



**"The films of Alexander are a new kind of film, of showing what can come out from the editing. It is good"**

Tinto Brass, Director: La Vacanza. Talking about "Break-Up".

**"At twenty-three, Alexander Tuschinski has begun to reveal his own very personal voice (...) with talent that is blossoming splendidly."**

Miles Kreuger, President: The Institute of the American Musical Theatre, Jan. 2012.

# **BREAK-UP: An Anarchist Trip**

**Break In. Break Out. Break Free. Break Up!**

## **Synopsis:**

Break-Up is an anarchist trip through the modern world. This satire on power, money, ideologies and social conventions renounces traditional storytelling in order to experiment with cinematic form and language. The lead characters are on their own separate journeys to find happiness. One by one, their paths cross and form a panoptical view of young people's lives today. It's written, produced & directed by **Alexander Tuschinski** (Menschenliebe).

The cast includes **Sebastian B** (Menschenliebe, Mutant Calculator), **Jennifer Pakosch**, **Alexander Tuschinski**, **Tonie Redford** (Menschenliebe), **Philipp Metzler** and **Dominic Rödel** (Menschenliebe, Mutant Calculator).

## **Funding and Production:**

Break-Up was produced on a low budget, taken almost exclusively from director Alexander Tuschinski's own savings. Almost all of the cast and crew worked on this film for free. Production took almost three years, as the director worked on the film parallel to his studies at Stuttgart University and Stuttgart Media University. Production started in late 2010, soon after Tuschinski finished his feature-film debut **Menschenliebe**. In **Break-Up**, produced with little budget and therefore without commercial obligations, Tuschinski experiments freely with new filmic grammar and language inspired by experimental 1960s cinema, most notably the early, surrealist films by **Tinto Brass** and the late works of **Luis Buñuel**.

Alexander Tuschinski only wrote a detailed screenplay for the first 20 minutes of the film, and a rough outline for the remainder. Thus, he often wrote scenes and dialogues for later scenes right before shooting them, based on the inspiration of the moment. He compares the process with the casual creation of a pencil-drawing: You first roughly sketch something you have in mind, and then add more and more details while drawing, as the ideas flow. Thus, "details" of the film were actually written while it was being filmed, and new ideas on the set were quickly incorporated into the overall structure of the movie. While filming, the director also encouraged cast-members to improvise, making their acting look more spontaneous and genuine. All these methods allowed to incorporate new ideas as they came along, and the film's structure developed on the set and in the editing room as much as it did in the pre-production phase.

This method of production is much different from the one Tuschinski employed on "Menschenliebe". Parallel to producing "Break-Up", he graduated at Stuttgart Media University, and started to study history and literature at University of Stuttgart.

## **The Film's Message**

Break-Up is a film of rebellion, both in a formal sense as well as in its narrative. Director Alexander Tuschinski states that he is deeply suspicious of conventions and authorities. From the narrative point of view, the “story” has a very different structure from those established in filmmaking conventions since decades. We follow different characters as they try to cope with today's many offers to get “happiness”, depicted in a funny satirical way. At first, the narrative is a free-flowing, almost episodic structure, that gradually becomes more interwoven. It shows the confusion of young people today, torn between business, money, love and ideologies and everything in between. It's done as a – sometimes outrageous – satire, suspicious of all ideologies that claim to give young people happiness and a purpose in life. The editing and camera-work are also very experimental, enriching the storytelling and the overall free feeling of the film.

## **Cast & Crew:**

### **Overview (actors):**

The cast consists mainly of new German actors. Some have already appeared in the feature-film “Menschenliebe”, while for many it was their first time acting in a motion picture. Most of them are students in various fields at different universities across Germany.

### **Alexander Tuschinski (writer / producer / director / editor)**

Born in 1988, Alexander Tuschinski directed his first short films at the age of 16. His feature-film debut **Menschenliebe** (2010) won numerous awards in the USA, and has been compared to “**the early works of Woody Allen**” (Hollywood Reel Ind. Film Fest, 2011).

Until graduating school, Tuschinski planned to study physics and even got an award from the “Deutsche Physikalische Gesellschaft”, but changed his mind as he realized that film was his passion. Before enrolling at Stuttgart Media University in 2008, he had already filmed several short films and music-videos for self-composed satirical songs. When he started his studies of Audiovisual Media, student life quickly inspired him with ideas for his first feature-length film Menschenliebe, which he wrote, produced and directed.

Tuschinski graduated Stuttgart Media University in 2011 as a Bachelor of Engineering in Audiovisual Media, and is currently studying history and literature at University of Stuttgart.

## **Manifesto by the Director:**

Without commercial obligations, working on a small budget, I am convinced that it's a filmmaker's moral obligation to try new ways and not copy some big film-clichés on a smaller scale. Thus, Break-Up is an experiment about form and ideas. In this film, form doesn't dictate the content or vice versa. Significant and signficante are almost completely separated, disconnecting the medium from the message, and the message from the medium. It's a rather anarchist attitude: Everything is possible. No genre-conventions apply.

Break-Up's style deliberately counteracts its narration: The story is sad, but it's told as a comedy. The film's narrative content is mainly a surreal trip that often features a rather negative view on society; it shows how people's desire to be happy gets abused by ideologies in their lust for power. The viewer will therefore feel joy when first watching this filmed statement all the way through. But thinking about it afterwards, the audiences will likely realize that the story is all but joyful – even though the film's style makes it feel like it was. A Brechtian disengagement? Not really, as the film doesn't aim to portrait a realistic story that is only sometimes broken up to create an intellectual distance for the viewers. Instead, it constantly reminds us that we are watching a fictional story – told in the most ironic ways, as funny as possible.

The creative crisis – how can we develop a new cinematic language – led to the developments of experimental storytelling means: Although multiple storylines – both in traditional and modern sense – exist, they are told in a way not tried before. The world created in this project reflects reality in a very surreal way – but emotionally probably more real than a merely “realistic” depiction. It's an outburst of feelings and thoughts on Western society's condition today and was created without considering genre or conventions. It's the portrait of young people's condition in all their facettes – often improvised in the spirit of each day of filming, by far more spontaneous than it's common on most feature-film sets. For me, that's the only appropriate way to address the confusion and turmoil young people go through in this world of seemingly unlimited choices.

Break In, Break Out, Break Free – Break-Up!

Alexander Tuschinski

## **Director's filmography (excerpt):**

2008: Killereichhörnchen (56 min)

2010: Menschenliebe (78 min)

2011: Mutant Calculator (7 min)

2011: Quasicrystal Research (11 min)

2012: Hollow Date (3 min)

2014: Break-Up (89 min)

## **Director's awards (excerpt):**

"Best Director" – California Film Awards 2011

"Best Comedy" – Hollywood Reel Independent Film Festival 2011, for "Menschenliebe"

"Best Foreign Film" – Nevada Film Festival 2011, for "Menschenliebe"

"Silver Ace Award" – Las Vegas Film Festival 2011, for "Mutant Calculator"

"Gold Medal of Excellence" – Park City Film Music Festival 2011, for "Menschenliebe"

"Best Short < 5 min" – Berlin Independent Film Festival 2013, for "Hollow Date"

## **Break-Up in Social Media / Press-Contact:**

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