WHITE PAPER
MORE ACTRESSES OVER 50 CINEMA, STREAMING AND TELEVISION

Media not only depicts society, it also shapes opinions and has proven to influence the reality of viewers' lives. In response to the many studies on gender parity in cinema, streaming and television, it is important for Women In Film And Television (WIFT) and the GÖTZ GEORGE STIFTUNG to contribute toward necessary cultural change.

The following impulses derive from the discussion rounds of the think tank "And please! More actresses over 50 in cinema, streaming and television", which was organized in October 2021 by WIFT and the GÖTZ GEORGE STIFTUNG and held in cooperation with the Bundesverband Schauspiel (BFFS) during the 55th International Hof Film Festival. Decision-makers from the industry reported on their experiences and gave important input that is ideally suited for implementation and further development. In particular, checklists were proven to be effective.

Recommended questions for script development

- Do all characters conceived as male roles necessarily have to be men? Might the material get a new and exciting twist if these roles are written as female?
- Do women over 50 have to predominantly be written as mothers, grannies, or betrayed wives?
- How are female characters portrayed: Do they have a name, a profession, what attitude and values do they convey?
- Is the attractiveness of a female character told through their outward appearance or through character traits?
- Are there as many men as women in the script?
- Do men and women meet at eye level?
- Is the amount of dialogue between the male and female characters appropriately distributed or balanced?
- How diverse are women described in the script? (Origin, religion, sexuality)?

Recommended questions for the casting

- Can male roles also be played by actresses?
- Do actresses have to conform to the standardized ideal of beauty to be considered attractive?
- How diverse is the physical appearance of the actresses cast?
- Does the age of the actresses correspond to the age of the characters?
- How successful is it to cast actresses who have not been hired for a long time?
- How diverse are actresses cast (origin, religion, sexuality)?

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