

## Director's Statement

Tom Tykwer

I always start with the image. I get an image in my head and I start wanting to get it moving, to build a story around it and then make a film out of it. In Run Lola Run it was a woman running. I think the idea of making a dynamic film is a primal urge for filmmakers. That's why action films are so popular: because film can get across the sense of speed. There's something dynamic, something explosive about film. Film can also transport emotions. A running person brings it all together, explosive dynamics and emotion, because it's when people move that express things: despair, happiness, or whatever. I wanted Run Lola Run to grab the viewers and drag them along, to give them a roller-coaster ride. I wanted the sheer, unadorned pleasure of speed. A wild chase with consequences.



In looking at Run Lola Run, my previous films (Deadly Maria, Winter Sleeper), are totally different, but I keep recognizing myself in all of them. Certain elements that interest me keep resurfacing. Time, for instance, and the way time gets manipulated. The dramatic principle of creating time is, I feel, one of the most interesting aspects of filmmaking. You can relate what happens in twenty minutes or in twenty years.

Run Lola Run is for me a continuous journey -- whereby the most important thing is that the viewer feels that Lola really has lived through the various possibilities we show in the film. And not only the last twenty minutes. That the audience transcends the timespan emotionally and really starts sympathizing with Lola as the film progresses -- and ends up wanting her to be finally rewarded for everything she has to go through -- Manni's death, as well as her own.

The film was storyboarded very precisely because so many details were involved. Where exactly was each person standing in each scene? How does the camera only show what's important and nothing else? On top of that, of course, we're also telling a story that is played out during a particular interval of time on the same day. That means that the weather and the light both have to be identical. One really crazy aspect was all the clocks that keep coming into shots everywhere -- we spent hours discussing whether it was seven minutes or six in some scenes. The continuity people really worked overtime on this one.

The music for Run Lola Run was also very important to me. I think, write and cut in a very musical way -- so it was obvious that I'd want to take care of the soundtrack, too. I worked on the music with Johnny Klimek and Reinhold Heil. The very idea of anyone else composing music for any film of mine is like a nightmare to me. The wrong music can screw up a film completely. In a film, music intensifies everything. I mean, just imagine Once Upon a Time in the West without the music! Music plus images equals film. I also didn't want any standard techno music through the film. With the soundtrack to Run Lola Run, I think we've made a pop album for the first time, a real dance record.

During editing the important thing for me was timing, because the film is really fast-moving and you have to have time, and also allow the audience time to make sense of what they've seen. Creatively speaking, the biggest challenge was not making the leaps ahead in time appear like breaks in the action, but to make all the transitions flow into each other so that the viewers would move from scene to scene with their emotional commitment unimpaired. The time-space continuum gets taken right off its hinges without anyone really noticing -- but at the same time it was important not to lose the breathless, driving edge to everything or to allow it to appear as an end in and of itself.

To accomplish this we followed a consistent pattern: each level has its own "look." The sequences with Lola and Manni are shot on 35mm. The others, where Lola and Manni are not involved, were shot on video -- in kind of a synthetic, artificial world. That places Lola and Manni at the center of their world, in which miracles can happen just like in the movies. The film image is true, and the others are untrue, as it were. So when Lola runs through a video image, it becomes film.

It's a new kind of film, I think, but only externally. The means don't change the way in which a story is told. It still functions according to the structural principles used back in classical drama. We have a great and passionate love, we have a clear action principle, and we have a mission that goes right through the film. The story of Run Lola Run is pretty simple: you have twenty minutes to come up with 100,000 marks and run through the city to rescue your true love. The starter message for a film doesn't get much clearer than that.

What happens is absolutely universal as far as both theme and content are concerned. It is this woman's passion alone that brings down the rigid rules and regulations of the world surrounding her. Love can move mountains, and does. Over and above all the action, the central driving force of this film is romance. The film could be just as easily be set in Peking, Helsinki or New York, the only thing that would change is the scenery, not the emotional dimension. I think everyone, truly everyone, can identify with Lola.