



BIG SCREEN CLASSICS

The Goalkeeper's Fear of the Penalty

Sent off during a match in Vienna, a German goalkeeper (Arthur Brauss) leaves the stadium, wanders around the city, visits a cinema and ends up committing a wholly unexpected murder... Wenders – a Bresson admirer with a particular love of *Mouchette* – follows the Frenchman in refusing to offer psychological explanations for his protagonist's actions, instead allowing Robby Müller's typically eloquent images to work their magic.

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Wim Wenders on 'The Goalkeeper's Fear of the Penalty'

Your early movies flirt with the idea of a narrative while remaining essentially non-narrative.

Yes, even the first film I made at film school had the sense of a 'missing' story. It was called *Shoot Again*, after the thing that lights up on pinball machines. There's only one take, of a man running, repeated four times – hence the title. It's taken from a moving car, and you see only the man's legs and you know that he's been wounded because he loses some blood. But you don't know what's before and after. It's true of *Silver City* too. My films were never completely non-narrative.

That sense of the story being missing might have been funny...

No, *Alabama* is a very depressive film, and *Silver City* isn't funny at all. Because these cities aren't funny.

What's the exact sequence of films?

After *Shoot Again* was *Silver City*, then *Alabama*, in 35mm and already nearly narrative, and then a 16mm black-and-white feature called *Summer in the City* (after the song by John Sebastian) although the film was shot in winter.

The Goalkeeper was the first non-'underground' film; there was a script for the first time, and so on.

The Goalkeeper is still like your early films in some ways, but it's also faithful to [Peter] Handke's novel. Is there a connection?

It may be that the novel has something in common with my other films. I know Peter Handke very well. I was visiting him when he started to write the book, and he said that it was mostly a joke, but that I could use it as the basis for a script if I wanted. A year later we really did it, and it wasn't a joke any more. The film's narrative style, the way one take follows another, is a lot like the book.

Music seems unusually important in all your films.

Yes, very much. It was even the other way round at the start; for the first two films, I had the music first and then added the film. In 1968 I helped a friend make a film in England called *Ten Years After* with the group of that name. It's a 30-minute take of them playing.

In Goalkeeper, the jukebox songs seem to be things that Bloch remembers.

Yes, it's a trip into the early Sixties in that sense. Mind you, this part of Austria does look like that, the furniture and everything. They do have those big jukeboxes of the period. It was shot in the village where Handke wrote the novel.

The songs are a kind of commentary...

I realised that recently for the first time, when I saw it again. I listened to the words, and I'm somewhat embarrassed about it. We never thought of that when we used them.

There are also reminiscences of 1940s thrillers here and there.

It's a bit similar to those pictures sometimes, perhaps the compositions. The scene where the plane flies past was supposed to be more like *North by Northwest*, but the sun was already very low and so it's not that much like it.

There's some confusion about the movie he goes to see at the start; the theatre marquee says Red Line 7000 one minute, and something about forgers the next.

Yes it's a big continuity slip. The other title is a novel by Patricia Highsmith, *The Tremor of Forgery*, which I like very much and always wanted to film. I was reading it when we made the film. It wasn't a real cinema, incidentally; we built the fascia over a greengrocer's shop in order to use the building, which is a famous Jugendstil house in Vienna. It was said that they were going to pull it down, so we wanted to use it. We used Wittgenstein's house in one scene for the same reason.

How much did you plan beforehand?

We made drawings every night. For the tracks and everything. We had to work quickly because there were so many different locations – generally, two a day.

Did the actors contribute much?

Yes, a lot. Also the locations, the weather, everything. On the other hand, we worked very precisely. We tried to stick to the script, but we never really succeeded.

It's an event when you move the camera...

When we started, we thought we could do it without any movement, and we actually did for the first two days of shooting. Then we saw that we could make movements that weren't really movements, that were still very static, and we made a lot of tracks from then on. But always following a moving subject. Except once, with the penalty at the end. I didn't like it.

That formality counters the fact that the viewpoint is essentially Bloch's; it's both objective and subjective.

It has a lot to do with the character; he lacks a feeling of reality sometimes. He's not schizophrenic, but there's this 'everyday schizophrenia' – it's in the way we made the film, too.

How much has his crisis to do with his age? The things that happen to him seem linked to anxieties about holding his own in various situations.

If you're a goalkeeper, you have to change your job at around 35. He's 36. In the script he tells a story about a famous Russian goalie who kept his job until he was 43 or 44. But we didn't shoot it; it would have been too obvious. In the novel he's a former goalkeeper, now working in another job, but that was difficult to explain in the film and so we made him a real goalie. That's the only thing we really changed from the novel. The fact that he's a goalkeeper is sometimes important, in the way that he reacts, for instance.

You cut away from all the climaxes...

I never wanted to show things that are shown in general. Even the murder. I think it's too dramatic.

Interview by Tony Rayns, *Sight and Sound*, Winter 1974/5

**THE GOALKEEPER'S FEAR OF THE PENALTY
(DIE ANGST DES TORMANNS BEIM ELFMETER)**

Director: Wim Wenders
Production Companies: Produktion 1 im Filmverlag der Autoren,
Telefilm AG, Westdeutscher Rundfunk
Production Manager: Peter Genée
Unit Production Manager: Eberhard Maier
Production Assistant: Martin Hennig
Production Secretary: Veronika Schmidt
Technicians: Honorat Stangl, Hans Dreher,
Max Panitz, Volker von der Heydt
Assistant Directors: Veith Fürstenberg, Klaus Bädelerl
Script Supervisor: Ulli Stenzer
Screenplay: Wim Wenders
Dialogue in Collaboration With: Peter Handke
Based on the novel by: Peter Handke
Director of Photography: Robby Müller
Camera Assistant: Martin Schäfer
Stills: Andrej Reiser
Editor: Peter Przygodda
Art Directors: R. Schneider Manss-Au, Burghard Schlicht
Make-up: Sybille Danzer
Music: Jürgen Knieper
Songs: Johnny & the Hurricanes, Roy Orbison,
The Tokens, The Ventures *
Sound Recording: Rainer Lorenz, Martin Müller
Thanks to: Admira-Energie-Wacker, S.C. Pinkerfeld

Cast

Arthur Brauss (*Josef Bloch*)
Kai Fischer (*Hertha Gabler*)
Erika Pluhar (*Gloria T.*)
Libgart Schwarz (*Anna*)
Maria Bardischewski (*Maria*)
Michael Toost (*salesman*)
Bert Fortell (*customs official*)
Edda Köchl (*girl*)
Mario Kranz (*school handyman*)
Ernst Meister (*revenue officer*)
Rosl Dorena (*woman in bus*)
Rudi Schippel (*janitor*)
Monika Pöschl (*1st hairdresser*)
Sybille Danzer (*2nd hairdresser*)
Rüdiger Vogler (*idiot*)
Karl Krittll (*castle doorman*)
Maria Engelstorfer (*shopkeeper*)
Otto Hoch-Fischer (*landlord*)
Gerhard Tötschinger
Liane Gollé
Ernst Koppens
Brigitte Svoboda
Paul Hör
Otilie Iwald
Achim Kaden
Alexandra Bäck
Ina Genée
Eberhard Maier
Ernst Essel
Josef Menschik
Norma Mayer
Ulli Stenzel
Hans Pemmer
Admira-Energie-Wacker *
S.C. Pinkerfeld *
Wim Wenders *

West Germany/Austria 1971©
101 mins

* Uncredited

BIG SCREEN CLASSICS

The Merchant of Four Seasons (Händler der vier Jahreszeiten)

Wed 1 Jun 18:10 (+ intro); Sat 11 Jun 20:30

Ivan's Childhood (Ivanovo Detsvo)

Thu 2 Jun 14:30; Mon 20 Jun 20:50

The Goalkeeper's Fear of the Penalty

(Die Angst des Tormanns beim Elfmeter)

Fri 3 Jun 20:50; Mon 13 Jun 18:10; Fri 24 Jun 20:45

Taxi Driver

Sat 4 Jun 20:45; Wed 15 Jun 20:40;

Sun 26 Jun 18:20

The Spirit of the Beehive (El espíritu de la colmena)

Sun 5 Jun 13:10; Tue 14 Jun 20:45;

Wed 29 Jun 20:40

Escape from Alcatraz

Mon 6 Jun 20:45; Sat 25 Jun 17:50

Thief

Tue 7 Jun 20:30; Thu 16 Jun 18:00; Sat 18 Jun 20:30; Thu 30 Jun 20:30

71 Fragments of a Chronology of Chance

(71 Fragmente einer Chronologie des Zufalls)

Wed 8 Jun 18:10 (+ intro by Geoff Andrew, Programmer at Large);

Mon 27 Jun 21:00

Rosetta

Fri 10 Jun 20:50; Wed 22 Jun 18:15 (+ intro)

Stranger by the Lake (L'Inconnu du lac)

Sun 12 Jun 18:10; Wed 15 Jun 18:10;

Tue 28 Jun 20:40

Down by Law

Fri 17 Jun 20:45; Tue 21 Jun 20:45

Certain Women

Sun 19 Jun 13:10; Thu 23 Jun 20:50; Wed 29 Jun 18:10 (+ intro by

BFI Director of Public Programme and Audiences, Jason Wood)

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