

## THE AMERICAN FRIEND



In 1977, *THE AMERICAN FRIEND* won the German Critics Prize as well as gold in two categories of the German Film Prize and is now considered a cult film. Wenders adapted Patricia Highsmith's novel *Ripley's Game* for the film.

Jonathan Zimmermann (Bruno Ganz) believes that he will soon die of leukemia. The unscrupulous American Tom Ripley (Dennis Hopper), learns of this and exploits Zimmermann's illness for his own purposes. He introduces Jonathan to the underworld figure Minot (G rard Blain), who offers to hire the terminally ill man as a professional hit man. He is to be paid appropriately for his work and thus enabled to leave something behind for his wife (Lisa Kreuzer) and their child. What does he have to lose, since he is going to die anyway?

A friendship develops between the two very different men, and this ultimately leads Ripley to intervene when Zimmermann proves incapable of carrying out an additional murder.

The cast of Wenders's film includes not only the directors Dennis Hopper and G rard Blain—many of the supporting roles of gangsters are also played by fellow directors, such as Hollywood legends Sam Fuller and Nicholas Ray, as well as Peter Lilienthal, Daniel Schmid and Jean Eustache.

# THE AMERICAN FRIEND

West Germany/France 1976/77

## FESTIVALS & AWARDS

1977 German Film Critics Award  
1978 German Film Award in Gold (Best Director; Best Editor)  
1978 German Film Award in Silver (further full-length Feature Film)

## FORMAT

Length: 126 min, 3439 m

Format: 35mm Eastmancolor; 1:1.66; Stereo

Language: German, English, French

4K Restoration 2014

## CREDITS

Production:  
Road Movies Filmproduktion GmbH (Berlin), Wim Wenders Produktion (Munich), Les Films du Losange (Paris), Westdeutscher Rundfunk (Cologne)

Director:  
Wim Wenders

Producer:  
Wim Wenders, Renée Gundelach

Screenplay:  
Wim Wenders, based on the novel *Ripley's Game* by Patricia Highsmith

Director of Photography:  
Robby Müller

Editor:  
Peter Przygodda

Sound:  
Martin Müller, Peter Kaiser

Cast:  
Dennis Hopper (Tom Ripley), Bruno Ganz (Jonathan Zimmermann), Lisa Kreuzer (Marianne Zimmermann), Gérard Blain (Raoul Minot)

Guest Appearances:  
Nicholas Ray ("Derwatt"), Samuel Fuller (The American), Peter Lilienthal (Marcangelo), Daniel Schmid (Igraham), Jean Eustache (Friendly Man), Sandy Whitelaw (Doctor), Lou Castel (Rodolphe)

Script:  
Gretl Zeilinger

Music:  
Jürgen Knieper

Assistant Camera:  
Martin Schäfer, Jacques Steyn, Edward Lachman

Special Effects:  
Theo Nischwitz

Assistant Editor:  
Barbara von Weitershausen, Ingrid Träutlein-Peer, Gisela Bock

Sound Assistant:  
Jens-Uwe Laddey, Jochen Bärwald, Peter Kaiser, Marite Kavaliaskas

Re-recording Mixer:  
Max Galinsky, Milan Bor

Light/Stage:  
Hans Dreher, Andreas Willim, Wolfgang Dell, Jean-Claude Lebras, Robert Morsch, Tassilo Peik, Hans Otto Herbst, Ekkehart Heinrich, Johan Holm, Hans Volkmann, Ernst Harinko, Viktor Saueremann

Set Construction/Requisite:  
Luigi de Luca, Peter Baum, Eckehard Voggenreiter, Hans Sörgel, Georg Feder, Bernhard Frey

Set Design:  
Heidi Lüdi, Toni Lüdi  
Wardrobe:  
Isolde Nist, Renate Zimmermann

Make-up:  
Hannelore Uhrmacher, Evelyn Döhring

La Louma:  
Jean-Marie Lavalou, Jean-Francois Casi, Marc Casi

Title Design:  
Sickerts

Songs:  
The Kinks

Production Management:  
Michael Wiedemann, Pierre Cottrell

Assistant Direktor:  
Fritz Müller-Scherz, Emmanuel Clot, Serge Brodskis

Production Assistant:  
Harald Vogel

Location Manager:  
Harald Kügler, Heinz Badewitz, Philippe Schwartz, Pat Kirck

Line Producer:  
Renée Gundelach

Editorial Office:  
Joachim von Mengershausen

Production Accountant:  
Anna Povel, Claude Bertonazzi

Driver:  
Axel Niendorf, Volker Finner, Michael Zimmer,  
Pierre Edelman, Herve Grandsart

Press Support:  
Cinepromotion

In Cooperation with:  
Westdeutscher Rundfunk (Cologne)

Primary Distribution:  
Filmverlag der Autoren GmbH & Co KG (Munich)

World Distribution:  
Argos Films S.A. (Neuilly sur Seine)

Shooting:  
18.10.1976 – 11.03.1977 in Hamburg, North Sea,  
Munich, Bavaria Studios Geiseltal, Paris, New  
York

Premiere  
(FR): 26.05.1977, Cannes International Filmfestival;  
(DE): 24.06.1977, Berlin, Kurbel

First Release (DE):  
17.08.1980, ARD

