

KDD-Kriminaldauerdienst

return of a German TV series

After a highly acclaimed first season, the award-winning *KDD - Kriminaldauerdienst* has returned to German television. Once again, it features the dedicated officers of the Police Operations and Co-ordination Centre who risk their lives – and often their relationships – investigating murder, kidnapping and armed robbery.

“We felt that towards the end of the first season the programme’s visual style developed a life of its own” says director Andreas Prochaska (*Zodiak - Der Horoskop-Mörder, In 3 Tagen bist du Tot (Dead in Three Days)*). “DP Bernhard Jasper (*Ausbilder Schmidt, Seeds of Doubt, Open Water 2: Adrift*) and I decided to reduce the use of zooms in the second season and integrate the camera into the scenes like an additional actor. It was vital that we achieved a realistic look and a fast shooting pace. We also had to explore the characters and give the actors as much room as possible. Bernhard was the perfect partner and kept the technical limitations as low as he could, while still creating interesting lighting and framing.”

“I usually pre-plan everything very carefully, but this project was different,” notes Jasper. “Andreas and I couldn’t decide much in advance because he and the actors needed the greatest possible freedom. We agreed that we

should relate the stories from our own perspective, without using the earlier ready-made scheme and searched for the ‘core’ of each scene, providing technical support for the actors and the story – and adrenalin for the viewers.”

Jasper opted for the first season’s two camera approach. He and B-camera operator Heinz Wehsling shot mainly handheld with ARRI SR3s. Wehsling quickly switched to Steadicam for the quieter driving set-ups.

Natural daylight

“We were very pleased with KODAK VISION2 500T and KODAK VISION2 250D,” continues Jasper. “Our flexible approach meant that we were extremely restricted in our choice of lighting, but we were still able to create an extremely high-contrast look in grading in scenes with only concealed single bank Kino Flos and LED panels.” Jasper and Wehsling used Soft/FX 1 filters to minimise contrast when a softer negative was required.

Jasper describes a scene in episode 16 of *KDD - Kriminaldauerdienst*, in which Jan Haroska (played by Manfred Zapatka) faces kidnapers: “We rented a 360°-lit set to give us the freedom to shoot from every angle. Then we dramatised the scene by splitting



the room into different lighting situations.”

“For the first mood, I intensified the natural daylight with two 6K Pars and 6 x 6 Light Grids which were positioned above the windows on a cherry picker and shone far into the room. I hung four spirit lights side by side inside the room. Although they have little depth, they still produced a great light. I lit the faces with a tube containing a 5000K, boosted by a Kino Flo. I created a second mood as the kidnap begins by reducing the fill light, the spirit lights and the Kino Flo, to produce a darker, more contrasty look. For the third mood, in which the kidnapers shut the blinds, I switched off the 6K Pars, increased the Spirit Lights and shot the actors in silhouette against the blinds. I used a Kino Flo to extend the colour space and changed the colour temperature of the light

to 4000° so that I could slightly increase the blues in telecine without affecting the skin tones. Outside the building there were two parking bays separated by a large roof. We created contrast changes to the exteriors by sometimes shooting under the roof and sometimes not. Set designer Claus Amler ensured everything looked natural and logical and gaffer Günter Damm helped me to retain the very naturalistic look.”

“It’s the first time I’ve worked permanently with two cameras and I was surprised by the spontaneous results,” concludes Prochaska. “Working in an almost documentary style, directing the actors, and giving Bernhard and Heinz the freedom to follow their instincts and involve the camera in the scenes was kind of liberating for me.”



1 (L-R) Director Andreas Prochaska and DP Bernhard Jasper

2 They live to serve. Members of the cast of KDD-Kriminaldauerdienst (Image courtesy of ZDF and Marc Meyerbrücker)