



Figure 1. Making visible gendered performances of entrepreneurial selfhood in Maren Ade's *Toni Erdmann* (Germany/Austria, 2016)

Introduction: Revisiting Feminism and German Cinema

Hester Baer and Angelica Fenner

On 14 May 2016, Maren Ade's third feature film, *Toni Erdmann* (Germany/Austria), debuted at the Cannes Film Festival, where it received two standing ovations and became an immediate contender for the festival's top prize, the Palme d'Or (Golden Palm). Ade's film elicited glowing reviews from the global press, which celebrated it as the first German selection for the competition at Cannes since 2008 and the first favored to win since *Paris, Texas* (dir. Wim Wenders, West Germany/France/UK/US, 1984) took the Palme d'Or. But when *Toni Erdmann* didn't take the prize, critics couldn't muster outrage, or even much surprise, since Ade would have been only the second female director in the sixty-nine-year history of Cannes to receive the festival's top accolade—the one and only woman to win was Jane Campion, for *The Piano* (New Zealand/Australia/France, 1993). *Toni Erdmann* secured Germany's nomination for Best Foreign Language Film in the Academy Awards that year, only the third time a female director had earned that distinction after Caroline Link was nominated

Camera Obscura 99, Volume 33, Number 3
DOI 10.1215/02705346-7142128 © 2018 by *Camera Obscura*
Published by Duke University Press

for *Jenseits der Stille* (*Beyond Silence*, 1998) and subsequently won for *Nirgendwo in Afrika* (*Nowhere in Africa*) in 2003. Although Ade came up empty at Cannes and at the Oscars, she did become the first woman director to win the European Film Award, and her success inspired plans for a studio remake of *Toni Erdmann* (set to star Kristen Wiig and Jack Nicholson), with Ade and her Komplizen-Film coproducer Janine Jackowski among the remake's producers.

Ade used the attention provided through the Cannes publicity juggernaut and media outlets in ensuing months to underscore the difficult circumstances faced by women filmmakers today and to emphasize the strategies she has pursued to overcome them. These include her work as a producer, the transnational and intermedial production model that underpins her films, and the importance of debuting her films at festival competitions. Moreover, in interviews Ade came out as an advocate for a new quota system to promote gender parity in film production: the Pro Quote Film initiative (For a Film Quota, or PQF), which was launched in 2014 and has begun to make major inroads in its demand for equitable representation of and financing for women directors in Germany. (The "In Practice" section of this special issue—Sebastian Heiduschke's "Women's Interventions in the Contemporary German Film Industry" and our own interview with PQF cofounder Tatjana Turanskyj—discusses the initiative in detail.)

While Ade has only recently begun to address gender subordination in the film industry in such explicit terms, Muriel Cormican's contribution to this issue, "Willful Women in the Cinema of Maren Ade," demonstrates that the filmmaker's work has contributed for more than a decade to a contemporary movement among a transnational assemblage of director-producers refiguring both the representational practices and the production modes historically associated with independent cinema on a global scale, including what has been called "women's cinema." In her landmark study *Women's Cinema, World Cinema*, Patricia White makes a trenchant case that "the discursive terrain referenced by women's cinema is still very much at stake" in the twenty-first century.¹ Taking a cue from White's argument that women's cinema can only be properly

apprehended as world cinema—because narrowly defined national frames miss the generative cross-fertilizations that have always characterized women’s cinema and that have only intensified through global media flows—this special issue of *Camera Obscura* expands her frame to focus on the German case.

The contemporary women’s film productions considered here observe, contest, and, above all, make visible performances of gendered subjectivity under late capitalism. Attention to the impact of flexible labor and post-Fordist rationality on the lives of women and children—and of gendered experiences of entrepreneurial selfhood and commodified affect on relationality in the twenty-first century—links the work of Maren Ade and other German-speaking female directors, many of them associated with what has been called the Berlin School, including Barbara Albert, Valeska Grisebach, Jessica Hausner, Maria Speth, Angela Schanelec, and Tatjana Turanskyj, to their peers worldwide, such as, to name only a few prominent examples, Andrea Arnold (UK), Claire Denis (France), So Yong Kim and Kelly Reichardt (US), and Lucrecia Martel (Argentina). Their films are characterized by a commitment to telling closely observed stories; an emphasis on disparate and divergent experiences of gender, sexuality, and intimacy; and a focus on the precarity of life today underpinned by a formal allegiance to an aesthetic of reduction and, crucially, women’s access to the means of production. Though their work is not classifiable within inherited schemas of women’s cinema as “oppositional,” “counterhegemonic,” “subversive,” or “resistant,” these filmmakers nonetheless tell stories whose intersectional concerns forge alliances with feminist, queer, antiheteronormative, and antiracist projects. Among the German directors in particular, the deliberate involvement in all aspects of the filmmaking process—financing, screenwriting, direction, cinematography, editing, and distribution—constitutes a significant intervention into the dire situation for women in media industries today.²

By bringing focused attention to the work of these directors, “Women’s Film Authorship in Neoliberal Times: Revisiting Feminism and German Cinema” posits German cinema as a renewed

site for the theorization of women's film authorship and feminist film production today. German cinema presents an especially generative case study for considering women's filmmaking in neoliberal times because of its centrality to the development of feminist film theory at an earlier historical moment in the 1970s. Owing to the institutional and financial successes of the West German feminist film movement spearheaded by Helke Sander and Claudia von Alemann, women directors received an unparalleled degree of support for their work during this period. The feminist film movement sought to change the landscape of filmmaking by rectifying the gender imbalance in the film industry while developing new narratives and aesthetic forms for women's cinema. Through a series of interventions, including the International Women's Film Seminar in West Berlin (established in 1973) and the journal *Frauen und Film* (founded in 1974), they educated women about film history and technology and empowered them to seize the means of film production. The Verband der Filmarbeiterinnen (Union of Female Film Workers) was created in 1979 to support and advocate for women's participation in filmmaking at a policy level. The group sought to establish gender parity, demanding that women's projects receive half of all available subvention funding and that women occupy half of all jobs and employee training programs in the film industry. It was remarkably successful in achieving institutional and financial support for female directors and making inroads into production and distribution schemes, so much so that by 1989 Thomas Elsaesser proclaimed that "West Germany possessed proportionally more women filmmakers than any other film-producing country."³ (For a discussion of the rather different situation for women directors in East Germany, see Faye Stewart's contribution to this issue, "Women of DEFA: Gender, Labor, and Precarity in [Post]Socialist Cinema.") Marc Silberman's catalog of women filmmakers in West Germany, appearing in *Camera Obscura* in 1980, called the attention of English-speaking readers to fourteen of the most prominent feminist filmmakers, including Jutta Brückner, Ulrike Ottinger, Helke Sander, Helma Sanders-Brahms, and Margarethe von Trotta. In a follow-up piece published in 1983, Silberman

introduced five further filmmakers to his catalog, among them Jeanine Meerapfel.⁴

As national locus for an aesthetically and politically diverse feminist filmmaking praxis, (West) Germany also formed an important matrix for transnational theoretical work by feminist film scholars, including, among many others, Annette Brauerhoch, Gertrud Koch, and Heide Schlüpmann in West Germany;⁵ Teresa de Lauretis, E. Ann Kaplan, Judith Mayne, B. Ruby Rich, Kaja Silverman, and Patricia White in the US;⁶ and Julia Knight and Annette Kuhn in the UK.⁷ The West German feminist *Frauenfilm* (women's film) played a key role in feminist film theory not least because it gave rise, in Alison Butler's words, "to a distinct and powerful structure of feeling, of historic significance within both women's cinema and German film culture."⁸ Crucial here was the engagement of these films with the specificity of German history (including the Nazi past and the Cold War present) and their probing of the impact of national constellations on ideologies of gender and sexuality, family structures, social institutions, and especially women's bodies. In terms of form, German feminist films were particularly noteworthy to feminist theorists for their interventions into inherited modes of realism, thereby bringing into focus the sexual politics experienced by women across disparate socioeconomic backgrounds. Significant, too, was the implementation of distancing strategies to reveal, in Kaplan's words, how the "position [of woman] has been externally constructed, as against presenting it as 'natural' or 'inevitable,' as in Hollywood film."⁹ Moreover, institutional support of women's filmmaking in West Germany enabled individual auteur-directors to make multiple feature films (unusual for women directors in other national-cultural contexts, even today), offering theorists oeuvres that facilitated sustained inquiry into questions of women's authorship, feminist aesthetics, and viewer address. Mary Hennessy's contribution to this issue, "Photography, Subjectivity, and the Politics of the Image from Helke Sander to Angela Schanelec," takes up these questions through a comparative approach to the politics of image making in feminist films from the 1970s and today.

Yet the remarkable flourishing of German-language femi-

nist film culture in the 1970s and 1980s was ultimately short-lived. As Faye Stewart's contribution to this issue furthermore reveals, the terms of gendered engagement among East German filmmakers invite a different optic, one revealing how the socialist accounting for women's reproductive labor sometimes failed to efface inherited gender biases in hiring practices or in the distribution of domestic responsibilities. Nor were East German women as a whole sheltered from the trend in the final years of the German Democratic Republic (GDR) toward contingent labor and a social climate of disaffection also emerging in West Germany in the same era. Political and economic change on both sides of the wall in postunification Germany, throughout Europe, and worldwide—including media conglomeration and the dismantling of redistributive policies to make way for the global free market—gradually reversed many of the gains of the feminist film movement. The undoing of feminism has created the context for a disavowal, or simply a lack of awareness, among a younger generation of female filmmakers in Germany of their feminist precursors. However, the rise of the Berlin School, beginning with the collaborations of Deutsche Film- und Fernsehakademie Berlin (German Film and Television Academy, or DFFB) graduates Thomas Arslan, Christian Petzold, and Angela Schanelec in the late 1990s; the development of production collectives fostering women's filmmaking; and the resurgence of feminist film politics in the context of PQF and other organizations promoting gender equity in the film industry all make the time ripe for a reconsideration of the relations between aesthetic form and the material conditions of women's filmmaking in Germany.¹⁰ Indeed, the transformation in October 2017 of Pro Quote Regie (an activist group founded by a small group of women directors) into Pro Quote Film (an umbrella organization advocating on behalf of more than 370 women professionals in nine trade branches of the film industry) aims to ensure that equity advances from ideal to reality.

Boasting a significant number of women director-producers, the Berlin School has gained international recognition for its revitalization of art cinema via techniques of filmic realism attentive to the forms of subjectivity and relationality produced among



Figure 2. Tatjana Turanskyj's *Top Girl* (Germany, 2014) portrays how the neoliberal mandate to self-optimize disproportionately targets women.

Germans and Europeans in the era of late capitalism and globalization. As Rajendra Roy has observed, “The prominence of the female protagonist has remained a constant and critical element in the laboratory of post-Wall German identity proposed by the Berlin School films.”¹¹ Disproportionately charged with the mandate to self-optimize, women in Berlin School films often struggle, fail, or refuse to self-manage properly, thereby functioning as sites for making visible the problems of agency and subjectivity in the present (fig. 2). Formal choices such as abrupt cuts, restrained acting that renders affect palpable rather than visible, and limited employment of artificial lighting or nondiegetic sound underscore on an aesthetic level the disorientation, waning of emotion, and vulnerability that is also the thematic focus of Berlin School narratives. Such formal and thematic choices reflect the imprint of women’s film authorship conceived in terms of both conceptual-aesthetic and material practices.

While authorship continues to be a contested category in film studies owing to the collective process inherent in feature filmmaking and the discrediting of masculinist accounts of the auteur as autonomous genius, it remains a crucial site of interrogation for feminism because of women’s historical and ongoing exclusion

from global film industries. Moreover, in the era of neoliberal globalization and media privatization, cinema has the potential to renew its function as a counterpublic sphere. As White has argued, “Women have a crucial role as *producers* of this public social vision, not only as media consumers and representational supports.”¹² The formally austere, dedramatized films of contemporary women directors in German-speaking Europe—with their focus on female protagonists, gendered subjectivity, and ordinary life—offer one such social vision. In doing so, they open up spaces for making visible the paradoxes of our contemporary moment, with its rhetorical commitment to equality politics and simultaneous undoing of collective social movements. Insofar as neoliberalism interpellates women as exemplary subjects, women’s cinema may indeed constitute a privileged site for exploring its implications for subjectivities more broadly defined. These directors’ estranged view of primarily (although not exclusively) cis, straight, white, and economically enfranchised women protagonists offers a productive point of departure for the intersectional investigations undertaken by the contributions collected here.

Even while framing this special issue around the topic of women’s authorship, we recognize that the very category of “woman” is contested terrain, representing neither a unified site of political agency nor a stable and coherent gender designation. Judith Butler argues that the norms governing gender “both constrain and enable life. . . . They designate in advance what will and will not be a livable existence.”¹³ For Butler, feminist critique emerges precisely from this paradox, from the place of recognition that we can neither do without gender norms nor accept them as fixed and given. As a means by which social relationships are organized, gender intersects with vectors—including those of class, race, and ethnicity—to powerfully and often ineluctably shape human experience and, by extension, the terms and conditions of artistic practices such as filmmaking. The term *gender*—it bears repeating—necessarily rejects biological determinism, cleaving sex from socialization, and, in some instances, sex from biology as well. When the international women’s movement was first gaining ground, the notion of a “feminine aesthetic,” to use Silvia Boven-

schen's term from her groundbreaking essay of 1977, became one means to think through the relations between bodily or sensory experience, socialization, and aesthetic sensibility as these variously inform artistic practice.¹⁴ Women's past and present experience of subjugation or marginalization does not necessarily generate political agency or automatically culminate in political art, but it does sensitize us as critics, scholars, and spectators to the possibilities for an expanded vision of and for the world.

Within the New German Cinema, it was the heterogeneity of women's authorship that brought attention to the inequities that result among men and women when reproduction is not factored into the labor market, forcing a double burden on women's ambitions. Helke Sander's *The All-Around Reduced Personality—Redupers* (West Germany, 1978) brilliantly transposed these concerns into the realm of the woman artist struggling for recognition and legitimation as a freelance photographer, while also expected to harbor a particular point of view that would entail aiming the camera on the domestic sphere, child raising, or biological experience. Experimental films (such as those of Monika Treut and Ulrike Ottinger) further unsettled these preoccupations by dismantling heteronormative desires from capitalist productivity and deromanticizing homosexuality as a practice not necessarily inherently utopian or uncoupled from market forces (e.g., Treut's *Die Jungfrauen Maschine* [*The Virgin Machine*, West Germany, 1988]), while also seeking new aesthetic forms with which to deconstruct the relationship between looking and desire within a scopic regime previously overdetermined by patriarchal strategies of objectification and containment (e.g., Ottinger's *Bildnis einer Trinkerin* [*Aller jamais retour/Ticket of No Return*, West Germany, 1979]). The paratactical elements of stylized artifice and lavish display, so often associated with queer German cinema, functioned allegorically, at once concealing and revealing sexualities that could not otherwise be represented.¹⁵

By contrast, the contemporary narratives of Berlin School filmmakers no longer seem to solicit an allegorical approach, instead coming full circle to realist aesthetics, yet with a difference. For the arepresentational approach of such directors as Albert, Grisebach, Hausner, and Turanskyj neither obscures nor neces-



Figure 3. Attention to everyday gestures in Angela Schanelec's *Mein langsames Leben* (*Passing Summer*, Germany, 2001)

sarily clarifies the libidinal orientation of their protagonists.¹⁶ The modes of heteropathic spectatorial identification once pioneered by queer German cinema have been supplanted by an aesthetics that renders screen affects opaque and open to myriad readings. In place of identification with female protagonists who mobilize social resistance, we may variously be invited to recalibrate our perceptions, to look anew with Schanelec on the minutiae of everyday gestures and social interactions (fig. 3), or to revisit with Ade how flexible labor conditions have uncoupled identity from any given vocation, instead demanding ongoing modulation of affects and a focus on individual accountability at the expense of social solidarity.

Whereas the representational realism of mainstream cinema employs codified methods to depict prefabricated realities and thereby elicit predictable responses from spectators, Berlin School films often redistribute our sensorial apprehension of the unfolding drama and do so by remaining emphatically ambiguous as to the broader social implications of character actions. When protagonist Ines (Sandra Hüller) in Ade's *Toni Erdmann* spontaneously casts off her unwieldy party dress in the penultimate scene of the nearly three-hour film and launches a naked party ostensibly in the service of team building, the entire sensory motor schema (govern-

ing both Ines's strict control of her body and our apprehension of her behavioral choices up to this moment) is simultaneously unraveled and potentially intensified in a new, highly ambiguous register.

The films of these contemporary female directors focus on the insecurity and precarity of white female protagonists predominantly of the middle class, training the lens on their socially contested behaviors and disorienting experiences of gender, sexuality, and intimacy. Underpinning this aesthetic and thematic focus is an innovative, independent production model that promotes collaboration and risk sharing via cooperative practices in both formal and informal contexts. Production collectives like the German-based *Komplizen-Film* (founded by Ade and Jackowski in 2000) and the Austrian-based *Coopgg* (founded by Albert, Hausner, Martin Gschlacht, and Antonin Svoboda in 1999) have helped establish the material conditions for women filmmakers to succeed by promoting gender equity in production rosters and facilitating the emergence of the successful nonstudio filmmaking of the Berlin School and adjacent modes of artistically independent cinema. With *Komplizen-Film*, Ade has developed an important career as a producer of contemporary German cinema, producing her own three features and a range of other well-known Berlin School films by directors like Valeska Grisebach, Benjamin Heisenberg, and Ulrich Köhler. *Komplizen-Film* has also collaborated extensively with *Coopgg*, which was established to promote Austrian independent cinema and has made its mark not only by producing the internationally lauded films of Albert and Hausner but also by specializing in films that address the impact of the Balkan wars in Central and Eastern Europe, coproducing, for instance, several features by Bosnian director Jasmila Žbanić. In addition to assembling complex funding packages, typically involving a range of regional, national, and international subventions in the form of grants, incentives, and rebates, *Komplizen-Film* and *Coopgg* have facilitated collaborative practices on a more informal level by sharing technical personnel and actors and by encouraging work on one another's films (for example, as script advisers). Such practices foster a shared aesthetic vision as well as save costs. While operating adjacent to these production collectives, Maria Speth has also

participated in the collaborative practices of sharing personnel and has benefited in ways similar to Ade, Albert, and Hausner from consolidating control over all aspects of the filmmaking process by forming her own production company, Madonnenfilm.

The successful (if at times laborious and very slow—witness the long lag times between these directors' features) mode of production pioneered by Berlin School filmmakers and their colleagues (which is noteworthy not least for its promotion of women directors) has offered a model for recently formed groups such as Into the Wild Mentoring, which seeks to formalize mentoring relationships between established and aspiring women filmmakers. The success of production collectives like Komplizen-Film and Coop99 has also no doubt spurred the movement for gender parity in German film and television production and financing promoted tirelessly, and with some major gains, by PQF since its founding in 2014. At the 2018 Berlin International Film Festival, women across the generational spectrum spoke on behalf of the goals of PQF at a standing-room-only event at the Academy of the Arts. In addition to compelling opening remarks by Academy president Jeanine Meerapfel and comprehensive statistical evidence delivered by scholar Elizabeth Prommer, filmmaker Jutta Brückner—a retired professor at the Berlin University of the Arts best known for her autobiographically inflected historical drama *Hungerjahre—in einem reichen Land* (*Years of Hunger*, West Germany, 1980)—delivered the rousing speech “Some Like It Equal,” which she closed by exhorting the euphoric audience, “Bildet Banden!” (Forge alliances!).

Such initiatives have succeeded on a material level in laying the groundwork for a resurgent women's cinema in German-speaking Europe, but it is noteworthy that, at least until recently, this cinema has not been conceptualized or framed in the context of feminism. Revisiting gender and women's authorship in the contemporary German film industry, then, means engaging with what Angela McRobbie terms “the aftermath of feminism,” a postfeminist climate that forecloses any contention that women across disparate social, class, and ethnic formations might still occupy a sub-

ordinated position within society.¹⁷ In investigating the reluctance that some directors, including Ade and Schanelec, have displayed toward identifying themselves or their films as feminist, it may be useful to recall some of the repercussions women incurred in the early 1970s, including the reproach Sander encountered from broadcasters to the effect that feminist filmmakers lacked “objectivity” in documenting social realities.¹⁸ Working collaboratively (as many women filmmakers did) and sometimes learning their craft in the field with others rather than through formal training left artists open to prospective producers’ assumption that they lacked the technical skill and vision to be commissioned for their own directorial projects.¹⁹ Moreover, focusing on topics relating specifically to women’s experiences at that time—including children and family, reproductive rights, and professional development—led to the assumption that these were the *only* topics women filmmakers were qualified to address.

The national legacy and institutional memory of these professional hazards may very well have permeated the political unconscious of a younger generation of directors, prompting a reluctance among some members of this generation to self-identify as feminist or even align themselves with the idea of gendered authorship lest their prospects for funding be narrowed even further. While such disavowals are congruent with the strategic construction of narratives of self-determination and autonomy, many women in the industry are nonetheless discovering that gender remains a political tool.²⁰ Initiatives such as PQF have gained momentum precisely because women are again realizing that they are indeed, against their own preferences, hailed as a social category, one disadvantaged or overlooked in the film industry, whether in casting choices that exclude women over age forty; in film stories that primarily revolve around male protagonists and their aspirations and relationships; or in film financing, in which women garner only a fraction of the subsidies their male colleagues earn.

Our interview with Tatjana Turanskyj reveals that not all contemporary filmmakers disidentify with feminism (or for that matter, with feminist film history). Turanskyj openly acknowledges her debt to an earlier generation that includes Sander and

Ottinger, and their legacy is clearly discernible in *Eine flexible Frau* (*The Drifters*, Germany, 2010), the first film in Turanskyj's trilogy on women and work. We share the excitement palpable among scholars Birgit Kohler and Sabine Nessel in their earlier interview with her in *Frauen und Film* on encountering a filmmaker prepared to take up the feminist torch of an earlier generation and advance the conversation further.²¹ Of course, we recognize that the extraordinary output that constitutes women's filmmaking in Germany since the 1970s also defies the conventional historiographical model that aims to reassemble disparate fragments to form a totality—what Monica Dall'Asta and Jane Gaines describe as “the kind of causal concatenation of traditional historical narration that attempts to provide linkages between them.”²² And yet, the new need not always position itself as revolt: women's productions, feminist and otherwise, also sometimes enact both intertextual and intergenerational continuities and solidarities. In her contribution to this special issue, “All That Glitters Isn't Gold: Auma Obama's Nightmare of Post-unification Germany,” Priscilla Layne surmises that filmmaker Auma Obama's intertextual engagement with such disparate legacies as those of Fritz Lang and Richard Wagner in her thesis film *All That Glitters*, produced in the early 1990s at the German Film Academy in Berlin (DFFB), is congruent with filmmaking of the black diaspora, for it signals Obama's deviation from inherited conventions to instead hybridize genres and thereby redirect the fate of her film protagonists.

In “Photography, Subjectivity, and the Politics of the Image from Helke Sander to Angela Schanelec,” Mary Hennessy, in turn, engages the works of both Sander and Schanelec when undertaking a comparative study of the relationship of the female protagonist and, by extension, of the filmmaker to camera optics and visual perception, and does so by contrasting the expanded scale of public photographs developed by Edda Chiemyjewski's photography collective in *Redupers* with the snapshots taken by the socially isolated photographer/tourist Sophie (Maren Eggert) and pinned in small format on the walls of her sublet apartment in *Marseille* (dir. Angela Schanelec, Germany, 2004). This intergenerational approach to the historicity of women's filmmaking does not neces-

sarily find a corollary among all the women directors of the Berlin School. Indeed, *Toni Erdmann* demonstrates that the focus on intergenerational tensions, even impasses, is just as (or perhaps more) likely to become legible at a diegetic level, between parents socialized in the era of 1968 and their adult children or adolescents, than it is between contemporary women directors and their feminist forebears. Yet if we bring women filmmakers of the past and their work into the historical present, it is to undertake the “constellating” work that Dall’Asta and Gaines have elsewhere postulated as a method for engaging historical and archival material across the gaps of time—gaps between disparate films and between films and the scholars striving to discern their significance—effectively creating “a temporal wedge in our present that makes us momentarily coincident with the historical past.”²³ Bringing attention to this unfolding present in women’s film production in Germany enables us to reframe past film history, a history too readily bracketed as an anomaly or rupture in German film historiographies. Instead, we aim to reveal both how what was once perceived as bygone is still very much in our present while also recognizing that the present conjuncture may necessitate defining anew the depth and scope of German feminist filmmaking practices in their impact and significance.

Notes

1. Patricia White, *Women’s Cinema, World Cinema: Projecting Contemporary Feminisms* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2015), 3.
2. See Hester Baer, “The Berlin School and Women’s Cinema,” in *The Berlin School and Its Global Contexts: A Transnational Art-Cinema*, ed. Marco Abel and Jaimey Fisher (Detroit, MI: Wayne State University Press, 2018), 25–48. Some of the formulations in this paragraph are borrowed from this chapter.
3. Thomas Elsaesser, *New German Cinema: A History* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1989), 185.
4. See Marc Silberman, “Women Filmmakers in West Germany: A Catalog,” *Camera Obscura*, no. 6 (1980): 122–52; and Silberman,

- “Women Filmmakers in West Germany: A Catalog (Part 2),” *Camera Obscura*, no. 11 (1983): 132–45. Silberman’s catalog joined dossiers on prominent feminist films *Unsichtbare Gegner* (*Invisible Adversaries*, dir. Valie Export, Austria, 1976) and *Die allseitig reduzierte Persönlichkeit—Redupers* (*The All Around Reduced Personality—Redupers*, dir. Helke Sander, West Germany, 1977) in establishing a central role for German-language cinema in the “Women Working” feature of *Camera Obscura*, which addressed the practice of feminist filmmaking in the early years of the journal.
5. See Annette Brauerhoch, *Die gute und die böse Mutter: Kino zwischen Melodrama und Horror* (Marburg, Germany: Schüren, 1996); Annette Brauerhoch, “Fräuleins” und G.I.s: *Geschichte und Filmgeschichte* (Frankfurt, Germany: Stroemfeld, 2006); Gertrud Koch, “Was ich erbeute sind Bilder”: *Zum Diskurs der Geschlechter im Film* (Frankfurt, Germany: Stroemfeld/Roter Stern, 1989); Gertrud Koch, “Why Women Go to Men’s Films,” in *Feminist Aesthetics*, ed. Gisela Ecker, trans. Harriet Anderson (Boston: Beacon, 1986), 108–19; Heide Schlüpmann, *The Uncanny Gaze: The Drama of Early German Cinema*, trans. Inga Pollmann (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2010); and contributions by all three writers to the journal *Frauen und Film*.
 6. See Teresa de Lauretis, *Technologies of Gender: Essays on Theory, Film, and Fiction* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1987); E. Ann Kaplan, *Women and Film: Both Sides of the Camera* (New York: Methuen, 1983); Judith Mayne, *The Woman at the Keyhole: Feminism and Women’s Cinema* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1990); B. Ruby Rich, *Chick Flicks: Theories and Memories of the Feminist Film Movement* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1998); Kaja Silverman, “Helke Sander and the Will to Change,” *Discourse*, no. 6 (Fall 1983): 10–30; and Patricia White, “‘Madame X of the China Seas’: A Study of Ulrike Ottinger’s Film,” *Screen* 28, no. 4 (1987): 80–95.
 7. See Julia Knight, *Women and the New German Cinema* (New York: Verso, 1992). Among Annette Kuhn’s prolific publications see in particular: *Women’s Pictures: Feminism and Cinema* (London: Routledge, 1982); *The Power of the Image: Essays on Representation and Sexuality* (London: Routledge, 1985); and *Cinema, Censorship, and Sexuality, 1909–1925* (New York: Routledge, 1988).

8. Alison Butler, *Women's Cinema: The Contested Screen* (London: Wallflower, 2002), 94.
9. Kaplan, *Women and Film*, 105.
10. German researchers have begun to take up this project as well. See, for example, the compilation of essays by women from all branches of the film industry, *Wie haben Sie das gemacht? Aufzeichnungen zu Frauen und Filmen*, ed. Claudia Lenssen and Bettina Schoeller-Boujou (Marburg, Germany: Schüren, 2014), and the accompanying two-DVD anthology of women-directed films from five decades of German film history released by Absolut Medien. See also the research reports on gender and cinema carried out at the University of Rostock Institute for Media Research: Elisabeth Prommer and Skadi Loist, "Wer dreht deutsche Kinofilme? Gender Report 2009–2013," February 2015, www.imf.uni-rostock.de/forschung/kommunikations-und-medienwissenschaft/gender-bericht/.
11. Rajendra Roy, "Women's Lab: The Female Protagonist in the Berlin School," in *The Berlin School: Films from the Berliner Schule*, ed. Rajendra Roy and Anke Leweke (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 2013), 57.
12. White, *Women's Cinema, World Cinema*, 3 (our emphasis).
13. Judith Butler, *Undoing Gender* (New York: Routledge, 2004), 206.
14. Silvia Bovenschen, "Is There a Feminine Aesthetic?," trans. Beth Weckmueller, *New German Critique*, no. 10 (Winter 1977): 111–37.
15. See especially Alice A. Kuzniar, *The Queer German Cinema* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2000), 139–56.
16. Marco Abel, *The Counter-Cinema of the Berlin School* (Rochester, NY: Camden House, 2013).
17. Angela McRobbie, *The Aftermath of Feminism: Gender, Culture, and Social Change* (London: Sage, 2008).
18. Helke Sander, "Die Herren machen das selber, das ihnen die arme Frau feind wird," in *Augenzeugen: 100 Texte neuer deutscher Filmemacher*, ed. Hans Helmut Prinzler and Eric Rentschler (Frankfurt, Germany: Verlag der Autoren, 1988), 83.
19. See Julia Knight's lucid analysis of the women's movement as formative of women's filmmaking in the 1970s in *Women and the New German Cinema*, 73–101.

20. See Emma Rich, "Young Women, Feminist Identities, and Neoliberalism," *Women's Studies International Forum* 28, no. 6 (2005): 495–508.
21. Birgit Kohler and Sabine Nessel, "A Woman under the Influence—in Berlin zu Beginn des 21. Jahrhunderts: Zu Tatjana Turanskyj's Spielfilm Debüt," *Eine flexible Frau*, *Frauen und Film*, no. 66 (2011): 171–80.
22. Monica Dall'Asta and Jane M. Gaines, "Prologue: Constellations: Past Meets Present in Feminist Film History," in *Doing Women's Film History: Reframing Cinemas, Past and Future*, ed. Christine Gledhill and Julia Knight (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2015), 18.
23. Dall'Asta and Gaines, "Prologue," 18–19.

Hester Baer is associate professor and head of Germanic studies at the University of Maryland, where she also serves as a core faculty member in the film studies and comparative literature programs. She has published widely on German film, digital media, contemporary literature, and feminism. She is the author of *Dismantling the Dream Factory: Gender, German Cinema, and the Postwar Quest for a New Film Language* (2009) and coeditor of *German Women's Writing in the 21st Century* (2015). Baer is a project leader of the Digital Feminist Collective (www.artsrn.ualberta.ca/feminism/) and a former president of the Coalition of Women in German. She is currently completing a manuscript, "German Cinema in the Age of Neoliberalism, 1980–2010."

Angelica Fenner is associate professor in the Cinema Studies Institute and associate chair of graduate studies in the Department of Germanic Languages and Literatures at the University of Toronto. She is the author of *Race under Reconstruction in German Cinema* (2011) and coeditor of *The Autobiographical Turn in Germanophone Documentary and Experimental Film* (2014) as well as guest coeditor of a special issue of *Transit*, "Contemporary Remediations of Race and Ethnicity in German Visual Cultures" (2014). Her articles and book chapters have appeared in various anthologies and in the journals *Camera Obscura*, *Feminist Media Studies*, and *Women in German Yearbook*.



Figure 4. Valeska Grisebach with cast and crew on the set of *Western* (Germany/Bulgaria/Austria, 2017).

© Komplizen Film