

## PRESSBOOK STRUCTURE

### Rheingold

#### Logline:

A refugee boy from the ghetto has a dream: to set up a rap label. To make his dream come true, he and a friend rob a gold transporter.

#### Status:

approved

#### Short synopsis (one paragraph):

Xatar's path from the ghetto to the top of the music charts is a dramatic adventure story. From the hell of an Iraqi prison, Giwar Hajabi came to Germany as a young boy with his family in the mid-1980s and landed at the very bottom. There were opportunities, but many more stumbling blocks. In no time, he went from a petty criminal to a big-time dealer. Until a shipment goes missing. To settle his debts with the cartel, Giwar plans a legendary gold heist.

#### Status:

approved

#### Interview with the director:

How did this project come your way, or how did you learn about the material?

XATAR and I have many friends and acquaintances in common, so we've been in each other's orbits for a long time. It was just a matter of time till we actually met. When we eventually did, I wanted to know more about him. So I picked up his biography. While reading it, I saw the potential for an epic film.

What piqued your interest?

His life story combines many genres: war film, immigrant drama, coming-of-age story, gangster movie, musical film. I like it when movies can't be pigeonholed. The film begins and you think, "Oh, it's that kind of movie." And in the end you land somewhere totally different. I like it when movies are challenging.

The book was a bestseller. Was it already written like a movie?

The book has a lot of things in it that I know from other movies or series and that you would expect from a life like his. But the things that really interested me were only hinted at. So during the first lockdown in 2020, G did very long Skype interviews with me. I had the opportunity to ask him all the questions that had piled up while reading his autobiography. The result was almost a whole new book. Appendices, if you will. And that was my main source for the screenplay.

What is the narrative approach?

The story also has to work for an audience that doesn't know anything about Xatar, or that doesn't give a shit about German hip-hop. The movie is meant to stand on its own, without knowledge of what it's based on. At the same time, I don't want to alienate his fans. That's the crux, the challenge, the narrative approach.

What was it like working with Giwar Hajabi on the set?

It was very helpful for me, since even though I come from a disadvantaged area, I know nothing about Bonn slang, dealing cocaine, bouncers, Kurdish people, German rap. Zero, zip, zilch. So it was essential for me that G always be on the set. G helped me create an incredible sense of authenticity. The audience is immersed in his world because I was immersed in G's world – and I mean deep! Even though G constantly drove my crew crazy, even though he challenged our ideas and I had to throw them overboard. I've made documentaries and am very flexible with ideas. There's only so much a crew can do, especially a crew as big as the one for this movie. When G was on the set, it was like racing slalom with a cruise ship. But my crew proved to be extremely flexible. They were all absolute professionals. They could handle anything.

He doesn't always come off as a man of honor...

I wanted to do it right. The more believable G's story is, the more convincing his character is for the audience. G is the streets. And he was a criminal. That means he abandoned his morality again and again – for his own advantage. If morality means preventing pain, then G caused many people pain. But today he is a reflective person. Someone who has made a living from reflecting. And that's how we fit together: I make movies about immoral people because they are not boring. After all, I work in the entertainment industry.

How do you create such authenticity without depicting Giwar's life exactly as it was?

I'm not entirely sure. I don't really have a recipe. Many of my decisions are instinctive and from the gut. And we didn't have much time to think things over before making decisions while filming. We never had enough time for anything: the screenplay, the preparations, and then the filming itself. Only during editing did we take the time that a movie like this requires. I can be a good listener and observer. And I respect the people whose stories I tell. Those are actually pretty good tools: respect and open ears and eyes.

It's not a rapper movie. It has many different musical elements, including compositions by Giwar's dad. What role does music play in the movie?

Like Jan Delay says: music is the best thing there is. And he's so right! I'm infinitely grateful to have been able to make this movie – because of the music. I hadn't been able to spend so much in-depth time with music since Crossing the Bridge. This is a musical film in the tradition of Beat Street, Wild Style, La Haine, Purple Rain, Break-In, La Bamba, and New York, New York. Music was one of the main driving forces for making this movie.

Emilio doesn't have very much experience with such complex roles. How did he do? From a purely visual point of view, the resemblance isn't very strong.

Emilio was a child actor, so I'd say he actually has a whole lot of experience with all kinds of roles. He has been in the business his entire life and has just been waiting for an opportunity like this to come along. Acting is in his bones. He loves it and has no fear. And when fear does creep in, it never paralyzes him. Rather, it just makes him more mindful. Emilio has a method. He spends months preparing, tries to get into the role with his body, voice, and soul. Emilio is one of the reasons I do this job. I think a movie like this requires glamor. You either have it, or you don't. You can't learn it. And Emilio has it. The movie is my interpretation of Giwar. My translation. And Emilio is perfect for it, because it's much more exciting to see him in the role than to look for an imitation. Giwar is inimitable.

Did Giwar give him advice?

Yes, around the clock. For months.

Again and again, your movies have dealt with refugees and forced displacement and the search for a place in society.

That's a coincidence. It's just cinematographically more interesting to change the shooting location from time to time.

Can you say something about the visual concept?

There wasn't much time to think of one. Just this: to always have the scene under control, to depict this brutal world in friendly colors, and to craft every image so that people would later say, "Yes, this movie belongs on the big screen."

Let's end on a poetic point. How do Wagner and Das Rheingold fit in?

This movie is about modern German mythology, as Giwar's spectacular gold heist has entered the canon of German popular culture. The heroes of modern German mythology are no longer named Siegfried and Kriemhild and shit. Now they're named Xatar and Shirin and Asamoah and Özlem.

#### Director's biography:

Fatih Akin is an internationally successful filmmaker.

#### Status:

approved

With his film HEAD ON he won the Golden Bear in 2004. Before that, he had completed his film studies, two short films, a documentary about the migration of his parents from Turkey to Hamburg and three feature films. His next big international success was the drama THE EDGE OF HEAVEN (2007), which received the BEST SCRIPT award at the internationally renowned Cannes Film Festival, followed by the European Film Prize and the German Film Prize. His subsequent film SOUL KITCHEN (2009) won the SPECIAL AWARD OF THE JURY in competition at the Venice Film Festival. With his production company corazón international, founded in 2004, Akin produced, in addition to his own films, the internationally and nationally successful films CHIKO, TAKVA and MIN DIT – DIYARBAKIR'S CHILDREN, among others. In 2012 he founded the production company bombero international, which exclusively produces his own films. The first bombero production was THE CUT, which was filmed in 2013 and celebrated its world premiere in August 2014 in competition at the 71st International Film Festival in Venice. In 2016 IN THE FADE was filmed with Diane Kruger and Denis Moschitto in the leading roles. The world premiere took place in 2017 and the film received numerous awards, including the prize for best actress (Diane Kruger) in Cannes and the Golden Globe for best foreign language film. It was also selected as the German contribution for the Oscar 2018 and was nominated for the German Film Award in five categories, ultimately receiving awards in two categories. The feature film THE GOLDEN GLOVE premiered in competition at the 2019 BERLINALE. RHINEGOLD, based on the biography of gangster rapper Xatar, starring REPUBLICAN F 72's European Shooting Star Emilio Sakraya, will be released in fall 2022.

starring BERLINALE / Z's European Shooting Star Emilio Sakraya, will be released in fall 2022.

#### Selected director's filmography:

Year:	International title:	Original Title:	Status:
2022	RHINEGOLD	RHEINGOLD	approved
2019	DER GOLDENE HANDSCHUH	THE GOLDEN GLOVE	
2017	IN THE FADE	AUS DEM NICHTS	
2016	GOODBYE BERLIN	TSCHICK	
2014	THE CUT	THE CUT	
2012	GARBAGE IN THE GARDEN OF EDEN	MÜLL IM GARTEN EDEN	
2009	SOUL KITCHEN	SOUL KITCHEN	
2008	NEW YORK, I LOVE YOU	NEW YORK, I LOVE YOU	
2007	THE EDGE OF HEAVEN	AUF DER ANDEREN SEITE	
2006	NEW YORK, I LOVE YOU	CROSSING THE BRIDGE - THE SOUND OF ISTANBUL	
2004	HEAD-ON	GEGEN DIE WAND	
2002	SOLINO	SOLINO	
2000		WIR HABEN VERGESSEN ZURÜCKZUKEHREN	
2000	IN JULY	IM JULI	
1998	SHORT SHARP SHOCK	KURZ UND SCHMERZLOS	

#### Main Cast Biography:

Name and Surname	Biography	Status:
Emilio Sakraya	<p>Emilio Sakraya started his career at the age of nine with several appearances in film productions. In his childhood years, he discovered his passion for music and for karate, kung fu and parkour. He won the German Championship in "Full-Contact Karate". 2010 he had his cinema debut in the film "Zeiten ändern dich", produced by Bernd Eichinger. This was followed by numerous film and television productions. From 2014 to 2016 he appeared as "Iarik Schmüll" in the very successful German cinema series "Bibi und Tina". In the same year, he was filming the international series "4 Blocks" for TNT-Series and the film "Rock my Heart". Emilio Sakraya also shot the TV movie "Tatort: Das verschwundene Kind". For his performance he was nominated for the Studio Hamburg Nachwuchspreis. At the beginning of 2018 Emilio Sakraya took over the leading role in the film "Cold Feet". In the first half of 2019, Emilio Sakraya assumed the role of JC in the new international Netflix drama series "Warrior Nun". The series is based on the manga novels of author Simon Barry (Ghost Wars, Continuum). The release of his first songs followed in 2019. Emilio Sakraya also shot the Netflix original series "Tribes of Europa" in which he played the leading role. On 18th September 2020 he released his first album "Roter Sand". In summer 2020, Emilio Sakraya took on the lead role in Til Schweiger's feature film "The Salvation of the World as we know it", which premiered in winter 2021. This was followed by the lead role in "One Night Off," the first original feature film from Amazon Studios Germany.</p> <p>At the end of 2021, he finished shooting the gangster drama "Rheingold." Directed by Fatih Akin, he plays the lead role Giwar Hajabi aka Xatar. In February 2022, the actor was named European Shooting Star at the Berlinale. On July 1 he released his second album "1996".</p>	approved

Name and Surname	Biography	Status:
Kardo Razzazi	<p>Kardo Razzazi is a Swedish-Kurdish actor born in Uppsala, Sweden. He was the third of three children to the famous Kurdish singers and actors Naser Razzazi and Marziyeh Farighi, meaning that artistry runs in his blood. In 2008 he got accepted to Malmö Theatre Academy where he got his bachelor degree in arts of acting. This kick started a long chain of movies, series and plays he's taken part in. Kardos dream came true in 2017 when he wrote and directed his monologue ALLT SOM BLEV KVAR (All that was left) about his life.</p> <p>Working with Fatih Akin on Rheingold was an extremely amazing and giving experience. "Being connected to the story by having parents from the same city and sharing the culture was enriching when building the character Eghbal. And doing so while in the presence of a high end director like Fatih was a win", Kardo said.</p> <p>Kardo is most known for SUEDI, PEACEMAKER, TOP DOG and HEDER.</p>	approved

Name and Surname	Biography	Status:
Mona Pirzad	<p>Mona Pirzad discovered her passion for acting during the year she spent in Argentina in 2007. She then made her cinematic debut in 2012 in the highly acclaimed and multi-award-winning feature film "UMMAH - UNTER FREUNDEN", alongside Burak Yigit, Frederick Lau and Kida Khodr Ramadan. In this film, she embodied Dina, an Afghan woman living in Neukölln. At that time Mona Pirzad, who was born in Tehran and has lived in Germany since the age of two - was still training at the Charlottenburg Acting School. This was followed by appearances in various films, series, music videos and also short films such as Karoline Herfurth's first directorial project "MITTELKLEINER MENSCH" (2012). Since then she has usually been involved in Herfurth's directing projects. In Lars Becker's "NACHTSCHICHT - DER LETZTE JOB" (2015) she played a young woman from Syria who is to be sold by a women's trafficking ring. In 2017 she took on the lead role in the German-Iranian comedy "LIEBE AUF PERSISCH" (director: Florian Baxmeyer), for which she traveled to her country of birth for the first time. The film, which aired on ARD in October 2018, was the first German production to be filmed in Iran since the 1970s. In 2019, Pirzad starred alongside Anke Engelke in an episodic role in the Netflix series "DAS LETZTE WORT", directed by Pola Beck and awarded the German Television Award for Best Comedy Series. Mona Pirzad was also able to showcase her comedic talent as a permanent ensemble member in the mini-series "START THE FCK UP", conceived by ZDF Neo.</p> <p>Since 2020, Mona Pirzad has opened up another professional field for herself: she works, meanwhile also as a DJ on an international level, is signed with the label Mystic Tales and is involved in the artistic women's collective WUMANAS, in which women from the most diverse creative professions from all over the world have come together to co-create artistic happenings.</p> <p>Her great talent for languages - Mona Pirzad is fluent in German, English, Spanish and Persian - came in handy for her latest cinema project: in Fatih Akin's eagerly awaited film "RHEINGOLD" about the life story of the rapper Xatar, she took on the role of the Kurdish mother of Giwar Hajabi alias Xatar, played by Emilio Sakraya. "RHEINGOLD" will be released in German cinemas in Autumn 2022.</p> <p>Mona Pirzad is currently filming alongside Ken Duken in the Sky-produced action series "Autobahn", in which she has taken on the role of the lawyer Maryam Soltani.</p>	approved

Main Cast:	Name and Surname	Character's name in the film	Status:
1	Emilio Sakraya	- Giwar Hajabi aka Xatar	approved
2	Kardo Razzazi	- Eghbal Hajabi	

3	Mona Pirzad	-	Rasal
4	Arman Kashani	-	Miran
5	Hüseyin Top	-	Samy
6	Sogol Faghani	-	Shirin

Main Crew:	Position	Name(s) and Surname(s) - separated by commas	Status:
	1 Director	Fatih Akin	approved
	2 Author	Fatih Akin	
	3 Casting	Monique Akin	
	4 Produzenten	Nurhan Şekerçi-Porst, Fatih Akin, Herman Weigel	
	5 Bildgestaltung	Rainer Klausmann	
	6 Schnitt	Andrew Bird	
	7 Szenenbild	Tim Pannen	
	8 Kostümbild	Katrin Aschendorf	
	9 Maskenbild	Maike Heinlein	
	10 Musik	Giwar Hajabi aka Xatar	
	11 Originale Orchesterkompositionen	Eghbal Hajabi	
	12 Music Supervisor	Pia Hoffmann	
	13 Originalton	Joern Martens	
	14 Sound Design	Michel Schöpping	
	15 Mischung	Richard Borowski	
	16 Mischung	Matthias Schmidt	
	17 VFX Supervising	Denis Behnke	
	18 VFX Supervising	Falk Büttner	
	19 Postproduction Supervisor	Elke Andreas-Möller	
	20 Beratung	Kawa Qazi	
	21 Beratung	Samy Abdel Hadi	
	22 Beratung	Sidar Coskun	
	23 Beratung	Maestro	
	24 Dialogue Coach	Xatar	

**Billingblock + Logos:** [please send separately](#) Status: approved

**Technical details:** [please fill out this information in the General Information Template here ==>](#) <https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets> Status: approved

Original title: *RHEINGOLD*  
 International title: *RHEINGOLD*  
 Duration (min.): 140  
 Aspect Ratio: 1.85:1  
 Format: 2K  
 Sound: *Dolby Atmos*  
 Year: 2022  
 Original language: *German, kurdish, turkish, dutch, english, arabic*  
 Country(ies) of production: *Germany, The Netherlands, Morocco, Mexico*  
 Production Companies: *Bombero International*  
 Co-production Companies: *Warner Bros. Entertainment GmbH, Palosanto Films S.R.L., lemming film*  
 With the support of: *Pathé, The Match Factory, Rai Cinema*

**World sales:**

The Match Factory GmbH  
 Domstrasse 60  
 50668 Cologne/Germany  
 phone +49 221 539 709-0  
 info@matchfactory.de  
[www.the-match-factory.com](http://www.the-match-factory.com)

Follow us on (Facebook Icon) (Twitter Icon)  
 (hyperlink to @TheMatchFactory)