

EIN TRAUM IN ERDBEERFOLIE

COMRADE COUTURE
A FILM BY MARCO WILMS



Foto: Sven Marquardt



Foto: Günter Rubitzsch



Foto: Gerdula Schulze Eldowy

SYNOPSIS

COMRADE COUTURE PANORAMA AT THE BERLINALE 2009

»Comrade Couture«, a documentary film by Marco Wilms, is celebrating its world premiere in the »Panorama« section of the 59th International Film Festival in Berlin.

THE FILM

»Comrade Couture« is a journey into the wild nether world of the fashionistas and Bohemians of East Berlin. Director Marco Wilms, a former model of the GDR's fashion institute, sets out to once more resurrect this life's unique lifestyle, economic freedom, and longing to be different, in the here and now.

SYNOPSIS

»Comrade Couture« is a journey into the wild nether world of the fashionistas and Bohemians of East Berlin. It was a fantasy world within East Germany's very restricted everyday life. Here you could break ranks, be individual and provocative. The most important identifying feature of the scene was the development of a personal style, because you couldn't buy such a thing in GDR times. In this nether world, you had to create your individual image. This film tells of the longing, passions and dreams which were tested, experienced and lived out in the shadow of the Wall.

Director Marco Wilms, who was himself a model at the GDR's fashion institute at the time, sets out to once more resurrect this life's unique lifestyle, economic freedom, and longing to be different, in the here and now. He finds the heroes of his youth in East Berlin: designer Sabine von Oettingen, photographer Robert Paris, and stylist and hairdresser Frank Schäfer, and explores with them their shining nether world lives. Two decades later, the members and friends of the legendary East Berlin avantgarde fashion theatres »Chic, Charmant und Dauerhaft« (Chic, Charming and Enduring) and »Allerleirauh« (All-Kinds-of-Fur) meet again at a »subversive« Eastern Bloc Party, initiated by director Marco Wilms.

»Comrade Couture« is a humorous documentary about creativity as the elixir of life – and the never-ending longing for individual freedom.



Foto: Sabine von Oettingen

CREW

Documentary, Germany, 2009, 84 minutes, HDcam
A Film By Marco Wilms

With Frank Schäfer, Sabine von Oettingen, Robert Paris,
Angelika Kroker, Klaus Ehrlich, Helga Paris, Jürgen Breski, Frieda von
Wild, Jürgen Hohmuth, Dominique Hollenstein, Esther Friedemann
Marlen Burghardt, Amon Wilms, Ingrid Wilms, u.v.a.

Fotos Jürgen Hohmuth (Schrat), Sven Marquardt,
Robert Paris, Helga Paris, Günter Rubitzsch, Frieda von Wild,
Gundula Schulze Eldowy, Gerhard Krommik, Stephan Gustavus

Written & Directed By Marco Wilms
Cinematography Lars Barthel,
Jörg Jeshel, Istvan Imreh
Edited By Christian Fibikar
Music Moritz Denis, Eike Hosenfeld, Tim Stanzel
Sound Marc Witte, Tobias Fritzsche
Sound Design Thorsten Minning
Sound Mix Christian Riegel
Additional Editing By Dirk Seliger
Graphics Ulrike Knauf, Arno Wolf
Animations Marcus Müller
Assistant Directors Hannah Leonie Prinzler, Janet Stornowski
Production Coordinator Jasmin Singh
Associate Producer Marlen Burghardt
Executive Producer Marco Voß
Commissioning Editor Kathrin Brinkmann/ZDF/ARTE,
Franz Grabner/ORF, Marijke Huijbregts/AVRO
Producers Gunnar Dedio
Marco Wilms, Carmen Cobos
World Sales LOOKS Distribution GmbH
Distributed By polyband Medien GmbH

Special Thanks Thomas Brussig, Christian Schidlowski

A LOOKS Production in co-production with HELDENFILM, COBOS Film BV,
ZDF in cooperation with ARTE, AVRO, ORF and YLE Teema
With the support of the European Union MEDIA Programme, DEFA Foundation, Kulturelle
Filmförderung Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, and CoBo Fund Netherlands.



CCD fashion show Foto: Jürgen Hohmuth

PROTAGONISTS

The protagonists of this film are members of the subversive East Berlin fashion groups »Chic, Charmant und Dauerhaft« (CCD, Chic, Charming and Enduring) and »Allerleirauh« (All-Kinds-of-Fur).

CCD began in the mid-80s with living room fashion shows. The performances soon moved into churches and decommissioned Gründerzeit bath houses, and became more and more opulent. The members of these groups lived their excessive lust for individual performance right in the middle of socialist everyday life.

The renowned Museum für Deutsche Geschichte bought their collections, and showcased these works of art in its exhibition »Dictatorship and Boheme«. The illegal shows created by »Allerleirauh« (All-Kinds-Of-Fur) are legendary to this day. And they still exist, in the magnificent photographs of Sven Marquardt, Jürgen Hohmuth, as well as Robert and Helga Paris. Almost 300 of these photos are shown in this film.

In 1989, (West)-German magazine Der Stern published a story about this magical troupe. They worked with leather at its most creative. They embellished East Germany's morbidness and almost apocalyptic atmosphere – without knowing that its end was nigh.

In this film, we experience the rebirth of CCD's most famous collections, created by designer Sabine von Oettingen out of »Erdbeerfolie« and »Eingeweidetüten« (gardening foil and organ bags).

Foto: Sven Marquardt



Foto: Jürgen Hohmuth



CCD-clothes made from »Erdbeerfolie« (gardening foil)



PROTAGONISTS



Foto: Jürgen Hohmuth

SABINE VON OETTINGEN

CCD's blue-blooded designer removed herself from East Germany's monotony through a fake-marriage to an American gay man. After brief stints in the US and West Berlin, she now lives near Halle, in her own windmill. Sabine has five children and makes a living from selling her custom-made baroque dresses on art fairs. She also works as art director for theatre plays, and sees her dresses as pages of a diary.



Foto: Jürgen Hohmuth

FRANK SCHÄFER

Frank went from being East German Television's worst make-up trainee to the GDR's most sought-after stylist. Together with director Klaus Ehrlich, he made East German Television's famous fashion films. He also worked for the GDR's fashion institute, as well as VEB Exquisit, East Germany's extremely expensive luxury goods chain store. Today, Frank is a sought-after hair stylist in Berlin-Prenzlau. His pubic hair styles brought him television fame, and many TV show appearances. At the end of this film, Frank launches his new career as a singer.



Foto: Sven Marquardt

ROBERT PARIS

Robert was the star actor of the »Allerleirauh« (All-Kinds-Of-Fur) fashion theatre, as well as photographer Sven Marquardt's favorite erotic model. His mother is Helga Paris, herself a renowned East German photographer, and CCD's very first fashion show took place in her living room. After converting to Islam, Robert now lives with his wife in India, where they built a house and raised a family.

As well as many other protagonists.

WEBSITES, FOTOGRAPHERS & PROTAGONISTS

Jürgen Hohmuth | www.zeitort.de

Sven Marquardt | www.marquardtftografie.com

Sabine von Oettingen | www.takelage.com



STATEMENT

PERSONAL STATEMENT BY DIRECTOR MARCO WILMS

I spent the first half of my life in East Germany. I spent my child and teenage years living in a prefab apartment block with a view of the Ministry for State Security. As an individualist, I felt entirely out of place in the socialist collective – until I was, by chance, discovered as a model by the GDR's Institute of Fashion. As a state-certified model!

And so, I entered a GDR fantasy world. We wore clothes that you couldn't buy anywhere and were something like the decadent fools of the »workers' and farmers' state«. It was a wonderful position to be in.

But a real life, I only found in the free and dazzling world of underground fashion. And that is what my film is about: A lost world, so absurd that today you can hardly imagine it ever existed. Looking back, our life back then seems schizophrenic – we were free and wild like a tiger in the cage of dictatorship. We developed the most bizarre methods of escaping the boredom of the real GDR. While these strategies were at that time perfect for a self-determined life, they are almost useless for us today – under the total freedom of turbo capitalism.

Why did I make the film? I wanted to travel through time and feel this amazing, wild attitude to life once again. Even if just for a tiny moment...





Foto: Axel Schnepf

BIOGRAPHY

BIOGRAPHY DIRECTOR MARCO WILMS

Born 1966 in East Berlin

After finishing his high school in evening classes, he became a tool maker, graphics designer, and dress man.

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|-------------|---|
| 1989 | Fled East Germany via Hungary and Austria to West Berlin. Returned to East Berlin after the Wall came down. |
| 1990 | Studied stage design at Kunsthochschule Berlin Weißensee |
| 1991 | Studied art direction at HFF Potsdam-Babelsberg |
| 1993 | DAAD scholarship in the US |
| 1998 – 1999 | DAAD scholarship in Thailand, at the Film Department of Thammasat University
Acting Workshop with John Costopoulos, Actor's Studio New York, USA |
| 2000 | Director & Creative Director for music videos with Shorts Production, Berlin
Kontext scholarship for young journalists |
| 2001 | Finished studies in directing at HFF Potsdam-Babelsberg |
| 2002 | Screenplay scholarship by Stiftung Kulturfonds |
| 2003 | Instructor, Film Department Thammasat University
Instructor, documentary film work shop, Film Academy Hanoi |
| 2004 | Developed international documentary co-production »Tailor-Made Dreams«
at Discovery Campus Master School |
| 2005 / 2006 | DEFA Foundation scholarship |
| 2007 | Instructor for EDN Pitching Workshop Lissabon, Film Festival DOCLISBOA |



FILMOGRAPHY

SELECTED FILMOGRAPHY DIRECTOR MARCO WILMS

- 2007 Die Zukunft ist jetzt! – CHINAS KUNST AVANTGARDE (Series)
 Yang Fudong – Sinnsuche auf Celluloid
 Cao Fei – Multimedia Künstlerin zwischen den Welten
 4x 26 min., ZDF/ARTE »Kunst und Kultur«, Gebrüder Beetz Filmproduktion
Nominated for Rose'd Or Award 2008
- 2006 PFERDE IN ÖL, ZDF/ARTE, 26 Minuten, Produced By Heldenfilm
 LICHTKUNST, (Series),
 Angela Bulloch – Im Zwielflicht der Erinnerung,
 John Armleder – Im Supermarkt des Lichts,
 Keith Sonnier – Im Komos der Farben,
 3x 26 min., ZDF/ARTE »Kunst und Kultur«,
 Produced By Gebrüder Beetz Filmproduktion
Int. Competition, Festival of Films on Art, ASSOLO Italy 2007
Int. Festival of Films on Art ARTFIFA Montreal, Canada 2008
 TAILOR-MADE DREAMS (MASSGESCHNEIDERTE TRÄUME) Cinema documentary
 86 min., 35 mm, ZDF/ARTE, Produced By MAJA.DE, Co-Production with
 FRANCE 5, YLE TV2, DR, RTBF, VRT, TVOntario, Project of Discovery Campus
 Masterschool, Produced with the support of MDM, Medienboard Berlin-
 Brandenburg, DEFA Stiftung, MEDIA
GOLDENER GIRALDILLO, Sevilla Festival de Cine 2006, Spanien; PRIZE OF FRENCH AMBASSADOR;
Int. Competition Int. Documentary Filmfestival Pärnu 2006, Estland; Int.Wettbewerb VISIONS DU
REEL, NYON 2006; Filmfestival MAX OPHÜLS PREIS; SILVERDOCS USA Sterling Award Feature Film
Competition; DOK LEIPZIG; Dokfest KASSEL; Achtung Berlin Filmfestival; Int. Filmfestival Frankfurt;
Guangzhou International, Documentary Festival, DOCPOINT Helsinki; Int. Filmfestival Krakow
Opening; Film in Feature Film Competition
- 2003 BERLIN VORTEX
 Cinema documentary, 80 min.; ZDF, Das kleine Fernsehspiel; Kopffilm
Filmfestival MAX OPHÜLS PREIS; documentary film festival »DREHORT OSTWESTDEUTSCHLAND«;
Int. Dokfilm Festival Istanbul; Int. Dokfilm Festival Göttingen; Kulturwoche SIENCE PO, Paris
- 2000 NAAM DJAI – DER FLUSS DES HERZENS
 Documentary, 61 min.; Producers: Marco Wilms/Manfred Durniok
Int. Documentary Festival Amsterdam IDFA; UFVA FESTIVAL, Philadelphia;
1st Prize; Silver Pine International Students Festival, Zlatibor, Jugoslawia
- 1994 DIE VERLOHRENE STRASSE, 35mm widescreen, 27 Minuten, Producer: Marco Voss,
 Filmdokument e.V./HFF, Produced with the support of Filmförderung
 Brandenburg
 1. Prize Best Fiction Film, KODAK, UFVA FESTIVAL, USA;
 2. Prize International Festival, Filmshool Lodz, Polen; Silbermedaille, Filmfestival Duisburg;
 BANCA NAZIONALE DEL LAVORNO MONTECATINI, Italy



PRODUCTION

WWW.LOOKSFILM.TV | Berlin | Leipzig | Rostock

LOOKS was founded in 1995 by managing partner Gunnar Dedio. Based in Berlin, Leipzig and Rostock, its team of 25 employees produces documentary films for cinema and television. Most films are produced as international co-productions or partnerships. Historical documentaries, often focused on stories revolving around the Iron Curtain, form a cornerstone of LOOKS's projects. Among its productions is the award-winning series »Life Behind the Wall«, which was screened in 126 countries.

Going against the trend of outsourcing, LOOKS produces its documentaries based on the strengths of a constant team, utilizing in-house development, production, postproduction and distribution-

Two theatrically released LOOKS projects will premiere in 2009: »Comrade Couture« and »Animal Farm«.

SELECTED FILMS:

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|-----------|---|
| 2008 | IN SEARCH OF AMERICA; 5x 43'; RBB, NDR, ARTE
OF SHARKS AND MEN; 4x 52'; VOX
ALL'S WELL THAT ENDS WELL! MORTICIANS AT WORK; 8x 52'; VOX
THE ENDLESS TRACK; 2x 43'; MDR |
| 2007 | LIVING WITH THE ENEMY; 4x 45'; MDR, WDR
GESICHTER EUROPAS – MENSCHEN & TIERE; 5x 30'; NDR, ARTE
HITLER & MUSSOLINI; 90'; RBB, SWR, ARTE, Istituto Luce S.P.A.,
Transit Film GmbH, FOX International Channels Italy, Discovery
2030 – WERDEN WIR UNSTERBLICH?, ARTE-Themenabend,
3 Dokumentationen; 52', 28', 38'; NDR, ARTE
LIFE UNDER NAPOLEON; 4x 52'; MDR, WDR, ARTE |
| 2006 | HOFFEN ZWISCHEN TOD UND LEBEN, 5x 26'; ARTE, NDR |
| 2004/2005 | LIFE BEHIND THE WALL; 4 & 10x 45'; MDR, WDR
2004 »Hans-Klein-Medienpreis«; 2005 »Adolf-Grimme-Preis« |
| 2004 | EUROPE'S OLD NEW FACES; 10x 26'; KAUPON FILM, VG Studio, Prazska
Kinemateka, OpusFilm, Where's Everybody, ALLFILM, KATAPULT Film,
artvision, BELAFILM |
| 2003 | GENESIS II; 6x 52'; Teleimages, France 5, VOX, Discovery
SCHACHMATT; 60'; ZDF, ARTE, 3sat, ORF
Winner of the Austrian Film- and Television Award (ROMY): »Special Selection of the Jury« |

HELDENFILM

PRODUCTION

HELDENFILM produces international theatrically released documentaries and Arthouse programs for ZDF, ARTE, MDR, NDRFrance 5, AVRO, ORF, YLE, DR, TV Ontario, VRT, RTB, and many more.

We love and produce entertaining films about exceptional characters, poetic locations, magical stories, and we like a feature-film approach to documentary storytelling. Director/producer Marco Wilms has been invited to festivals such as IDFA, Vision du reel Nyon, Silverdocs, DOK Leipzig, Kassel, FF Max Ophüls Preis, FF Krakow, Docpoint Helsinki.

The films have been nominated (Rose'd Or, Schweiz) and have won awards such as the »First Kodak Prize« at UFVA Festival USA, or the First Prize »Golden Giralddillo« at Festival de Cine in Sevilla. Marco Wilms's films have been produced with the support of Discovery Campus Masterschool, DEFA Foundation, Stiftung Kulturfonds, MEDIA, Medienboard Berlin Brandenburg and MDM.

HELDENFILM is a member of AG DOK and EDN.

www.tailormadedreams.de

www.mittendrinderfilm.de

www.naamdjai-film.de

www.heldenfilm.de



THEATRICAL RELEASE

Theatrical Release Germany

Polyband Medien GmbH, a division of Splendid Medien AG, produces and distributes entertainment programming. Its licencing options include cinematic distribution, as well as DVD, and Blu-Ray, in German-speaking territories. Polyband has a substantial rights library, especially in the areas of documentary, special interest, animation and children's films, as well as TV series.

Documentary programs are the main focus of our library. We currently offer more than 150 documentaries, covering a wide variety of genres and themes. Strategic cooperations with leading production houses, such as BBC and Discovery, several public broadcasters, such as ORF, WGBH/PBS, as well as many freelance producers, ensure that our library is always current, and of the highest quality. Programs such as »Planet Earth« and »Blue Planet« are documentary milestones, with millions of viewers worldwide.

polyband Medien GmbH

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www.polyband.de



THEN Foto: Günter Rubitzsch



NOW Foto: Jürgen Holmuth

CONTACT

CONTACT & INTERVIEW REQUESTS

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Germany

www.polyband.de



SCREENING DATES

EIN TRAUM IN ERDBEERFOLIE – COMRADE COUTURE

(mit Vorfilm, 22 min) 7.02.2009 | Cubix 7 | 17:30 Uhr

(mit Vorfilm, 22 min) 8.02.2009 | CineStar 7 | 12:00 Uhr

PREMIERE 10.02.2009 | International | 17:00 Uhr

(mit Vorfilm, 22 min) 11.02.2009 | Colosseum 1 | 15:30 Uhr

Premierenparty sponsored by **SOPHIENCLUB**



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