

MONOLITH FILM



JOANNA SIELICKA

JAYMES BUTLER

BUT I NEVER ASKED

DIRECTED BY NICOLE HUMIŃSKI

MONOLITH FILM IN COOPERATION WITH UNIVERSITY OF TELEVISION AND FILM MUNICH PRESENTS **BUT I NEVER ASKED**
WITH **JOANNA SIELICKA** **JAYMES BUTLER** **BARBARA HORVATH**
CINEMATOGRAPHY **NIKOLAI HUBER** PRODUCTION DESIGN **AMELIE SEEGER LEIF ERIC YOUNG** COSTUME DESIGN **RAPHAELA DÜRR**
SOUND **PETER KAUTZSCH** EDITING **NICOLE HUMINSKI** **NIKOLAI HUBER** COLORGRADING **NIKOLAI HUBER**
SOUNDDESIGN&MIX **STEFAN MÖHL** MUSIC **FRYDERYK CHOPIN** INTERPRETED BY **JOANNA SIELICKA**
PROJECT SUPERVISION & CONSULTANT **PROF. MARCUS H. ROSENMÜLLER** LINE PRODUCER **HANS-JOACHIM KÖGLMEIER**
PRODUCER **MICHAELA MEDERER** **LUIA EICHLER** **NATALIE SERAPHIM** **BEN BRUMMER** WRITER-DIRECTOR **NICOLE HUMINSKI**
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Official Site:	butineverasked.com
World Premiere:	13 November 2025 - PÖFF Shorts (Black Nights Film Festival, Tallinn) New Talents Live-Action Competition
Duration:	19:46 Min
Completion Date:	11 October 2025
Technical Details:	1.66:1 2K & 4K DCP Flat 5.1 & 7.1 Dolby Digital Color
Original Languages:	German, Polish, English
Subtitles:	German, English
Writer-Director:	Nicole Humiński
Producer:	Michaela Mederer, Luisa Eichler, Natalie Seraphim, Ben Brummer
Cinematography:	Nikolai Huber
Sound Design & Mix:	Stefan Möhl
Editing:	Nicole Humiński, Nikolai Huber

SYNOPSIS

A young pianist at the Munich Conservatory prepares for the most important audition of her life, performing Chopin's Ballade No. 1 — the same music broadcast by Polish radio as bombs fell on Warsaw in 1939. While perfecting her technique, Sophia becomes haunted by fragments of her family's untold wartime past. Memories she never lived begin to surface, blurring the boundaries between history and identity, dream and reality. To truly play, she must face the traces of war passed down to her.

For further information please contact:

Ben Brummer

Producer
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<https://monolith-film.com>

Nicole Humiński

via Writers & Directors Agency
Monika Maria Conti
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Director's Statement

I grew up in Munich in a Polish family, caught between two worlds. At home, everything was Polish, while outside I learned to blend in, to be the "Good German Kid." Over time, I began to suppress the part of me that didn't fit. The more I tried to assimilate, the more disconnected I became, until I no longer recognized myself.

That rupture led me back to my family's past. I started filming interviews with my grandfather in Poland, hoping to understand where I came from. Soon after, he passed away — and I realized how many questions had remained unasked. My research revealed buried histories: relatives lost to Nazi shootings, others deported to forced labor in Germany. These discoveries reshaped my sense of self and my artistic voice.

BUT I NEVER ASKED explores how the experiences of previous generations continue to shape us — in small gestures, in unspoken fears, and in the pressure to be flawless when navigating between cultures. The lead is played by a young, classically trained pianist — not an actor — someone who, like the character, carries Polish roots and a deep connection to music as a language of identity. The protagonist's struggle with Chopin's Ballade No. 1 grows out of that conflict. Chopin's music, once banned by the Nazis, embodies both resistance and vulnerability; it connects individual and collective memory, becoming a way for her to face what she has long avoided.



NICOLE HUMIŃSKI (Writer-Director)

Nicole Humiński is a German-Polish director currently studying Directing at the University of Television and Film Munich (HFF). Her films have been screened and awarded at international festivals, including *Coins* and *Ich weiche ja in meinem Leben jeglichem Zwang* aus, for which she received the German Camera Award 2025 (Editing / Cinegrell Young Talent Award). Beyond, she is actively involved in projects of remembrance culture, collaborating among others with the Munich Documentation Center for the History of National Socialism (nsdoku). Her artistic works have been presented in institutions such as the Pinakothek der Moderne Munich and the Museum für Kunst & Gewerbe Hamburg. Nicole is represented by Writers & Directors.

Agency: <https://writersanddirectors.de/portfolio/nicole-huminski/>

Nikolai Huber (Director of Photography)

Nikolai Huber gained his first experience at the Munich Kammerspiele and on international productions such as Abel Ferrara's *Tommaso* and Werner Herzog's *Fireball*. He has been studying cinematography at the University of Television and Film Munich (HFF) since 2014. His work as a cinematographer has received multiple awards, including honors at Camerimage and the German Camera Award. His recent projects include *Boyz* (awarded at IDFA), the feature film *No More Trouble*, and *Bubbles*, which premiered in the New German Cinema section at Filmfest Munich. Nikolai is represented by Above The Line.

Agentur: <https://www.abovetheline.de/de/dop/nikolai-huber>

Michaela Mederer (Producer & Production Manager)

Michaela Mederer, born in 1996 in Munich, holds a Bachelor's degree in Political and Media Studies. She is currently studying Production and Media Business at the University of Television and Film Munich (HFF).

During her studies, she has produced fiction shorts, documentaries, and commercials, including *Long Long Kiss*, which premiered at the Berlinale 2023, and *Elysian Fields*, which had its world premiere at Visions du Réel 2025.

Since 2024, she has been working as a line producer and production manager.

Luisa Pilar Eichler (Producer)

Luisa Pilar Eichler, born in 1996 in Münster, has been working in film production since 2016.

In 2020, she began studying Production and Media Business at the University of Television and Film Munich (HFF), while simultaneously working as a production assistant at Constantin Film. During a semester abroad in New York in 2022, she specialized in Producing. Since 2024, she has been part of NEUESUPER, first as a Junior Producer and, since 2025, as a Producer. A children's film concept she developed is currently part of the Academy for Children's Media 2024/25.

Natalie Seraphim (Producer)

Natalie Seraphim completed her training as a marketing and communications manager at Constantin Film, where she later worked as a cross-promotion marketing manager.

While studying Production and Media Business at the University of Television and Film Munich (HFF), she produced several short films that screened at festivals such as the Filmfestival Max Ophüls Preis and Interfilm Berlin.

In 2023, she spent a year abroad at UCLA, specializing in Business and Management of Entertainment.

CAST & CREW

Writer, Director NICOLE HUMIŃSKI

Producers MICHAELA MEDERER
LUISA EICHLER
NATALIE SERAPHIM

Cinematographer NIKOLAI HUBER

Production Design AMELIE SEEGER
LEIF ERIC YOUNG

Costume Design RAPHAELA DÜRR

Sound Mixer PETER KAUTZSCH

CAST

Sophia Kowalski JOANNA SIELICKA
Teacher JAYMES BUTLER
Director of Conservatory BARBARA HORVATH
Dean of the Conservatory ROBERTO MARTINEZ
Mother ELA HUMIŃSKI
Khatia SARAH SCHELLHAS
Rafael MERT KÖSE
Luna HAVIN ABKAY
Piano Tuner PETER GROSSE
Jurymember ROBERT ECKL
Site Workers GEORG PRAHMANN
JAKOB MATTHIAS
Students at Conservatory ANDREAS GÜNTHER, SAMRAGNI DASGUPTA

BALLADE No. 1 IN G MINOR, OP. 23

Composed by Frédéric Chopin 1835
Performed by Joanna Sielicka

CREW

Production Manager MICHAELA MEDERER
Casting LUISA EICHLER
First Assistant Director THERESA REHE
Unit Manager DELIAH LUGER

Camera First Assistant MICHELE CHERCHI PALMIERI
2nd AC ALEKSANDRA DYJA
3rd AC NATALIA BREZWAN

Gaffer SIMON WILBERT KRAMER
Best Boy OLAF WEBER
Electrician LEO DZHYSHYASHVILI
Key Grip THOMAS APEL

Sound On Set Assistant VLADISLAV HADJEV
SARAH ELLERSDORFER

Makeup LEA POTTHOFF
ANDREEA SZEMES

Garderobiere HELENA MEDERER
Catering FEINKOST GULET
Set-Runner HELENA MEDERER

ELLA RÜCKERL
Set-Photography THEODOR KOSSAKOWSKI
NATALIE SERAPHIM

Editors NICOLE HUMIŃSKI, NIKOLAI HUBER
Rerecording Mix & Sound Design STEFAN MÖHL
Additional Sound Design Opening LUKAS STIPAR
Colorist & VFX-Artist NIKOLAI HUBER

Project Supervision & Consultant PROF. MARCUS H. ROSENMÜLLER

Dramaturgical Consultant MICHAELA KEZELE
Directing Consultant SILVIA ZEITLINGER

Line Producer HANS-JOACHIM KÖGLMEIER
Accounting MEIKE SCHMIEDER
Team Assistant BIRGIT LESHEL

Post Production Supervisor CHRISTOFFER KEMPEL
Scheduling BEATE BIALAS
SABINA KANNEWISCHER

Editing Support YUVAL TZAFRIR
Conforming MARTIN FOERSTER

Rental HFF Munich RAINER CHRISTOPH
ARRI Rental Munich ANDREA ROSENWIRTH

Shot on Location at FAT CAT, MUNICH
EGGARTEN-SIEDLUNG
KIES- UND QUETSCHWERK OBERBRUNN
RUCIANE-NIDA, POLAND

Monolith Film BEN BRUMMER

SPECIAL THANKS

Prof. Marcus H. Rosenmüller • Hans-Joachim Köglmeier • Abt. VII • Prof. Christian Rein • Ina Mikkat • Marek Adamski • Marek Salwa
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stabil e.V. • Writers & Directors • Arri Rental • Brigitte Huber • Humińscy • Nikolai Huber

Placeholder names – final list pending



UNIVERSITY OF
TELEVISION AND FILM
MUNICH, GERMANY



ARRI Rental

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STILLS

