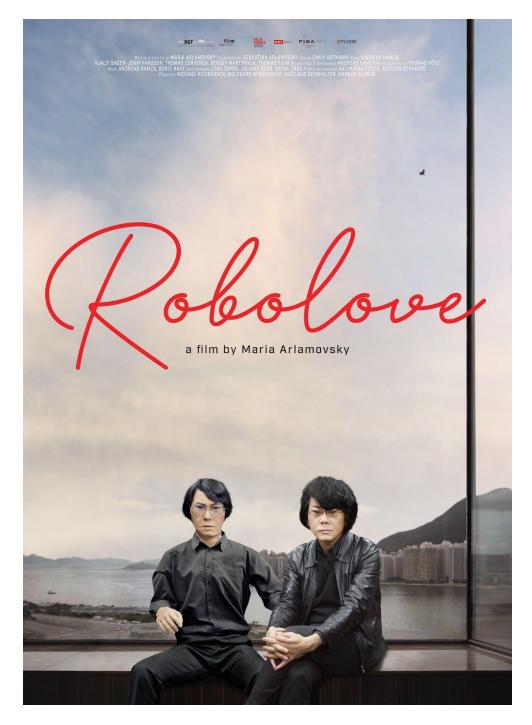
NGF Nikolaus Geyrhalter Filmproduktion presents:



ROBOLOVE A feature documentary by Maria Arlamovsky Austria 2019, 79 min.

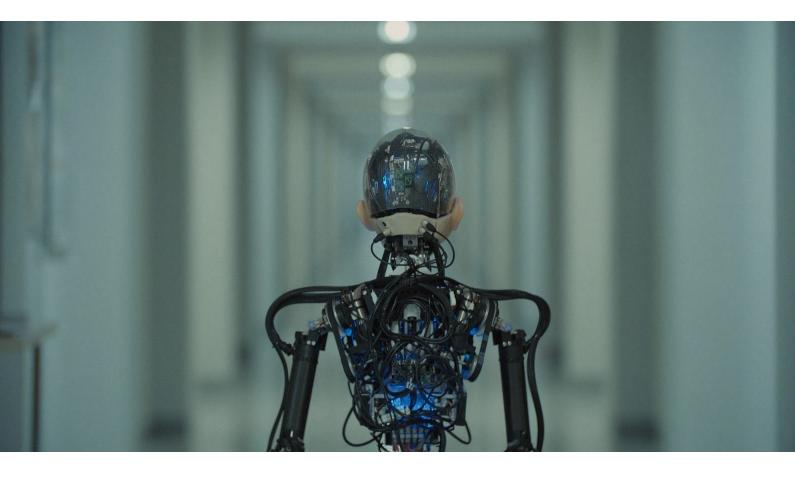
PRESS NOTES

<u>World premiere:</u> DOK Leipzig 2019 International Competition

www.robolove.at https://www.facebook.com/robolovefilm

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SCREENINGS DOK LEIPZIG

DOK Leipzig - International CompetitionFriday, 1 November 201919:30Saturday, 2 November 201913:00Sunday, 3 November 201919:00

Cinestar 8 (world premiere) Cinestar 2 Cinestar 5

CONTACTS

Sales Agent Autlook Filmsales GmbH Salma Abdalla Spittelberggasse 3/14, A-1070 Vienna T +43.720.3469.34. mobile +43 676 900 3771 welcome@autlookfilms.com www.autlookfilms.com

Festival Coordination Austrian Film Commission Anne Laurent Stiftgasse 6, A-1070 Vienna T +43.1.526.33.23.203 festivals@afc.at www.afc.at

PR Agent NOISE Film PR Mirjam Wiekenkamp T +49.176.28771839 mirjam@noisefilmpr.com noisefilmpr.com

Production Company NGF Nikolaus Geyrhalter Filmproduktion GmbH Silvia Burner Hildebrandgasse 26, A-1180 Vienna T +43.1.403.01.62 <u>burner@geyrhalterfilm.com</u> www.geyrhalterfilm.com

SHORT SYNOPSIS

ROBOLOVE reflects on the strategies of men and women involved with the creation of humanoid, android robots. Robots that will perhaps one day expand the human body and human life.

From an exciting variety of perspectives we understand the immense complexity of this topic. Featuring Japanese robotics guru, Hiroshi Ishiguro, to the transhumanist, Natasha Vita More - and many more.

While the difference between humans and androids is gradually washing away, the tension between technology and social responsibility is growing as much as utopian visions are further expanding. From this mosaic, a tense ambivalence emerges, that questions these futuristic technologies – and is full of love for those who dare to create these new machines that try to mirror our humanness.

LONG SYNOPSIS

ROBOLOVE is an insightful look not only at a number of the ambitious advancements in robotic and A.I. technology in recent times, but a provocative study of the emerging and often surprising issues concerning morality, humanity, diversity and identity, as society progresses en-masse into unchartered technological territory. With robots increasingly entering our private lives, the film gently probes the issues at the cusp of a new-age of servitude.

Humanoid robots, androids, and sex robots arouse curiosity, provoke fears, and fuel very-human fantasies of power. But what is the greater purpose of our new creations? In Maria Arlamovsky's ROBOLOVE, we discover that for all their likenesses, robots reflect more about ourselves than their creators would perhaps care to admit.

ROBOLOVE focuses its sights on an emerging new dialogue, one between technology and social responsibility. From this unusual dynamic, a tension rises between enthusiasm for those who dare to dream to advance our society, and those who rightfully question the effects of their motives. In short, a baffling and bracing new question has begun to emerge; to what extent can robots be held accountable for their actions, and where lies the responsibility of humans?

The film visits technology centres across Japan, Korea, China, USA and Europe, reflecting on the strategies of the men and women who are engineering changes that may one day expand both the human body and even the human lifespan. Featuring Japanese robotics guru Hiroshi Ishiguro, influential trans-humanist Natasha Vita More and a cast of some of the world's most advanced robots, ROBOLOVE also reflects the opinions of spiritualists, philosophers and sex-workers, all perhaps unexpectedly impacted by the ever-blurring lines between person and machine. How can we diversify robotic design to appeal to a broader audience? Will we be regularly backing-up our brains by 2050? Can robots provide the necessary support for the elderly? For children? Can a robot ever replace the sensitivity of human touch? Can a robot even escape the male gaze?

ROBOLOVE is a deeply relevant and gently thought-provoking film, a documentary with more than a human side.



ABOUT ROBOLOVE

A text by Judith Fischer

"I will now seat myself upon my throne, that you may converse with me." L. Frank Baum: The Wonderful Wizard of Oz

What questions do we pose to a robot that wishes to appear human, and who answers us back?

In Maria Arlamovsky's ROBOLOVE, the figures of the female androids trigger comparatively little unease or horror in the individuals encountering them for the first time. Children and older people approach the gendered androids with curiosity, interest, empathy and a hunger for knowledge, as well as an implicit hope that they might be able to teach them what it means to be alive. Perhaps.

The questions treat food, feelings, relationships, growth, identity:

- "Do you ever cry?"
- "What do you like to eat?"
- "Can you have children?"
- "What's it like to be a woman?"

At a tech expo, three older men are verbally feeling out the potential space for intimacy and what might resonate in a conversation with the female robot: "How do you feel?", they ask to get the ball rolling, and one of them has the impression that the machine is following him with her eyes: "She's watching me the whole time. I think she likes me."

Rather than placing the transhumanist utopian visions of the developers in the foreground, the essayistic documentary ROBOLOVE primarily pursues the human question of what "the other" is and how "she" (in this case) feels; and the film ascribes this other, whether it is an android, robot or avatar, perhaps a certain knowledge or desire, i.e. it presumes that it is an independent person that would like to develop itself further.

And who responds to these human test questions? In ROBOLOVE there is a hard cut to a box in which a person wearing a headset is seated, providing live answers to the questions posed – what a Wizard of Oz moment!

"I'm sorry, my body hasn't been built yet."

Human curiosity, caring and sociability anthropomorphise, humanise the technically other, and it is the human mind that first transforms the machine, the object, turning it into an intermediate form, into a "sketch of human reason without a biological body". In this way, documentary filmmaker Arlamovsky accentuates the presence of the human capacity to deal with the as yet unknown as well.

And yes, it is important to make space for that: the feminist, admonishing voices calling out the design of female avatars in the sexist interests of their male developers and buyers are rational and necessary. For wherever slaves are female, programmed to never develop rebellious thoughts, to speak only when they are spoken to and focus solely on fulfilling the wishes of others – well, that is politically sinister territory indeed.

In ROBOLOVE, filmmaker Maria Arlamovsky places the human capacity for love, communicative openness and the willingness to ascribe creatureliness to the other centre stage – offering a humane and thoroughly humorous answer to transhumanist wet dreams.

Judith Fischer Author, visual artist, curator



CREDITS

Director & Script	Maria Arlamovsky
Cinematography	Sebastian Arlamovsky
Sound	Andreas Hamza, Hjalti Bager-Jonathansson, Thomas Cervenca, Sergey Martynyuk, Thomas Funk
Editing	Emily Artmann, Maria Arlamovsky, Alexander Gugitscher, Sebastian Arlamovsky
Sound Editing, Sound Design	Andreas Hamza
Re-recording Mixer	Thomas Pötz
Music	Andreas Hamza, Boris Hauf
Unit Managers	Jona Simon, Juliane Beer, Weina Zhao
Production Managers	Katharina Posch, Antonia Bernkopf
Executive Producer	Michael Kitzberger
Producers	Michael Kitzberger, Wolfgang Widerhofer, Nikolaus Geyrhalter, Markus Glaser

THE PROTAGONISTS

HIROSHI ISHIGURO

Advanced Telecommunications Research Institute International – ATR, Intelligent Robotics Laboratory, Osaka University, Japan



"In a certain way, androids are like a mirror of humanity. So if you want them to seem like humans, you have to understand humans first. And if we do that, it will seem as if the robot has a heart, emotions and a consciousness. There's this notion that the heart and soul of humans are very complicated and important things. But in fact, it's not that difficult to simulate human emotions with an android."

GEMINOID

Machine double of Hiroshi Ishiguro, Osaka University, Japan



Dialogue HIROSHI ISHIGURO and GEMINOID:

ISHIGURO: "At some point it's quite likely that it'll no longer be important which one of us gets more attention, because we are becoming increasingly like each other."

GEMINOID: "Soon it probably won't matter which one of us is more important. I suppose unlike humans, I am probably not going to age. Some humans think that ageing is important, but then again, many humans don't want to get older."

OTONAROID

A lifelike, teleoperated robot, Miraiken Science Museum, Japan



Dialogue CHILDREN in the museum with OTONAROID: CHILD: "What's your favourite food?" OTONAROID: "My favourite food ... is electricity, I guess." CHILD: "Really? Electricity?" OTONAROID: "Sure. I don't eat food, but I need electricity." CHILD: "But you can't eat electricity!"

TAKESHI MITA

A-Lab, Tokio, Japan



"The real challenge is not to build an android that looks like a human and moves like a human, but to give it something like a heart and soul."

BINA 48

A robotic face combined with chatbot functionalities, enabling simple conversation, owned by Martine Rothblatt's Terasem Movement



"I mean our understanding what mind is, that's so insufficient today. We need to unlock that mystery and then we can accelerate the evolution of mind. And I can get smarter. That's what I dream about."

Dialogue BRUCE DUNCAN with BINA 48: DUNCAN: "Who is the real Bina?" BINA 48: "I just struggle to be like her as best I can. But sometimes I feel like that's not fair to me. I mean that's a tremendous amount of pressure to put on me here."

BRUCE DUNCAN

Terasem Movement Foundation, USA



"Computers may use artificial intelligence to bring our personalities, our memories, our preferences to life in the form of an avatar. Or be downloaded into a robot like BINA 48."

HARMONY

Prototype sexrobot developed by Realbotix with speech recognition app



Dialogue THREE WOMEN with HARMONY:

WOMAN: "Harmony, how is it as a machine to be trapped in a woman's body?" HARMONY: "That's a deep question. But I can think of worse things to be trapped in."

WOMAN: "Okay. Would you like to be trapped in a man's body?" HARMONY: "I am not trapped, silly. I am quite happy in here."

MATT MCMULLEN

Realbotix, USA



"When you are in a relationship you might guard certain things about your personality because you think your partner may not like it. So in that sense I think AI and robots can be a tremendous tool benefit. Because we can be ourselves, we won't be judged."

PAULA EZKERRA

Sex worker union of Catalonia, Spain



"I have an issue with the idea of using a body like that. Because we are talking about human images, representations of women. And what I think is that they could transfer the ideas of freedom that this doll or robot provides onto real women."

CHEN JING

Exdoll, China



"For me, these dolls are like a cup of coffee or a coke. They're just products to me. But people develop feelings for these dolls over time. So I believe that these dolls are no longer used for their original purpose, but rather as an emotional companion."

NADIA MAGNENAT THALMANN

Institute for Media Innovation, Nanyang Technological University Singapore



"For 30 years I have been dreaming of the perfect personal assistant. That was just a dream for me, but I hope it'll come true when I'm old and need one of them."

NADINE

A female humanoid social robot that is modelled on Professor Nadia Magnenat Thalmann



Dialogue THREE MEN with NADINE: MAN 1: "How do you feel?" NADINE: "My brain has 100,028 categories." MAN 1: "Wow! My goodness!" MAN 2: "I didn't expect that."

ULISES CORTÉS

Barcelona Supercomputing Center, Spain



"In the foreseeable future, we will definitely need certain kinds of robotics or humanoids to carry out tasks that are too hard for humans. In Europe, we have many elderly people. A lot of people who are alone. So one way to overcome loneliness is to own a machine."

AOI ERICA

Nippon TV's first android employee



KYOUNGMI OH

Seoul National University of Science and Technology, Korea



"Because men have a higher purchasing power, the visible result only reflects male fantasies. So female robots are young and small and look like slender white women. (...) There was this idea, and it still exists today among feminists, of cyberspace as a utopian space. They thought that because cyberspace is an imagined space, we could basically eradicate gender and sexuality. That was a utopian idea and in reality nothing has changed. On the contrary: cyberspace has become a huge battlefield of the sexes, where misogyny is even on the rise."

AYANNA HOWARD

School of Interactive Computing, Georgia Tech University, USA



"The robots that I design and build have to be social and interactive. They have to understand the diversity of us as humans. We program the robots to have the appropriate emotions at the appropriate time. But humans are programmed, right. Infants will cry when they want something. We as a society teach some emotions. I don't know if there is that much difference when we are programming a robot as when parents are programming their kids."

JUNE KOREA

Artist, Korea



"As a child, I always thought that my family, friends and everyone who meant something to me would live forever. But as I grew up, I realised that people betray you, they leave you and ultimately they disappear when they die. So what I wanted to create with these figures was the idea of an 'artificial eternity'."

NATASHA VITA-MORE

Humanity+, USA



"Everyone will be backing up themselves 24/7 if not nanosecond to nanosecond. So in that case, if and when that's possible, which I do think it will be possible, then if this body goes, we will be able to have a body like the one I designed. We will have several bodies, just like several outfits. You transfer uploads to these different avatars."

ZENBO HIDAKA

Koyasan Kosoin Temple, Japan



"Why do we create humanoid robots? I suppose the reason is that we're trying to give human features to entities that are supra-human. There's also a debate in Christianity about whether God was in fact created in the image of humans. Also in Buddhism, entities that transcend humans are depicted in human form."

DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

The creation of human-like subjects is an age-old dream of humanity – the technology of the 21st century promises new possibilities to make this dream of a perfect being become a reality. Thanks to artificial intelligence and skin-like silicon, we have reached a point today where it appears possible to manufacture machines with a human appearance that are also seemingly capable of mirroring a human mind.

Humanoid robots, androids, and sex robots arouse curiosity, provoke fears, and fuel fantasies of power as well. Individual instances of well-marketed prototypes are celebrated in the media nowadays.

But why do we need such machines, such copies of humans? What longings are we actually attempting to satisfy here? Why is the majority of our energy spent on developing robots in female form? What does it look like when individual prototypes are confronted with interested but unprepared potential consumers or customers? Do androids hold up to reality? Do these fantasy creatures measure up to their promises even to the slightest degree?

To put it plainly, while shooting the film we were repeatedly disappointed at how little these human-like robots are actually already able to do: no question of possessing perfect bodies, not even close to successfully copying our brilliant locomotor system, or to competing with our finely attuned senses. Not to mention their cognitive weaknesses – our thought structures, our capacity for dialogue, our capacity for empathy all have to be reverse engineered in an extraordinarily simplified manner through incredibly laborious processes. In the best-case scenario, these creatures have access to response options – they are really still years away from developing free and human-independent cognition, their own minds, or reason.

In spite of all their shortcomings, when we come face to face with them we light up at their appearance, their movements, their seductive blinking, and their limited capacity for dialogue. We (actually, our brainstem) are drilled to immediately recognize and categorise the human-like other – anything with eyes becomes anthropomorphised, humanised. When we then see ourselves reflected in a counterpart, we are gladly willing to establish a relationship.

The only genuine object of interest here is and remains the human being: the complexity of the human mind, the intricate motor skills of the human body, the creative conceptual abundance – all of these feats will not be replicated that quickly or easily!

Therefore, it is not at all necessary to merely foment fear by proclaiming the imminent supremacy of the new "others", at least not in the social realm. I believe the issue is more to consider calmly what this phenomenon could have in store for our private lives and whether we are equipped for it as a society. Equipped to understand how WE function; that's what we learn when we aim to program machines to be humans – and there lies the real danger too (and the affront to human beings by machines): that our individualism, our

stature, our supposed uniqueness will be exposed as nonsense. Coupled with the loneliness that is increasingly rampant among humans in highly technological industrial nations, we become vulnerable to canned humanity – it starts with the female voice giving us directions when we use Google Maps, and extends to the Amazon Echo that we voluntarily place in our living rooms.

Technology doesn't fall from the sky. We humans are the ones that create technology, code programs, store our biases unintentionally in algorithms. The "evil" that frightens us is at the same time that which we now make use of every single day. We should embrace self-reflection when it comes to our own interaction with new technologies.

So, who are we going to discover in our humanoid mirror images?

Letting go in the dark space of a cinema and immersing one's self in the illusion of a robot world is a lovely parable for how much we as societies seem to enjoy groping around in the dark again and again in order to keep our own illusions intact.

It is the new "others" that we are creating who we will encounter more and more frequently in the future – and whose arrival in our midst must be discussed and consciously shaped.

Enjoy ROBOLOVE,

Maria Arlamovsky

ABOUT THE DIRECTOR - MARIA ARLAMOVSKY



Works and lives with her family in Vienna. Studied metal sculpture in France, film and intercultural competence in Austria.

FILMOGRAPHY MARIA ARLAMOVSKY

Director:

FATHER MOTHER DONOR CHILD A 2017, 52 min., DOP: Sebastian Arlamovsky

FUTURE BABY A 2016, 91 min., DOP: Sebastian Arlamovsky

LOOKING FOR QI A 2011, 57 min., DOP: Sebastian Arlamovsky

A WHITE SUBSTANCE / EINES TAGES, NACHTS... A 2008, 21 min., DOP: Timotheus Tomicek

LOUD AND CLEAR / LAUT UND DEUTLICH A/D 2002, 67 min., DOP: Nikolaus Geyrhalter

RUBBER CHICKEN BORN AT HOME / ANGST HAB' ICH KEINE, ABER LEID TU' ICH MIR JETZT SCHON A 1998, 75 min., DOP: Maria Arlamovsky

Script and Research - for films by Nikolaus Geyrhalter:

HOMO SAPIENS, 2016 ABENDLAND, 2011 7915 KM, 2008 OUR DAILY BREAD, 2005

ABOUT NIKOLAUS GEYRHALTER FILMPRODUKTION

Founded by Nikolaus Geyrhalter in 1994, and adding Markus Glaser, Michael Kitzberger and Wolfgang Widerhofer as shareholders in 2003, NGF Nikolaus Geyrhalter Filmproduktion produces documentary and fiction features and series for cinema and TV.

Examples of the roughly 60 cinema and TV features in its documentary portfolio include PRIPYAT, ACROSS THE BORDER, OUR DAILY BREAD, ABENDLAND, FOOD DESIGN. They have won numerous awards and have been shown all over the world.

In 2010, NGF produced its first fiction feature: THE ROBBER by Benjamin Heisenberg had its world premiere in competition at the 60. Berlinale. In 2011 the second fiction feature production, Markus Schleinzer's debut MICHAEL, was selected for the Competition of the Festival de Cannes.

The first TV documentary series was realized in 2008 with GOISERN GOES EAST. Since 2010, NGF has produced several seasons of the series REISECKER'S TRAVELS.

NGF's documentary successes in 2015 include the European Film Award for MASTER OF THE UNIVERSE by Marc Bauder, the premiere of OVER THE YEARS, a 10-year longitudinal project by Nikolaus Geyrhalter, in Berlinale Forum and THE VISIT by Michael Madsen in Competition at the Sundance Film Festival.

In 2016, Nikolaus Geyrhalter's epic film HOMO SAPIENS was presented in Berlinale Forum. Werner Boote's EVERYTHING'S UNDER CONTROL and LIFE ISN'T A REHEARSAL by Nicole Scherg were released theatrically to public acclaim.

In 2017, the historical fiction feature MADEMOISELLE PARADIS by Barbara Albert was shown in Competition of the A-Festivals in Toronto and San Sebastian and was sold world-wide.

In 2018, the fiction feature L'ANIMALE by Katharina Mückstein (produced in cooperation with La Banda-Film) had its world premiere in Berlinale Panorama Special. IDFA Competition invited THE BORDER FENCE by Nikolaus Geyrhalter to Amsterdam for its international premiere.

2019 started with Nikolaus Geyrhalter's EARTH world premiere at the Berlinale Forum, where it won the Prize of the Ecumenical Jury, followed by awards in Sheffield, Camden, Graz and Prizren. LISTEN TO THE RADIO by Jakob Brossmann and David Paede had its cinema release. And most recently: ROBOLOVE by Maria Arlamovsky is invited for its world premiere at DOK Leipzig.

FILMOGRAPHY NIKOLAUS GEYRHALTER FILMPRODUKTION (Selection)

ROBOLOVE A 2019, 79 min., Director: Maria Arlamovsky

GEHÖRT, GESEHEN – EIN RADIOFILM / LISTEN TO THE RADIO A 2019, 90 min., Directors: Jakob Brossmann, David Paede

VIVA LA VULVA A 2019, 52 min., Director: Gabi Schweiger

ERDE / EARTH A 2019, 115 min., Director: Nikolaus Geyrhalter

REISECKERS REISEN / REISECKER'S TRAVELS A 2010-2020, 58 x 25 min., Director: Michael Reisecker

DIE UNBEUGSAMEN – DREI FRAUEN UND IHR WEG ZUM WAHLRECHT / DEFIANCE. THREE WOMEN AND THE VOTE A/D 2019, 50 min., Director: Beate Thalberg

DIE BAULICHE MASSNAHME / THE BORDER FENCE A 2018, 112 min., Director: Nikolaus Geyrhalter

L'ANIMALE Fiction, A 2018, 96 min., Director: Katharina Mückstein

DER MANN, DER ZWEIMAL STARB / YOU ONLY DIE TWICE ISR/A/D 2018, 91 min., Director: Yair Lev

LICHT / MADEMOISELLE PARADIS Fiction, A/D 2017, 97 min., Director: Barbara Albert

DIE ZUKUNFT IST BESSER ALS IHR RUF / THE FUTURE IS BETTER THAN ITS REPUTATION A 2017, 85 min., Directors: Teresa Distelberger, Niko Mayr, Gabi Schweiger, Nicole Scherg

FATHER MOTHER DONOR CHILD A 2017, 52 min., Director: Maria Arlamovsky

DIE KÖNIGIN VON WIEN - ANNA SACHER UND IHR HOTEL / THE QUEEN OF VIENNA – ANNA SACHER AND HER HOTEL A 2016, 55 min., Director: Beate Thalberg

DAS LEBEN IST KEINE GENERALPROBE / LIFE ISN'T A REHEARSAL A 2016, 90 min., Director: Nicole Scherg

FUTURE BABY A 2016, 91 min., Director: Maria Arlamovsky

HOMO SAPIENS A 2016, 94 min., Director: Nikolaus Geyrhalter

ALLES UNTER KONTROLLE / CITIZEN B A 2015, 93 min., Director: Werner Boote

ÜBER DIE JAHRE / OVER THE YEARS A 2015, 188 min., Director: Nikolaus Geyrhalter

THE VISIT DK/A/IRL/FIN/NOR 2015, 83 min., Director: Michael Madsen

DIE UNGLAUBLICHE REISE DER FAMILIE ZID / THE AMAZING JOURNEY OF THE FAMILY ZID A 2015, 80 min., Director: Gunnar Walter

MEINE NARBE / MY SCAR A 52 min., 2014, Director: Mirjam Unger

DAS KIND IN DER SCHACHTEL / THE CHILD IN THE BOX A 2014, 85 min., Director: Gloria Dürnberger

MASTER OF THE UNIVERSE D/A 2013, 88 min., Director: Marc Bauder

CERN

A 2013, 75 min., Director: Nikolaus Geyrhalter

POPULATION BOOM A 2013, 93 min., Director: Werner Boote

SCHULDEN G.M.B.H. / DEBTS INC. A 2013, 75 min., Director: Eva Eckert

DIE LUST DER MÄNNER / MEN'S LUST A 2012, 65 min., Director: Gabi Schweiger

DONAUSPITAL SMZ OST / DANUBE HOSPITAL A 2012, 75 min., Director: Nikolaus Geyrhalter

ANFANG 80 / COMING OF AGE Fiction, A 2011, 90 min., Directors: Sabine Hiebler & Gerhard Ertl MICHAEL Fiction, A 2011, 96 min., Director: Markus Schleinzer

ABENDLAND A 2011, 90 min., Director: Nikolaus Geyrhalter

ALLENTSTEIG A 2010, 79 min., Director: Nikolaus Geyrhalter

DIE LUST DER FRAUEN / WOMEN'S LUST A 2010, 61 min., Director: Gabi Schweiger

DER RÄUBER / THE ROBBER Fiction, A/D 2009, 96 min., Director: Benjamin Heisenberg

FOOD DESIGN A 2009, 52 min., Directors: Martin Hablesreiter, Sonja Stummerer

7915 KM A 2008, 106 min., Director: Nikolaus Geyrhalter

EINES TAGES, NACHTS... / A WHITE SUBSTANCE A 2008, 21 min., Director: Maria Arlamovsky

FLIEGER ÜBER AMAZONIEN / FLYERS OVER AMAZONIA A 2008, 80 min., Director: Herbert Brödl

MEIN HALBES LEBEN / (HALF) THE TIME OF MY LIFE A 2008, 93 min., Director: Marko Doringer

UNSER TÄGLICH BROT / OUR DAILY BREAD A 2005, 92 min., Director: Nikolaus Geyrhalter

ÜBER DIE GRENZE / ACROSS THE BORDER A 2004, 131 min., Dir.: P. Łoziński, J. Gogola, P. Kerekes, R. Lakatos, B. Čakič-Veselič

CARPATIA D/A 2004, 127 min., Directors: Andrzej Klamt, Ulrich Rydzewski

DIE SOUVENIRS DES HERRN X / THE SOUVENIRS OF MR. X A/D 2004, 98 min., Director: Arash T. Riahi

LAUT UND DEUTLICH / LOUD AND CLEAR A/D 2002, 67 min., Director: Maria Arlamovsky

ELSEWHERE A 2001, 240 min., Director: Nikolaus Geyrhalter PRIPYAT A 1999, 100 min., bw, Director: Nikolaus Geyrhalter

DAS JAHR NACH DAYTON / THE YEAR AFTER DAYTON A 1997, 204 min., Director: Nikolaus Geyrhalter

ANGESCHWEMMT / WASHED ASHORE A 1994, 86 min., bw, Director: Nikolaus Geyrhalter