

The film *ES*, currently digitized by the DFF – Deutsches Filminstitut & Filmmuseum as part of the Förderprogramm Filmerbe, will be shown in the Classics section of the Cannes Film Festival (May 16-27, 2023).

In 1966, a whole series of feature-length 'young films' from West Germany and West Berlin premiered. Alongside films by Volker Schlöndorff and Alexander Kluge, Ulrich Schamoni's first feature-length work *ES* was part of the long hoped-for breath of fresh air in German film production. When the film was released in theaters in March 1966, it marked the beginning of the New German Cinema. Now the film, which has just been digitized by the DFF, can be seen in the Classics section of the Cannes Film Festival (May 16-27, 2023).

Ulrich Schamoni was only 25 during the filming of *ES* in West Berlin, having previously pursued an acting career and worked as an assistant director. He had a knack for breaking taboos and dared to address them. *ES*, in which a young woman consciously and alone decides to have an abortion, hit audiences and critics like a punch in the face. Schamoni's film was quickly followed by Schlöndorff's *DER JUNGE TÖRLESS* and Peter Schamoni's *SCHONZEIT FÜR FÜCHSE* - three works that earned German cinema high respect on the international festival circuit at Cannes and Locarno.

**Synopsis:**

West Berlin 1965. A young unmarried couple enjoys the relaxed and free life away from the conventions and rules of their parents' generation. She is a technical draftsman in an architectural office. Her partner is an assistant to a renowned real estate agent. When the young woman learns of her unplanned pregnancy, her happiness is marred. Instead of discussing the situation with her boyfriend, who had often spoken negatively on the subject of having children, she goes off on her own to find an abortion doctor. Eventually he finds out about the pregnancy, but she has already had the abortion. In the final scene the two young people sit silently across from each other in their apartment.

Schamoni produced *ES* independent from government aid and cultural funding. The film was shot largely on original locations, with original sound and hand-held camera. As Hans Günther Pflaum and Hans Helmut Prinzler wrote in *Film in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland* "the goal of the directors of the New German Cinema was a socio-critical rather than an aesthetic starting point [...]. They found themselves striving to depict West German reality and to criticize it through the depiction. Authenticity took precedence over perfection or stylistic will." (translation by DFF).

*ES* received five Federal Film Awards, was entered as an official West German entry in the Cannes competition and in the running for the Oscars®. Moreover, it was not only the first commercial success of the New German Cinema, but also one of the most commercially successful German films of those years. In 2023, the DFF digitized the film with funds from the Förderprogramm Filmerbe, so that it can now be shown in cinemas again.

**Technical aspects**

The film was restored from the original camera negative and a combined duplicate positive. The negative contains numerous damages – heavy film tears, glue residues and dirt – which had to be repaired extensively. The material was scanned with the utmost care in 4K and retouched afterwards. The grading took place in alignment with a contemporary print from the collection of the DFF. For the sound digitization, three sources were compared before the best available element, in this case the optical soundtrack of the duplicate positive, was chosen.

The digitization and restoration took place in Munich-Unterföhring, at Cinepost Production.