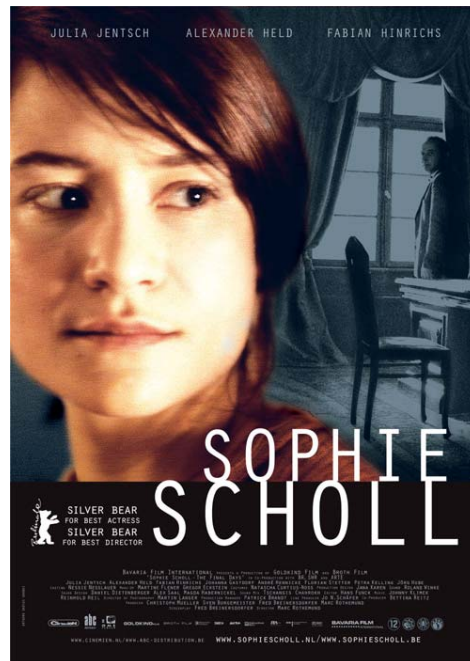


CINEMIEN Film & Video Distribution
Amsteldijk 10
1074 HP Amsterdam
t. 020 – 577 6010
www.cinemien.nl
info@cinemien.nl

ABC Distribution
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2000 Antwerpen
t. 03 – 231 0931
www.abc-distribution.be
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presenteren / présentent:

SOPHIE SCHOLL



DIE LETZTEN TAGE / THE FINAL DAYS

EEN FILM VAN / UN FILM DE MARC ROTHEMUND



9 Zilveren Beer voor Beste Regie - Berlinale 2005 9

9 Zilveren Beer voor Beste Acteur (Julia Jentsch) - Berlinale 2005 9

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SOPHIE SCHOLL- synopsis (NL)

München, 1943. Terwijl Hitler een vernietigende oorlog voert in Europa zoekt een jonge groep mensen hun toevlucht tot het passieve verzet, dat ze als enig middel zien om de Nazi's en hun onmenselijke oorlog te verzwakken. Ze richten *Die Weiße Rose* op, een verzetsbeweging die voornamelijk uit studenten bestaat en zich richt op de ondergang van het Derde Rijk. Sophie Scholl voegt zich als enig vrouwelijk lid bij de groep; een onschuldig jong meisje dat uitgroeit tot een bevlogen en onbevreesde anti-Nazi. Op 18 februari 1943 worden Sophie en haar broer Hans gearresteerd voor het verspreiden van folders op de universiteit. De daaropvolgende dagen wordt Sophie verhoord door de Gestapo officier Robert Mohr. Het verhoor ontwikkelt zich tot een psychologisch duel: ze liegt en ontkent, ze beraamt plannen, daagt uit en is haar tegenstander bijna te slim af. Maar uiteindelijk is daar toch de bekentenis en Sophie's laatste, wanhopige poging om haar broer en de andere leden van *Die Weiße Rose* te beschermen. Geraakt door Sophie's buitengewone moed biedt Mohr haar hulp aan, maar daarvoor moet ze een hoge prijs betalen: haar idealen verloochenen. Ze weigert het aanbod, waarmee haar lot bezegeld wordt...



Sophie Scholl- die Letzten Tage is het ontroerende portret van één van de weinige helden uit de Duitse geschiedenis. De film beschrijft de laatste zes dagen (17-22 februari 1943) van het leven van Sophie Scholl vanuit haar eigen perspectief: dat van een moedige en levendige jonge vrouw die bereid is te sterven voor haar geloof in de idealen van *Die Weiße Rose*. Vanwege hun verzet tegen het Nazi regime zijn Sophie Scholl en de overige leden van de verzetsgroep *Die Weiße Rose* synoniem geworden voor burgerlijke moed en een vreedzaam gevecht tegen de overheersing van geweld en onderdrukking.

Hoewel de film de historische feiten zo nauwkeurig mogelijk volgt (gebaseerd op originele gespreksopnamen), is hij geschreven en geregisseerd als een speelfilm. Regisseur Marc Rothemund brengt door middel van zijn gevoelige en verfrissend ruimdenkende kijk op de geschiedenis, een werkelijk mythisch, iconisch figuur tot leven in de vorm van Sophie Scholl. De sterke hoofdrol wordt gespeeld door Julia Jentsch, die eerder te zien was in *The Edukators* (ook uitgebracht door Cinemien/ABC Distribution).

SOPHIE SCHOLL- DIE LETZTEN TAGE

117 min. / 35mm / Kleur / Dolby SR / Duits gesproken / Duitsland 2005

Kijkwijzer:

Nederlandse theatrale distributie: Cinemien
Belgische theatrale distributie: ABC Distribution
DVD uitbreng : Homescreen

www.sophiescholl.nl/be

SOPHIE SCHOLL - synopsis (FR)

Printemps 1943. La bataille de Stalingrad touche à sa fin. A Munich , les membres du mouvement *die Weiße Rose* inondent la ville de slogans antinazis. Sophie et Hans Scholl distribuent des tracts dans le hall de l'université. Quelqu'un les observe et ils se font arrêter peu de temps après. Le film retrace du point de vue de Sophie Scholl les interrogatoires , le procès et la condamnation qui suivirent. Au début, Sophie fait l'inconsciente. Elle se bat pour sa liberté et celle de son frère. Elle se doute que la peine de mort l'attend et veut pourtant protéger son frère et les autres résistants. L'homme de la Gestapo, Mohr, finit par admirer Sophie. Il l'aiderait volontiers si seulement elle prétendait n'être qu'une suiveuse, mais elle témoigne de ses convictions et confronte Mohr avec sa propre opinion inconsidérée du droit et de la justice.

Roland Freisler, chef du « tribunal de peuple », est envoyé de Berlin à Munich pour y mener un simulacre de procès contre les étudiants dont la condamnation à mort est déjà décidée. Lord d'une audience tenue au mépris de toutes les règles de la justice, Sophie et son frère sont condamnés à mort. Elle se bat formidablement contre Freisler qui écume de rage, sa vaillance forçant même l'admiration de l'auditoire, essentiellement des hommes nazis.

Immédiatement après la notification de la sentence, le frère et la sœur sont transférés à Stadelheim pour l'exécution. Sophie et Hans Scholl peuvent faire leurs adieux à leurs parents. Puis ils se partagent une dernière cigarette. Sophie Scholl avait raison lorsqu'elle répliquait à Freisler : « Aujourd'hui vous nous pendez et demain, ce sont vos propres têtes qui tomberont ! »

Sophie Scholl - Les Derniers Jours est le portrait émouvant d'une des rares héroïnes de l'histoire allemande. Le film décrit les six derniers jours (17-22 février 1943) de la vie de Sophie Scholl de sa propre perspective: d'une jeune femme courageuse et vive qui est prête à mourir pour sa croyance dans les idéaux de *Die Weiße Rose*. En raison de leur résistance au régime nazi, Sophie Scholl et les autres membres du groupe *Die Weiße Rose* sont devenus des synonymes pour le courage civil et le combat pacifique contre la domination de la violence et de l'oppression

Bien que le film suive les faits historiques aussi précise que possible (basé sur les enregistrements de conversation originales), il a été écrit et mis en scène comme un long métrage. Le réalisateur Marc Rothemund crée une figure mythique et une icône sous forme de Sophie Scholl par sa vision sensible et tolérante de l'histoire. Le rôle principal fort est joué par Julia Jentsch, qu'on a aussi vue dans *The Edukators* (aussi distribué par Cinemien/ABC Distribution).

SOPHIE SCHOLL- LES DERNIERS JOURS

117 min / 35mm / Couleur / Dolby SR/ dialogues en allemand/ Allemagne 2005

La sortie théâtrale aux Pays-Bas: Cinemien

La sortie théâtrale en Belgique: ABC Distribution

La sortie sur DVD : Homescreen

www.sophiescholl.nl/be

SOPHIE SCHOLL - crew

Regie / réalisation	: Marc Rothemund
Scenario / scénario	: Fred Breinersdorfer
Director of Photography	: Martin Langer, BVK
Set Design	: Jana Karen
Muziek / musique	: Johnny Klimek, Reinhold Heil
Geluid / son	: Tschangis Chahrokh, Daniel Dietenberger, Peter Fuchs
Montage	: Hans Funck
Aangestelde monteurs	: Hubert von Spreti (Bayerischer Rundfunk), Ulrich Herrmann (Süd-West Rundfunk), Andreas Schreitmüller (arte)
Producent / producteur	: Christoph Mueller, Sven Burgemeister (Goldkind Film), Fred Breinersdorfer, Marc Rothemund (Broth Film)
Co-producenten	: Bettina Reitz (Bayerische Rundfunk)
Productie Manager	: Patrick Brandt
Locatie Manager	: Jo N. Schäffer
Casting	: Nessie Nesslauer
Kostuums	: Natascha Curtius-Noss
Make-up	: Gregor Eckstein



SOPHIE SCHOLL - cast

Sophie Scholl	: Julia Jentsch
Robert Mohr	: Alexander Held
Hans Scholl	: Fabian Hinrichs
Else Gebel	: Johanna Gastdorf
Dr. Roland Freisler	: André Hennicke
Christoph Probst	: Florian Stetter
Alexander Schmorell	: Johannes Suhm
Willi Graf	: Maximilian Brückner
Gisela Schertling	: Lili Jung
Robert Scholl	: Jörg Hube
Magdalena Scholl	: Petra Kelling
Werner Scholl	: Franz Staber

Marc Rothemund (1968) begon zijn carrière als assistent-regisseur voor Helmut Dietl (voor *Rossini*), Bernd Eichinger (voor *Das Mädchen Rosemarie*), Dominik Graf (voor *Sperling*) en Gérard Corbiau (voor *Farinelli*). In 1998 ontving hij de Bavarian Film Prize voor de beste jonge regisseur voor zijn debuut *Das Merkwürdige Verhalten Geschlechtsreifer Grossstädter zur Paarungszeit*. Met 1,7 miljoen bezoekers was zijn tweede speelfilm *Harte Jungs* één van de succesvolste films van 1999. Zijn TV thriller *Das Duo - Der Liefhaber* won de VFF TV Movie Award in 2003.



Met *Sophie Scholl - die Letzten Tage* zet Marc Rothemund zijn succesvolle samenwerking met scenarioschrijver Fred Breinersdorfer voort. Deze begon in 1997 met twee afleveringen voor de ZDF thriller serie *Anwalt Abel* en bereikte een hoogtepunt met de TV-film *Die Hoffnung stirbt zuletzt*. Dit aangrijpende drama over de noodlottige mishandeling van een politievrouw heeft vele prijzen ontvangen, waaronder de Golden Camera en de Grimme Prize in Gold.

Voor *Sophie Scholl - Die Letzten Tage* werkte Marc Rothemund ook als producent met scenarioschrijver Fred Breinersdorfer voor Broth Film.

Né en 1968. Travaille comme assistant réalisateur entre autres avec Helmut Dietl, Dominik Graf et Gérard Corbiau. Sa collaboration avec le scénariste Fred Breinersdorfer débute en 1997, lors de la réalisation de deux épisodes de la série policière télévisée ANWALT ABEL. En 1998, Rothemund reçoit le prix du cinéma bavarois dans la catégorie des jeunes talents pour son premier long métrage de fiction. Son second film pour le grand écran, HARTE JUNGS, est l'un des plus grands succès commerciaux allemands de l'année 1999, avec 1,7 million d'entrées.

Filmografie:

2005 **Sophie Scholl - Die Letzten Tage**

2000 **Harte Jungs**

1998 **Das Merkwürdige Verhalten Geschlechtsreifer Grossstädter zur Paarungszeit**

What is 'Sophie Scholl - The Final Days' about?

Our film focuses on Sophie Scholl's last six days - from the preparation of the leaflet operation at the University of Munich to her capture, interrogation, sentencing and execution. It is an extreme situation in which we also become acquainted with her character, her past and the ideas of the White Rose.

In what ways is it different to Michael Verhoeven's film about the White Rose?

Michael Verhoeven's film 'Die weisse Rose' describes the development of the entire resistance group; the dramatic events following the arrest of the members take up only a minor portion of the film. That film ends with the arrest of Sophie Scholl; ours begins with this, and we accompany Sophie on her emotionally turbulent journey to her death over the period of five days. We also show how Sophie grows under pressure as she assumes her duty.

Percy Adlon's film 'Fünf letzte Tage' also covers this period ...

Percy Adlon's 'Fünf letzte Tage' devotes itself to this period of time, but it looks at the events through the perspective of Else Gebel, Sophie's cellmate in the Gestapo prison. That film ends when Sophie is led to the courthouse. Our film, in turn, is consistently narrated from Sophie's point of view, and it goes further. We have reconstructed the trial and brought to life the infamous 'blood judge' Roland Freisler. And we also depict Sophie's stay in Stadelheim prison: her last cigarette, her farewell to her parents, her last meal, her prayers, her execution. But perhaps what sets this film apart the most from the previous films on Sophie Scholl is that we were able to consult documents that were still inaccessible in the 1980s.

Namely?

Above all the original minutes of the Gestapo interrogations. These previously unpublished documents had been hidden away in East-German archives for decades and were only made accessible in 1990. Especially the interrogations of Sophie Scholl are tremendously exciting. What particularly fascinated me was the fact that the Gestapo official Robert Mohr, an interrogation specialist with 26 years of experience, actually believed that Sophie Scholl was innocent after his first, five-hour-long questioning. For five hours she listened to him, never batting an eyelash, never hesitating at the wrong moment. An incredible achievement. Then, when incriminating evidence against her is found after a search in her apartment, she continues to deny her involvement. It is not until she is confronted with the interrogation minutes of her brother, in which he confesses to everything and accepts full responsibility that she says: Yes, I took part in this and am proud of it. From then on she tries to protect her friends and convince the interrogation officer that the 'White Rose', whose leaflets always gave the impression of coming from a large organization, consisted solely of herself and her brother.

Up to now little was known about the interrogation officer ...

Yes, since before us hardly anyone had taken the trouble of conducting research on him. Robert Mohr was an interesting figure: an interrogation specialist who had already worked under two other governments; and a passive collaborator who upheld the laws, no matter who passed them. I found it thrilling to see how someone like that could be in denial of the horrible events transpiring at that time. For a long time I asked myself why, after interrogating Sophie Scholl over several days, he

offered her a chance to save her neck at the end. Then I found out that Mohr had a son of Sophie's age, who had just been sent to the eastern front shortly before.

Did you have an opportunity to talk to this son?

Yes, we interviewed his son Willy Mohr, who is now 83 years old, for four hours - and won deep insights into Robert Mohr's nature. We also conducted long interviews with Anneliese Knoop-Graf, the sister of the 'White Rose' member Willi Graf. She was questioned by Mohr for four months and was able to describe both Mohr and the interrogation room very precisely. Moreover, she was in the same cell as Sophie Scholl during these four months, also with Else Gebel as cellmate. The two were good friends even after the war. She was thus able to provide valuable information on Else Gebel, too. And we had the chance to speak to Else Gebel's nephew. Another important witness was Elisabeth Hartnagel, Sophie Scholl's younger sister, who later married Sophie's fiancé Fritz Hartnagel. Her conversation with the filmmakers was her very first interview in front of a camera. She also opened up her private archives to us. All these witnesses gave us additional support in our endeavor to tell our story as authentically as possible.

What sources did you use for your depiction of the trial?

We had the written grounds for the death sentences by Judge Roland Freisler, the indictment and the official minutes of the legal proceedings. We also had a number of eyewitness accounts. Basing himself on all of this material, Fred Breinersdorfer, who practiced law for many years himself, wrote a thrilling judicial hearing: three defendants - three completely different viewpoints. First there was Christoph Probst, who fights for his survival and, with the assent of Hans and Sophie Scholl, distances himself from the ideas of the 'White Rose' since he does not want his three children to grow up without a father. Then there is Hans Scholl, whose arguments strike at the heart of Judge Freisler's views since Scholl, unlike Freisler, has actually fought on the front for his country. And finally there is Sophie, who argues on an emotional level and is guided by her natural sense of right and wrong. She courageously challenges Freisler to the very end.

She marches unbroken towards death ...

I admire her courage. She turned down the 'golden bridge' offered to her by the interrogation officer Robert Mohr - thus practically signing her own death sentence. I find this approach to death quite startling: how does such a life-affirming, positive-minded young woman like Sophie Scholl come to terms with the fact that her life is being taken away from her? How does she find a meaning in her death? And, of course, as an atheist I ask myself: is it easier to face death as a believer?

The script emphasizes the inner world of the characters ...

The emotional aspect was the most important one for Fred Breinersdorfer and myself: the emotions of the characters, their viewpoints, their conflicts - this is what constitutes the red thread that runs through the story. I had already been astonished by the dialogues when reading the as yet unpublished interrogation protocol. Then, when you have such great actors at your disposal such as we did, an entirely new dimension comes into play: it is really incredible how Julia Jentsch, for example, threw herself into her role, how she empathized with Sophie's emotional life and awakened it to life.

If you had to choose, what is more important to you: that a film is engrossing - or that what is shown is historically authentic down to the last detail?

The first. But in our case we were lucky since the facts that we researched did not contradict each other. We were able to piece them all together like a puzzle. We knew the course of the events and were able to build an emotional structure on this groundwork, which enabled us to trace Sophie Scholl's feelings and frame of mind. This is how I approached the figure with Julia Jentsch and how we shaped her character with all the information we had, and according to the way we saw it. I am very happy that Julia agreed to go on this difficult emotional trip.

How did you put your cast together? How did you find Julia Jentsch in particular?

I had seen Julia both on the screen and on the stage, the latter in 'Othello' in the Munich Kammerspiele. She is an extremely intense actress who commands an incredible power when she is on the stage or in front of the camera. And she would have given an arm and a leg to play Sophie. We needed fighters like this for the film, since the shooting conditions were difficult for everyone. Julia, for example, had to start at six in the morning, then she worked till 6:30 pm, went to the Kammerspiele to star in a play in the evening - and was back at work on the set punctually at six the next morning. Fabian Hinrichs, whom I had admired in 'Gun-Shy' (Schussangst) and who plays Hans Scholl, flew from Munich to Berlin at 5 pm on his first day of shooting, then stood on the stage for three and a half hours at the Volksbühne before traveling back by car to Munich to shoot with us for another 14 hours. Only someone who absolutely wants to be part of this project can do this.

In your production you have avoided all too blatant topical references ...

Intentionally. I want to cut down the distance as much as possible so that today's viewer can slip right into the action. This is why I paid attention to show as few uniforms and swastikas as possible. As for the costumes, I wanted originals from the 1940s, but chose those that are the least disconcerting to us today. I even went into a café with the actors in costume, and no one seemed surprised. I don't want to make copies of historical scenes, but explore current issues. How do we react when we are confronted with injustice? How far are we willing to go with our personal commitment? There are still wars and dictatorships today all over the world. Only recently did the people in Ukraine go out on the streets to protest even though they knew that they could have been mowed down by tanks. I would be happy if more Muslims would rise up against Islamic fanatics. But the issue of civil courage is also one that we face in our everyday lives - for example, in bullying at the workplace or at school, where the weaker ones are trampled on. To rise up against injustice, to refuse to close our eyes - this will always remain an important issue. And this is why viewers shouldn't feel that they're sitting in a history class in my film.

Where did you shoot? On original locations?

As much as possible, yes. You can see, for example, Hans and Sophie Scholl leaving their former apartment in Munich's Franz-Joseph-Strasse and stepping out into the courtyard. Since the Schwabing workshop where the 'White Rose' printed its leaflets unfortunately no longer exists, we reconstructed it after extensive research. The Wittelsbacher Palais in the Brienner Strasse, where Munich's Gestapo headquarters were located, was torn down in 1964, but there are several other buildings with similar facades, for example the Government of Upper Bavaria. We had detailed ground-plans of the interiors and rebuilt them faithfully in the Bavaria Studios. And, of course, we also filmed at the Ludwig-Maximilian University and the Munich Courthouse. Incidentally, I discovered on old photos that the trees on the Geschwister-Scholl Square in front of the University, which were replaced some time after the war, are now exactly the size they were in the early 1940s. I consider this a good omen: the time is ripe for this film!

SOPHIE SCHOLL - Cast



JULIA JENTSCH speelt Sophie Scholl

Julia Jentsch (1978) debuteerde succesvol in het theater, wat haar de titel Beste Nieuwe Talent opleverde van het tijdschrift *Theater Heute* in 2002. Sinds 2001 speelt ze in het *Münchner Kammerspiele*, waar ze onder andere de rollen van Desdemona in Luk Percevals versie van Shakespeare's *Othello* en Elektra in Andreas Kriegenburgs productie van Euripides' *Orestes* speelde. Jentsch volgde haar opleiding aan de prestigieuze Ernst Busch Academie in Berlijn. Ze acteerde tevens in verschillende films en TV-series (o.a. *Tatort*). In 2001 speelde ze in *Mein Bruder, der Vampir* van Sven Taddickens en *Julietta* van Christoph Stark.

Voor haar rol van Sophie Scholl ontving zij in 2005 de Zilveren Beer tijdens het Filmfestival van Berlijn en een Film Award in Gold tijdens de Duitse Film Awards.

Julia Jentsch (1978) a débuté avec succès dans le théâtre, ce qui lui a valu le titre de Meilleur Nouveau Talent du magazine *Theater Heute* dans 2002. Depuis 2001, elle est membre du *Münchner Kammerspiele*, où elle a joué entre autres les rôles de Desdemona dans la version de Luk Perceval d'*Othello* de Shakespeare et celui d'Elektra dans la production de Andreas Kriegenburgs d'*Orestes* de Euripides. Jentsch a suivi sa formation à l'Académie prestigieuse Ernst Busch à Berlin. Elle a joué également dans plusieurs films et dans des feuilletons de télévision (entre autres *Tatort*). En 2001, elle a joué dans *Mein Bruder, der Vampir* de Sven Taddickens et *Julietta* de Christoph Stark.

En 2005, elle a reçu l'Ours d'Argent au Festival du Film de Berlin et un Film Award in Gold aux Film Awards allemands pour son rôle de Sophie Scholl.

Geselecteerde filmografie / filmographie sélective:

2005 Sophie Scholl- Die Letzten Tage	Marc Rothemund
2005 Schneeland	Hans W. Geissendörfer
2004 Der Untergang	Olivier Hirschbiegel
2004 The Edukators	Hans Weingartner
2001 Mein Bruder, der Vampir	Sven Taddicken
2001 Julietta	Christopher Stark
1999 Zornige Küsse	Judith Kennel



SOPHIE SCHOLL - Cast



ALEXANDER HELD speelt Robert Mohr

Alexander Held (1958) studeerde drama aan de Otto Falckenberg Schule in München. Hij begon zijn carrière in 1980 en speelde in vele prestigieuze theaters, waaronder het *Münchner Kammerspiele*, het *Staatsschauspiel Hannover* en de *Freie Volksbühne Berlin*. Door zijn ervaring als solo zanger acteerde hij tevens in een aantal musicals, zoals *Sweet Charity* in het *Theater des Westens* in Berlijn.

Roland Emmerich ontdekte hem in 1993 voor het grote scherm door hem te casten voor zijn TV-film *Morlock - Köning Midas*. In hetzelfde jaar speelde hij een SS 'Obersturmbahnführer' in Steven Spielbergs Oscar winnende film *Schindler's List*. Held heeft in ruim 70 televisieproducties gespeeld en in een groot aantal speelfilms.

Alexander Held (1958) a étudié le drame au Otto Falckenberg Schule à Munich. Il a commencé sa carrière en 1980 et a joué dans beaucoup de théâtres prestigieux parmi lesquels le *Münchner Kammerspiele*, le *Staatsschauspiel Hannover* et le *Freie Volksbühne Berlin*. Grâce à son expérience de solo chanteur il a aussi joué dans un nombre de musicals, comme *Sweet Charity* dans le *Theater des Westens* à Berlin.

Roland Emmerich a découvert le talent de Held pour le grand écran en 1993, en lui donnant un rôle dans son film de télévision *Morlock - Köning Midas*. Pendant la même année, il a joué un SS « Obersturmbahnführer » dans le film *Schindler's List* de Steven Spielbergs. Held a joué dans plus de 70 productions de télévision et dans un grand nombre de longs métrages.

Geselecteerde filmografie / filmographie sélective:

2005	Sophie Scholl- Die Letzten Tage	Marc Rothemund
2004	Der Untergang	Olivier Hirschbiegel
2004	Napola	Dennis Gansel
2003	Raus ins Leben	Vivian Naefe
2003	Effroyables Jardins	Jean Becker
2002	Bibi Blocksberg	Hermine Huntgeburth
2000	Anatomie	Stefan Ruzowitzky
1993	Schindler's List	Steven Spielberg

SOPHIE SCHOLL- Cast

Fabian Hinrichs (1976) begon zijn carrière na zijn opleiding gevolgd te hebben aan de Westfälische Schauspielschule Bochum. Hij stond voor het eerst op het toneel in de producties *Measure for Measure* en *Peter Pan* van Leander Hausmann. Hinrichs is ensemblelid van de Volksbühne am Rosa-Luxemburg-Platz in Berlijn sinds 2000.



FABIAN HINRICHS speelt Hans Scholl

Naast verschillende gastrolletjes in TV-series, acteerde Hinrichs in een aantal speelfilms. Hij brak door met de thriller *Schussangst* van Dito Tsintsadze die de Gouden Schelp won tijdens het filmfestival van San Sebastián.

Fabian Hinrichs (1976) a commencé sa carrière après sa formation au Westfälische Schauspielschule Bochum. Il se trouvait pour la première fois sur la scène dans les productions *Measure for Measure* et *Peter Pan* de Leander Hausmann. Hinrichs est membre du Volksbühne am Rosa-Luxemburg-Platz à Berlin depuis 2000.

À côté de plusieurs petits rôles dans des feuilletons, Hinrichs a joué aussi dans un nombre de longs métrages. Il s'est fait jour dans le thriller *Schussangst* de Dito Tsintsadze, qui a gagné la Coquille d'Or au festival du film de San Sebastián.

Geselecteerde filmografie / filmographie sélective:

2005	Die Bluthochzeit	Dominique Deruddere
2005	Sophie Scholl- Die Letzten Tage	Marc Rothemund
2003	Schussangst	Dito Tsintsadze

SOPHIE SCHOLL - Achtergrondinformatie

André Hennicke (1959) speelt de rol van de rechter Dr. Roland Freisler (1893-1945). Een geboren spreker, een levendig jurist en bewonderaar van Hitler. Hij was voorzitter van het *Volksgerichtshof* van 1942 tot zijn dood in 1945. Onder Freisler werden duizenden veroordeeld voor politieke acties, toespraken en uitgesproken meningen die als hoogverraad werden beschouwd. Verdediging van het oordeel was nutteloos en de veroordeelden werden bij voorbaat al schuldig bevonden. De doodstraf werd enkele uren na het oordeel uitgevoerd.

De uitbarstingen van Freisler in de rechtszaal lijken karikaturaal, maar zijn gebaseerd op de verklaringen van ooggetuigen en op originele filmopnamen. Kleinerend, ongeduldig, luidruchtig, breedspakig en alles behalve rechtvaardig; Freislers uitbarstingen zijn legendarisch. Zijn bijnaam luidde dan ook 'Raaskallende Roland'.

A CONVERSATION WITH LEADING ACTRESS JULIA JENTSCH

What was for you the most interesting aspect in the film 'Sophie Scholl - The Final Days'?

That the situation was so extreme and so exceptional. We follow a young woman who's going to die shortly, we accompany her throughout the police interrogations and the trial, and all the way to her execution. A young woman who faces death with incredible strength, and who fights courageously for her goals and ideals till the very end. This both fascinated and intrigued me, and I asked myself how did she think, how did she feel? I wanted to get close to this character. It was clear that it would be a major challenge. But at the same time I knew that this is a story that absolutely deserves to be told!

How did you prepare for the role?

I read a lot, especially Sophie Scholl's letters and diaries, but also the minutes of the interrogation. Before we started shooting, I got together with Alexander Held quite often in order to learn the dialogues and work out the interrogation scenes together. I found it very nice that he also felt a need for this collaboration. Then I saw the videos of the interviews that Marc Rothemund conducted with Anneliese Graf and Elisabeth Hartnagel. They were incredibly exciting - even though they threw me somewhat into a panic when they described how Sophie spoke ...

She spoke with a Swabian accent?

Yes. However, Marc and I had quickly agreed that I was not to speak like this in the film. Sophie Scholl with a Swabian accent would have created a distance and caused a certain perplexity that we wanted to avoid at all costs. In any event, I soon noticed that it wasn't good when I tried to copy Sophie as closely as possible. I look different from her, I have a different voice range ... Instead, I tried to develop a feeling for her, for example through the way she wrote. This at least gives us an idea about how she thought and what was important to her. It is in this manner that I tried to come as close to her as possible.

Do you find it principally more difficult to portray historical figures?

I do feel that it is quite difficult. As an actor, you want to do justice to every figure that you portray. But when you're interpreting people who actually lived, there is another component, an enormous responsibility towards those who knew them. I really do not want to be too intrusive or importunate. Marc tried to break down my scruples by saying: 'Sure, we're trying to do justice to history and to be as authentic as possible. But we're also not obsessively chasing after every detail. Ultimately, we're telling our own version of the story based on our research and on the results of our shoot.' That convinced me.

Did you see the films by Michael Verhoeven and Percy Adlon on Sophie Scholl before the shooting?

I already knew 'Die Weisse Rose'. But since that film focuses chiefly on a different period of time, there was no danger of letting myself be too influenced here. 'Fünf letzte Tage' I saw much later,

and I was very glad in hindsight. I thought it was very good, and if I had been familiar with it before the shooting, it might have exerted too much of an influence on me.

How would you characterize Sophie Scholl? What makes her special?

I had the impression that she took a great interest in people. She had an enormous sense of compassion. I find it amazing how she wrote about meeting people from all walks of life, and how she communicated with them. And on top of this came a great thirst for knowledge. In her letters you keep reading: 'Send me more new books, I'm dying of hunger!'

Do you think that Sophie's faith helped her on her path?

Absolutely. I find it interesting here that while her father tended to keep away from the church, her mother was very religious, but did not force her faith upon her children. The Scholl siblings were thus exposed to both points of view, were able to observe them critically and decide what they wanted for themselves. They thus found their way to God on their own. I am convinced that Sophie culled great strength from her faith just before her death, when she was so alone. Her prayers are depicted in the film.

In the Gestapo interrogations she showed that she had nerves of steel ...

Indeed. She actually managed to mislead the interrogation officer, an experienced professional, for hours on end and to convince him of her innocence. Sophie even becomes a little eerie when you read the records of the interrogation. She must have had an enormous serenity and self-assuredness during these hours. Her strong sense of compassion and her need to protect her friends no doubt pushed her to accept full responsibility when the evidence against her became crushing and she was no longer able to deny her involvement. And she also had the courage to turn down the chance that the interrogation officer gave her. She practically signed her own death sentence by standing up for her ideas and saying: 'I repeat what I said. I was the guilty one.'

Did you ever ask yourself how you would have reacted in this situation?

Of course. And I can only say that I hope I would have made the same decisions. But I really don't know. It would be presumptuous to claim that I would have acted the same way. However, the war should also be taken into consideration here. Sophie may have thought: 'Countless people are being killed in air raids or dying somewhere on the front for this immoral war - why shouldn't I commit myself to a good cause, one that's worth fighting for?'

At the beginning of the film, we see how Sophie sings and dances to a song by Billie Holiday ...

Yes, we felt it was important to at least hint a little at what a life-affirming person Sophie was. On old photos we can see how she went hiking and swimming with her friends, how she had fun at parties and drank wine. She most certainly wasn't someone who longed for death, but a young woman who loved life and was interested in everything.

Not an ethereal creature with a halo ...

No, a real person. A young woman. One shouldn't forget this. On one side we have the statement of her executioner, who said that he had never in his entire working life seen anyone go to the scaffold as upright as Sophie Scholl. But on the other side we also know that she cried, for example when she heard that Christoph Probst had been arrested. This was for me the biggest problem I faced: in every scene I had to ask myself what Sophie was feeling right then. Are her inner strength and sense

of security prevailing here, or do her fear and sadness break through? I had to contend with this dilemma throughout the shooting.

A permanent struggle between strength and fear of death?

Yes, exactly. That's precisely what makes this character so thrilling. I would have found it totally uninteresting to portray a larger-than-life being hovering in some unattainable distance. The viewers should realize that Sophie was a totally normal girl with all the fears of a normal girl - and that she made decisions that we could also make. We can't simply hide behind some excuse, saying: 'I'm not as strong as Sophie Scholl.' This is absurd. Sophie showed us that we can also overcome our fears and weaknesses - and that we must fight in order to be strong.

Thus it's not a film that only looks into the past through binoculars ...

No, absolutely not. The issue of civil courage keeps coming back all the time. For example, if someone is assaulted in the subway. Sophie forces us to ask ourselves: how would we behave? Do we really always act in such a way that we can reconcile our behaviour with our conscience? How far would we go for our ideals? As far as this is concerned, the film is really up-to-the-minute!

SOPHIE SCHOLL - Press quotes

The logo for the magazine VARIETY, featuring the word in a stylized, bold, serif font with a decorative flourish above the letters.

Derek Elley:

Last stanza in the life of Germany's most famous anti-Nazi heroine gets a cleanly directed, straight up-and-down and finally moving retelling in "Sophie Scholl: The Final Days." An ace performance by 26-year-old Julia Jentsch ("The Edukators," "Snowland"), as the quietly determined Munich student who was beheaded for distributing counterpropaganda leaflets in 1943, gives pic a focuses dramatic power.

De indrukwekkende geschiedenis van een van de weinige Duitse studentengroepen die zich tegen Hitler verzetten:

De Witte Roos
Inge Scholl

In de zomer van 1942 doken in verscheidene Duitse steden pamfletten tegen het nationaal-socialisme op. Het brein achter de pamfletten was de medisch student Hans Scholl, die met zijn zuster Sophie en een handvol vrienden tegen Hitlers fascistische dictatuur in opstand gekomen was. Kort voordat Hans en zijn vrienden naar het Oostfront gestuurd werden, richtten zij de verzetsgroep *Die weisse Rose* op en verspreidden zij teksten door de stad. Toen zij weer naar München teruggekeerd waren, verdubbelden zij hun inzet. De Gestapo, die veronderstelde dat er achter de studentengroep een grote organisatie zat, zette een grootscheepse jacht in. Op 18 februari 1943 werden Hans, Sophie en Christoph Probst gearresteerd. Vier dagen later werden ze onthoofd. Enkele maanden later ondergingen andere vrienden en sympathisanten hetzelfde lot.

Inge Scholl, de zuster van Hans en Sophie, doet in dit boek verslag van het studentenverzet tegen Hitler. Zij baseert zich daarbij op verslagen van overlevenden en op documenten, op de brieven en dagboeken van haar broer en zus en op haar eigen herinneringen.

Onlangs is de film *Sophie Scholl: die letzten Tage*, over de laatste dagen van het leven van Sophie Scholl in Duitsland verschenen. In mei dit jaar vindt de manifestatie 'Die weisse Rose' plaats, met concerten van het Nederlands Barokorkest.

De Witte Roos van Inge Scholl is een uitgave van uitgeverij Ambo en is vertaald door Gerrit Bussink, ISBN 90 263 1901 0, € 14,95.

Een exemplaar van uw recensie zien wij graag tegemoet.

Met vriendelijke groet,
Ambo|Anthos *uitgevers*

Suzanne Ermers
Tel: 020 524 54 35
E-mail: sermers@amboanthos.nl