauner became an interviewer and referent for the “Survivors of the Shoah Visual History Foundation,” a Steven Spielberg foundation that archives statements of Holocaust survivors.

Dr. Brauner received her PhD at the “Anti-Semitic Research Center” of the Technical University of Berlin, focusing on the subject “anti-democratic and anti-Semitic tendencies within the new right-wing in Germany.”

In 1999, she became host of the Berlin politics TV show “Auf dem Punkt Berlin” (“On the Point Berlin”). Just a year later she was offered her own weekly talk show “Alice,” in which she interviewed well-known guests from politics, culture, economics, media or sports. In 2001, Alice switched to the German news channel “n-tv.” On her own show “Seite 17” (“Page 17”) airing from 2001-2003, she presented important books about politics and other subjects together with their authors.

Today, Dr. Brauner is CEO of her company CCC Cinema and Television GmbH, working alongside her father, Artur Brauner, as a TV and cinema producer.

In 2012, Dr. Brauner received the ROMY (the Austrian Oscar) for best producer of the year within the category “German Cinema Productions” for her work as a producer on the film WUNDERKINDER (2011).

Her latest film TO LIFE! premiered in German cinemas in autumn 2014.

