

## Press release

# START OF FILMING FOR THE CINEMATIC ADVENTURE “MEIN FREUND BARRY” (“MY FRIEND BARRY”)

Sion, February 11, 2025. **Atlantis Pictures and MMC Zodiac are bringing the moving story of the legendary rescue dog Barry to the big screen, under the direction of Markus Welter!**



Markus Welter, director (top left), Marcel Wolfisberg, producer (top right), Alma Büchenbacher as Resi, Paco von Wyss as Georg and the dog Barry Copyright © Atlantis Pictures Ltd.

Everyone knows him: the loyal-hearted St. Bernard with the little barrel around his neck. Today, Barry returns to the big screen in a thrilling family film! Following the successes of *Heidi* and *Schellen-Ursli*, MY FRIEND BARRY is a new adventure full of suspense, friendship, courage, and emotion.

Filming for this ambitious production kicked off this week in spectacular fashion—right in the heart of the majestic Valais Alps, at over 2,000 meters above sea level. After extensive outdoor shoots in Valais, production will move to Ticino and wrap up at MMC’s state-of-the-art studios in Cologne.

### A Swiss-German Co-Production

MEIN FREUND BARRY is produced by Marcel Wolfisberg and his Lucerne-based production company Atlantis Pictures, in collaboration with MMC ZODIAC from Cologne. The project is also supported by the Valais Film Commission and the Ticino Film Commission.

## Press release

"We are delighted to host this shoot, especially as it is being carried out in close cooperation with the Ticino Film Commission—further confirming the strong relationship between the two commissions. Such a partnership also enhances Switzerland's appeal as a filming location," says Tristan Albrecht, Head of the Valais Film Commission.

The film will be distributed in Swiss cinemas by ASCOT ELITE ENTERTAINMENT, while WILDBUNCH Germany will handle distribution in Germany.

This film is based on a true story set in the breathtaking alpine landscapes of the 18th century, capturing the magic of nature and celebrating the strength of community.

"Barry is a global symbol of courage and loyalty. His story hasn't been told on the big screen for generations. With MY FRIEND BARRY, we're bringing his extraordinary journey back to cinemas for the whole family—with stunning imagery and historical authenticity," says producer Marcel Wolfisberg.

A large-scale casting process took place over several months to select the lead child actors and the full troupe of young performers. Five roles were ultimately cast from over 600 applicants. Alongside Max Hubacher, the film also features German actor Ulrich Tukur and Carlos Leal in this moving story of a unique friendship.

### **Markus Welter is the director.**

*Among his projects are the thriller Im Sog der Nacht and the SRF/ZDF co-production Der Teufel von Mailand. He directed the first three seasons of Der Bestatter and received the PRIX WALO in 2014. Additionally, in 2018, he won the special jury prize at the Solothurn Film Festival for his television film Weglaufen geht nicht.*

### **Historical Context**

*Since the 11th century, the monks of the Great St. Bernard Hospice have offered their protection to travelers. Beginning in the 17th century, they used St. Bernard dogs as loyal companions and rescuers in the snowy Alps. The most famous among them: Barry. He saved over 40 people and became a legend.*

### **The Film – An Adventure of Friendship and Courage**

*Late 18th century. Georg, 12 years old, and his older brother Alfons, war orphans from Central Switzerland, embark on the difficult journey to the Great St. Bernard Pass, hoping to find their fortune in Italy. When Georg falls ill, Alfons leaves him at the hospice. There, Georg struggles against the prejudices of the novices, especially the leader, Célestin. A tender friendship with Resi, the daughter of the kennel master, helps him overcome his shyness. Georg secretly cares for a frail puppy named Barry. But when Célestin betrays him, Georg must fight for his future before the Prior and is offered one last chance.*

### **Production details**

MEIN FREUND BARRY is a production of Atlantis Pictures in co-production with MMC Zodiac, Swiss Radio and Television SRF, SRG SSR, Centauri Media, Senator Film, and blue. Supported by the Zürcher Filmstiftung, the Film- und Medienstiftung NRW, the German Film Fund, the Federal Office of Culture, the Filmförderungsanstalt FFA, the Canton of Lucerne, the Valais Film Commission, the Ticino Film Commission, Suissimage, and in collaboration with Lidl Switzerland and Suzuki Switzerland.

Directed by: Markus Welter | Screenplay by: Jan Poldervaart

Starring: Barry, Max Hubacher, Christoph Gaugler, Ulrich Tukur, Carlos Leal, Paco von Wyss, Mael Gallati, Alma Büchenbacher, Yousef Sweid, and many more.

Release date: Winter 2026

### **Contacts:**

Press office Valais Film Commission,  
films@valais.ch, 027 327 36 12

ASCOT ELITE ENTERTAINMENT  
Karin Rüegg, karin.rueegg@ascot-elite.ch