

The Invitation (Die Einladung)

**Directed, Written & Produced by
Thorsten Schade**

Assistant Director Lea Ganzek

Director of Photography Nicolas Mussell

Camera Assistant Alex Westphal

Sound by Tobias Heil & Julian Klotz

Gaffer Nicolas L. Meyer

Lighting Assistant Ursula Ostermann / NEW YORK

Makeup by Luise Ohlendorf

Location Manager Gunnar Abel & Tobias Heil

Score by Christian Reisert

Sound Design by André Klar

Color Grading by Dominika Cybulska

VFX (2d / 3d) Slavko Spionjak & Christian Reisert

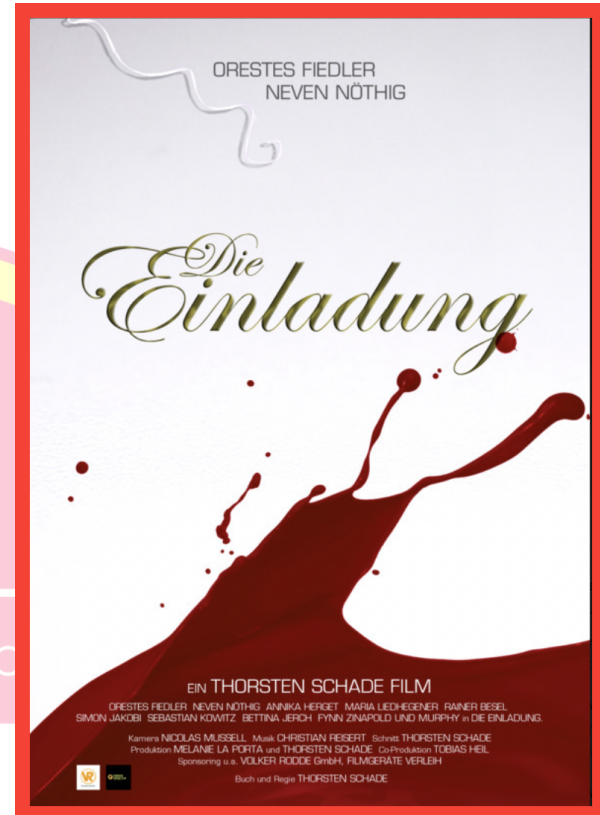
Motion Design by Maria Wintz

Graphic Design by Klaus Trapp

Storyboard by Gunnar Abel / FILM FESTIVAL

Produced by Melanie La Porta

Co-Producer Tobias Heil



The world-renowned Adam Birkenholz AG invites the young project developer Thomas Renner to an interview. The meeting in a noble property is developing promisingly. Renner imagines the goal of his dreams. But nothing is as it seems to be. And the hope of a little glamor and glory will become Renner's nightmare.

Critical Analysis

★★★★★

We have a profound admiration for German cinema. We like the German comedic style, which we find to be more expressive than the American style of humor, therefore seeing a German film is always a delight for us. Today, we have a greater appreciation for the German humor that can be found in some German horror films.

The Invitation is a standout among the German films we've seen in recent years, and that's in large part because of the refreshing way it combines humor with suspense. To really appreciate what Thorsten Schade and his colleagues had created, we had to keep playing it over and over again. It's not often that a film can provide such a jolt of energy, but this one does not disappoint.

The introduction is quite good; we observe a frightened man listening to a tape recording to fortify himself before a performance assessment; this leads to a dinner invitation that is very unsettling; thus, we are through with the story. The charming animated sequence that opens up the credits is a treat.

As it is so delightful and helps set the stage for the rest of the movie, it almost makes us wish that more directors would do this. It gives the impression to the audience that we

understand how to have fun. At the dinner party, we see the luxuries associated with wealth and nobility, such as pearls and velvet, in abundance.

When you are a successful businessman like Adam Birkenholz, you are able to buy items like this, and Tom Renner may not even be able to fathom having anything like this in his life. Amplified by the costume of the supporting actors, who are all dressed to the nines of whichever historical period they are from, the mise-en-scene is gorgeous without being overdone. The result is a perfect score.

There is no instance of excessive usage, nor does it have an overpowering ring, and it is always tone-appropriate. The movie is improved as a result, and the viewer is given the opportunity to get even more immersed in the environment shown on the screen.

The uniqueness of the picture contributes, in its own way, to the creation of the universe in which it is set. Before the vampire's true identity is revealed at this dinner party, we could easily believe that the host is a big shot. Because Adam Birkenholz is merely a self-proclaimed "oral care fanatic," he can't help but be fascinated by Tom's pearly whites.

We were so enthralled by the glitz and glamour that was around Tom that it wasn't until the other guests began assessing him that we even considered the possibility that the other visitors may be vampires. That is a really effective use of

foreshadowing and this film does not rush things and instead takes its time to build up to the big revelation.

We feel that far too many directors go for a clumsy approach that is both tonally off and destroys the big reveal. The fact that one is given the opportunity to reflect on the peculiarity of the partygoers' interactions with Tom in amusingly offbeat ways just adds to the shocking discovery that they have been betrayed.

We say this because we believe it is incredibly well done and enjoyable, and we also think the visual effects are lovely. Whether we like it or not, we have been used to the concept of the gorgeous and flawless vampire who isn't scary. These vampires live up to their reputation by being grotesque and provocative. It contributes to the movie's overall criticism on societal issues.

The horrifying bloodsucking wealthy were chewing on a (probably) working-class guy, both in their effort to devour Tom and, more definably, in the act of eating the blonde servant. Beyond the standard red-eyed devils, the bodily metamorphosis of vampires is what really strikes dread into the hearts of the living.

This particular touch adds tremendous character to normally quiet supporting characters by giving each one a vampire trait that makes them stand out from the crowd. Each of us is hoping that Tom will come out on top as we watch. Not because

we care about the lives of innocent people being lost at the hands of the vampires, but because we despise the idea of those strangely wealthy individuals coming out on top. Besides losing, Tom almost single-handedly becomes a vampire. Biting someone in the neck requires courage, but it might be worth it.

We're glad he was converted into what he feared by a vampire's bite. It's a terrific way to survive, "if you can't beat them, join them," as the old saying goes. They may not have set out with the intention of becoming members of a vampire club, but sometimes things just have to work themselves out the way fate lays them out.

There is a business social ladder to climb here, and Tom has high aspirations for his plans. The movie's conclusion reveals a different side of Tom. As he leaves the estate, he exudes an air of self-assurance and looks dashing and fresh.

He now has the glitz and sophistication of a vampire, which positions him as the most dangerous adversary in the world of commerce. There will be others in Tom's place, and there is a risk that he may not care since he now has the confidence of a vampire.

This makes him nearly as dangerous at an office or board meeting to a jogger when Tom is hungry as he is in a lonely, darkened park when Tom is hungry. Even if he betrayed his own people, he will never die! We had a great time with this

film and are eager to see what the cast and crew of *The Invitation* have in store for us next.

