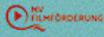


THE MATRIARCH

THE MATRIARCH

TUYEN DO LISSY-MARIE NGUYEN VIET PHAM TRANG LE HONG MARLON MINH-HAI LEYCK
a SCHIWAGO FILM PRODUCTION in co-production with TIDEWATER PICTURES in co-production with
ZDF - DAS KLEINE FERNSEHSPIEL world sales PLUTO FILM funded by MV FILMFÖRDERUNG, MEDIENBOARD
BERLIN-BRANDENBURG, NORDMEDIA produced by PHILIPP GOESER, MARTIN LEHWALD, MARCOS KANTIS
co-produced by PAULA ELINA KLOSSNER, STEPHAN BUSKE commissioning editor CHRISTIAN CLOOS (DAS KLEINE
FERNSEHSPIEL) director of photography JAN MAYNTZ production design LUCIA EIFLER costume design HAEMIN
JUNG make up design KIEU ANH DUONG production recording ALBRECHT IHLENBURG editor CHRISTIAN ZIPFEL
music by CHRISTIAN DELLACHER sound design LARISSA KISCHK sound mixing TORBEN SEEMANN casting director
STEPHANIE MAILE line producer ANNA-KATRIN WINKLER production manager PAULA ELINA KLOSSNER
written & directed by ALISON KUHN



SCHIWAGO FILM



TIDEWATER PICTURES

PLUTO FILM



LES ARCS
INDUSTRY VILLAGE



THE MATRIARCH

COUNTRY	Germany
YEAR	2026
LENGTH	102 min.
GENRE	Drama, Thriller
DIRECTOR	Alison Kuhn
PRODUCERS	Martin Lehwald, Philipp Goeser
PRODUCTION	Schiwago Film
WORLD SALES	Pluto Film

WORLD PREMIERE

PÖFF Tallinn Black Nights Film Festival

WORLD PREMIERE 18.11.2026 — 21:30 PM — 1st Lux Hall Apollo Kino Plaza

2nd SCREENING 19.11.2026 — 19:15 PM — Church Hall Electric Cinema, TARTU



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THE MATRIARCH DIRECTED BY ALISON KUHN



©SCHIWAGO FILM

DIRECTOR Alison Kuhn

WRITER Alison Kuhn

GENRE Drama, Thriller

FORMAT Feature Fiction

ORIGINAL TITLE Die Matriarchin

ENGLISH TITLE The Matriarch

COUNTRY OF PRODUCTION Germany

YEAR OF PRODUCTION 2026

LENGTH THEATRICAL 102 min.

COLOR Color

SHOOTING FORMAT 6K

SCREENING FORMAT DCP 2K (2048X858) (1:2, 5.1, UN-ENCRYPTED)

ORIGINAL LANGUAGE German, Vietnamese

SUBTITLES English

PROTAGONISTS Tuyen Do, Lissy-Marie Nguyen, Viet Pham, Trang Le Hong, Marlon Minh-Hai Leyck, Viet Long Hoang, Yung Ngo, Long Dang-Ngoc

DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY Jan Mayntz

EDITOR Christian Zipfel

MUSIC Christian Dellacher

SOUND DESIGN Larissa Kischk

SOUND MIX Torben Seemann

PRODUCERS Martin Lehwald, Philipp Goesser

PRODUCTION COMPANY Schiwago Film

CO-PRODUCERS Paula Klossner, Stephan Buske

CO-PRODUCTION COMPANY Tidewater Pictures

FINANCIAL SUPPORT ZDF – Das Kleine Fernsehspiel, MV Filmförderung, Medienboard Berlin-Brandenburg, Nordmedia

WORK IN PROGRESS PRESENTATION Les Arcs Industry Village

WORLD SALES Pluto Film



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SYNOPSIS

Seventeen-year-old Kim lives with her emotionally distant mother, mute younger brother, and strangers hiding in a secret room in their apartment at the Baltic coast. Vietnamese migrants regularly pass through their home as her mother, a key figure in a criminal network, runs human trafficking operations. When her mother's associate Luc defects to start a rival operation, Kim seizes her chance to prove herself to her mother. She navigates her first romance while entering a clandestine family business. As her good intentions drag her into a dark and brutal underworld that contradicts her sensitive nature, Kim begins to question the true costs of earning respect by crossing her own boundaries.

THE PROTAGONISTS



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TUYEN DO (The Mother)

Tuyen Do is a British Vietnamese actor and writer whose stage and screen credits include the National Theatre, Royal Court, *Shadow and Bone II* (Netflix) and *Emmerdale*. Her performance in *Shadow and Bone II* put her in consideration for Best Guest Actress at the 2023 Emmys. She is also an award-winning playwright and author, known for bringing British Vietnamese stories to the stage. *The Matriarch* marks her first lead role in a feature film.



©TIMO ROTH

LISSY-MARIE NGUYEN (Kim)

Lissy-Marie Nguyen is a Berlin-based actress with Vietnamese roots. She plays a lead role in *Die Matriarchin* and has also appeared in the TV film *Die Raben – Der Drache von Plön* and the short film *Vietnam*. A native German speaker, she also speaks English and Vietnamese and brings additional experience in singing, fitness, and on-camera content creation.



©TIMO ROTH

VIET PHAM (Luc)

Viet Pham is a German-Vietnamese actor based in Germany. He plays the lead antagonist in Alison Kuhn's feature film *The Matriarch* and is part of the main ensemble of the ZDF series *Back for More*, which premiered at SerienCamp Cologne in 2026. His previous credits include *The Door-to-Door Bookman* and Christian Alvart's series *Sløborn*. Fluent in German, English, and Vietnamese, Viet brings an international perspective to his work.



©TIMO ROTH

TRANG LE HONG (Mai)

Trang Le Hong is a Vietnamese-German actress based in Germany. She made her screen debut in Burhan Qurbani's *We Are Young. We Are Strong.*, earning a nomination for the German Actors Award. She stars in Alison Kuhn's *The Matriarch* and has been part of the ensemble of *Doppelhaushälfte* since its first season. Recent credits include *No Beast So Fierce*, which premiered at the 2026 Berlinale, and the short film *Nana*. Fluent in German, Vietnamese and English, Trang brings a multicultural perspective to her work across film, television and theatre.

DIRECTOR

Alison Kuhn (1995) is a German-Vietnamese director, writer and actress. Her student films at Film University Babelsberg received attention through numerous awards and screenings at A-list/Oscar-qualifying festivals.

During her studies, Kuhn was already hired as a director and writer for acclaimed series such as *DRUCK / SKAM* Germany or the bestselling novel adaptation *SCHATTENSEITE / SHADOW LEAKS*, which ranked in Netflix's Top 10 in May 2026.

Her first narrative feature *HOLY MEAT* premiered at Munich Film Festival, won the Jury Prize at Cinequest in California, and was released in cinemas across Germany in January 2026.

Her second narrative feature, *DIE MATRIARCHIN / THE MATRIARCH*, is the first German feature film with an all-Vietnamese cast and will have its world premiere in the International Main Competition at Tallinn Black Nights Film Festival in November 2026.



©MILLI ROSA

Alison Kuhn has served as an ambassador for "Face to Face with German Films" and is represented by Players agency.

FILMOGRAPHY (SELECTION)

2025 *HOLY MEAT* (117 min. — Feature Fiction)

2025 *SHADOW LEAKS / SCHATTENSEITE* (6×45 min. — Series)

2023 *WATCH ME* (6×15 min. — Series)

2022 *DRUCK / SKAM GERMANY* (10×20 min. — Series)

2022 *THE SWARMERS / SCHWARMTIERE* (30 min. — Short Fiction)

2021 *FLUFFY TALES* (15 min. — Short Fiction)

2020 *THE CASE YOU* (84 min. — Documentary Feature)

DIRECTOR'S NOTE

I've always wanted to tell a story rooted in the German Vietnamese community I was born into. Yet I hesitated, as my family's history, like that of many in the diaspora, carries deep-rooted trauma I was reluctant to reopen. For years, I searched for the right level of abstraction to explore the complex, often unspoken dynamics within families. Through extensive research interviews with members of the Vietnamese diaspora, I encountered recurring emotional patterns such as intergenerational tensions and inherited trauma. But to my surprise, another subject also emerged: the persistent presence of human trafficking, a reality largely overlooked by the German public.

This discovery sparked the idea of shifting from my original concept of a social drama to a thriller, a genre that offered greater abstraction from the personal while establishing the story more clearly as fiction. I've always believed in making delicate subjects accessible to a broad audience through engaging storytelling, and the thriller provided the ideal framework. But since stories about human trafficking are mostly told from the perspective of investigators, I wanted to shift the focus to the people caught up in these networks, exploring their personal stories and the social and political circumstances that led them there. To portray this world with nuance, I spoke with families, investigative journalists and the German Federal Police, who offered me rare insights.

Another recurring theme in my conversations was the particular role of mothers in Vietnamese families - both devoted and demanding, expressing love in ways often misunderstood from a Western perspective. A Vietnamese proverb says: "If you hate your child, give them sweets. If you love them, give them the rod." However exaggerated, it reflects the belief that mothers must sacrifice friendship with their children to prepare them for life's harsh realities, never showing weakness themselves.

Some communities in rural Vietnam still follow matriarchal traditions, with women holding authority not only within the family but also within the community as a whole. This inspired me to take these dynamics to the extreme through the character of The Mother, the head of a criminal network - a role traditionally reserved for men in cinema. Her daughter Kim reflects the experience of many children in diasporic families: growing up surrounded by Western expressions of affection rarely received at home, yet deeply longed for, and only later in life recognizing the true intentions and sacrifices behind their parents' behaviour.

Bringing all these elements together allowed me to create the suspenseful yet poetic space I needed to capture the ambivalence of this mother-daughter bond and sharpen the central question: How far will a daughter go for her mother's love?

THE MATRIARCH is the first German feature film with an entirely Vietnamese main cast. I hope it will allow some people to see themselves represented on screen for the first time, while introducing others to the range of Vietnamese talent that has long gone unseen. Above all, my greatest wish is that everyone leaves inspired to express their love for those closest to them.

ALISON KUHN



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PRODUCTION COMPANY



For more than two decades, Schiwago Film GmbH has been telling stories that move, challenge and resonate with audiences all over the world. Founded in Berlin in 2000 by Martin Lehwald and Michal Pokorny, the company develops and produces feature films and fictional TV formats with a keen eye for exceptional material and the directors who tell it.

Marcos Kantis joined as a partner in 2007; since 2020, he and Martin Lehwald have jointly run the company as managing partners. The company philosophy lies in the realization of ambitious, sophisticated, and varied material and in the close cooperation with authors and directors already in the early development phases of the films. A particular focus lies on supporting young directors and emerging talent – this approach has given rise to films that have been shown and awarded at international festivals and have found their way to both cinema and television.

FILMOGRAPHY (SELECTION)

2025 DIE MATRIARCHIN — Feature Fiction by Alison Kuhn

2025 MATRÖSHKI — Feature Fiction by Aliny Yklymova

2024 MUXMÄUSCHENSTILL — Feature Fiction by Jan-Henrik Stahlberg

2023 INSIDE — Feature Fiction by Vasilis Katsoupis

2019 LARA — Feature Fiction by Jan-Ole Gerster

2018 STYX — Feature Fiction by Wolfgang Fischer

2012 OH BOY — Feature Fiction by Jan Ole Gerster



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PLUTO
FILM

WORLD SALES

Pluto Film is an international sales, festival distribution, production and consultancy based in Berlin. We are committed to engaging global cinema and devoted to feature films, so they reach and engage audiences globally. Our focus is on arthouse and cross-over films, especially those by emerging talents, but our lineup also includes charming family films, elevated genre films, and documentaries.

Across all our activities, we work closely with the filmmakers to package and position their films effectively. In a collaborative practice, we develop fitting Audience Design strategies that maintain the soul of the film while maximizing its distribution potential. This creates a distribution network that spans from filmmakers and producers to distributors across all territories and platforms, facilitating collaboration throughout the film value chain.

FILMOGRAPHY (SELECTION)

2026 EXOTIC — Drama by Sonja Orlewicz-Zakrzewska

2026 SICK — Horror by Agata Trzebuchowska

2026 I MATTER — Drama by Alina Șerban

2026 CHICA CHECA — Comedy by Šimon Holý

2026 SUMMER WAR — Psychological Thriller by Alicia Scherson

2026 EXTRAORDINARY — Children, Adventure, Animation by Marina Andree Škop, Vanda Raýmanová

2026 ATLAS OF THE UNIVERSE — Adventure, Road-movie, Family, Children by Paul Negoescu