



Nora von Waldstätten

Ursula Strauss

OCTOBER NOVEMBER


A FILM BY Götz Spielmann

tiff. toronto
international
film festival®

OFFICIAL SELECTION 2013



DONOSTIA ZINEMALDIA
FESTIVAL DE SAN SEBASTIAN
INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL

A person with their back to the camera, wearing a light blue jacket and jeans, stands on a grassy bank next to a calm lake. The lake reflects the surrounding dense forest of evergreen and some autumn-colored trees. A wooden bench is visible to the right of the person. The scene is misty and atmospheric, with a large evergreen branch framing the top left corner.

*"Nobody knows what he's
really like. In fact 'really'
doesn't exist."*

Sonja

OCTOBER NOVEMBER

A FILM BY Götz Spielmann

WITH

Nora von Waldstätten

Ursula Strauss

Peter Simonischek

Sebastian Koch

Johannes Zeiler

Production	Austria 2013
Genre	Drama
Length	114 min
Format	DCP, 35mm
Aspect Ratio	1:1,85
Sound	Dolby 5.1
Original Language	German

www.oktober-november.at

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SYNOPSIS

In a small village in the Austrian Alps there is a hotel, now no longer in use. Many years ago, when people still took summer vacations in such places, it was a thriving business. Two sisters grew up here.

Sonja now lives in Berlin. She has become an actress, very successful, a TV star. She made a career for herself very quickly: she is still only in her early 30s. She has achieved a lot in this short time – but something seems to be missing from her life. She keeps a distance from people, as if protecting herself in this way. She goes through phases of sadness. Apart from her work and her professional attitude towards it, she always seems a little lost. Homeless.

Her sister Verena, who is a little older, has never left the village. After their mother died in an accident she, her husband and her little boy moved into the former hotel, which is much too big for them. But Verena's needs are not as modest as this may suggest. A secret affair with the local doctor brings out a passionate discontent in her, a longing for a different life.

The father of the two sisters also still lives in the former hotel. Still a patriarch, he has grown old and surly. His wife is dead, the hotel out of business. It's autumn, a beautiful October, and the leaves on the trees behind the house are richly coloured.

Then a major heart attack brings him close to death.

He survives, but from now on he is a sick man.

And for Sonja it is high time to visit her family once again, and the scenes of her childhood.

A new chapter begins; old relationships are reconfigured. The reunion slowly but relentlessly brings to light old conflicts between the so very different sisters. Each of them seems to envy the other. Did they really take the paths in life they wanted to follow? They are in the middle of their lives, but have they yet recognised the most essential aspect of that life? And then there is the father: so strangely changed. He, of all people, has abandoned his stubborn, harsh attitude towards the world around him. A new serenity emerges from him. As if the realisation that death is close has turned him into a contented human being. But there is still one secret that oppresses him, something that still has to be done. He knows that he has to act now, as there is not much time left for him.

So that by the time he is lying in the throes of death, and the two sisters keep watch at his bedside, many things have changed.

And it has become November; soon winter will descend upon the land...

A new clarity, a deep reconciliation has entered into the lives of the two sisters.



*"I've really missed a lot,
I sometimes think.
Although... it's something that
can be changed."*

Verena



"One of the great opportunities inherent in cinema is that it enables rooms and landscapes to be more than mere settings for action."

Götz Spielmann



VITA GÖTZ SPIELMANN

- Born in 1961** in Wels, Upper Austria: grew up in Vienna. Began writing while at school, mostly plays and poems. First film work. After high school spent several months in Paris.
- 1980 - 87** studied at the Vienna Film Academy - screenwriting and directing. Two medium-length films received first international prizes.
- 1988** assistant director in the theatre, spent a long period in New York. Screenplays.
- From 1990** in rapid succession, numerous films for the cinema and television.
- From 1994** retreated from filmmaking for several years. Read, thought, taught acting, wrote poems, watched movies. Spent a long period in Berlin.
- From 2000** returned to films and established himself **2004** with **ANTARES** as one of the most important Austrian auteur filmmakers. Work in the theatre. Founded his own production company **SPIELMANNFILM**.
- From 2008** International success for **REVANCHE**, including nomination for "Foreign Oscar". More theatre work. Birth of daughter Hannah.
- 2011** Professor at the Vienna Film Academy, head of the scriptwriting class.
- 2013** **OCTOBER NOVEMBER**
Enjoys living in Vienna.

FILMOGRAPHY GÖTZ SPIELMANN (selected)

2013 OCTOBER NOVEMBER

2008 REVANCHE

With Johannes Krisch, Irina Potapenko, Ursula Strauss, Hannes Thanheiser, Andreas Lust, Hanno Pöschl

Awards: Oscar nomination for Best Film in a Foreign Language. 14 prizes at more than 30 festivals, including winner of Europa Cinema award as Best European Film at the Berlin Film Festival (Panorama) and FIPRESCI Prize for Best Foreign Language Film in Palm Springs
Festivals (selected): Berlin Film Festival, Sydney, Karlovy Vary, Melbourne, Toronto, Vancouver, Pusan, Palm Springs, Haifa, Warsaw, London, Chicago, Los Angeles

2004 ANTARES

With Petra Morzé, Andreas Patton, Hary Prinz, Susanne Wuest, Dennis Cubic, Martina Zinner, Andreas Kiendl

Awards: Austrian Oscar nomination for Best Film in a Foreign Language
Festivals (selected): Locarno, Toronto, Montreal, Vancouver, San Francisco, Palm Springs, Istanbul, Mannheim, Sevilla, Saloniki, Sofia, Belgrade, Pusan, Mar del Plata

2001 SPIEL IM MORGENGRAUEN

(TV Film; based on a novella by Arthur Schnitzler)

With Fritz Karl, Birgit Minichmayr, Karlheinz Hackl, Nina Proll

2000 DIE FREMDE

With Hary Prinz, Goya Toledo, Martin Feifel, Fritz Karl, Nina Proll

Awards: Austrian Oscar nomination for Best Film in a Foreign Language, Austrian entry for the Golden Globe
Festivals (selected): Toronto, Moscow, Seattle, Hof, Palm Springs

1991 DER NACHBAR

With Dana Vávrová, Rudolf Wessely, Hanna Cainer, Wolfgang Böck

Awards: CICAIE Prize (Confédération Internationale des Cinémas D'Art et Essai), San Sebastian, Goldener Kader – Best Screenplay (1992), Vienna Film Prize (1992)
Festivals (selected): San Sebastian, Montreal, Hof, Bratislava, Brussels, Saarbrücken, Strasbourg

1990 ERWIN UND JULIA

With Julia Stemberger, Heinz Weixelbraun, Wolf Bachofner, Wolfgang Böck, Oda Thormeyer

Festivals (selected): Locarno, La Baule, Triest

1987 VERGISS SNEIDER!

Writer and Director

(Diploma Film at the Vienna Film Academy)

1985 ABSCHIED VON HÖLDERLIN

Writer and Director (short film)

1984 FREMDLAND

Writer and Director (short film)

INTERVIEW WITH THE DIRECTOR

One recurring theme of your films is alienation. In OCTOBER NOVEMBER, just as previously in ANTARES and REVANCHE, relationships are reconfigured or brought to an end, while characters attempt to come to terms with themselves.

I wouldn't call it alienation but a search for true identity, the longing for an authentic life. You could also say the search for true vitality. That's what drives my characters. It's not just suffering from things they miss in life; that would be boring, in fact. I'm interested in longings and the struggle for the right life. My films aren't driven by criticism of the conditions someone lives in, or the life a person leads. That always has to be a compromise. And it would be banal. I'm looking for the energy and strength that is required in order to change existing conditions or, if that's not possible, to fulfil your needs within those conditions.

Is the idea of rectifying things also present here? In OCTOBER NOVEMBER the idea of seizing one last opportunity is of considerable importance, especially for the dying father. This is interesting, because the title of your previous film, REVANCHE, also includes within the title the concept of a second chance like this.

Those are interpretations that I like to leave to the audience. Rectifying things... isn't really an important idea for me. To rectify things would mean wanting to have things the way they used to be. That's not the way I think. The idea of rectifying a situation, for me, is too closely associated with the past, with restoration. Making amends is enough.



"Perhaps I didn't try hard enough," says the father to his younger daughter in OCTOBER NOVEMBER - and that's perhaps the most honest apology he can make.

When I was young and really started to think about things, I was quite preoccupied with the ideal of solitude, also in a painful way. I regarded solitude as an existential precondition of human life. Of course I wasn't the first to do so – it's a common theme in philosophy and art. The realisation that solitude is no more than an illusion – an illusion of thought and consciousness which proceeds from the idea that the self is an enclosed unity – was very liberating for me. This belief in the individual is what enables the concept of solitude to be constructed, along with the feeling that goes with it. But I don't believe in the independent, closed self; I think every person is part of an immensely complex network of relationships. I show characters who might perceive themselves as alone, but I hope the story shows that in fact they are mistaken. That they are interwoven in a whole range of relationships, and that this is what constitutes real life for them.

OCTOBER NOVEMBER is a very precise film. The dynamic is developed less by the narrative than by means of the form and the characters. You have the impression that what motivates the characters is expressed predominantly in the images.

In terms of the images, the form, I have three aims: I want to tell the story as precisely, as simply and as intensively as possible. This is the source of my filmic language, the images, the rhythm, the montage. In narratives it's always a great challenge to achieve intensity, density. In that sense OCTOBER NOVEMBER wasn't an easy film, because the story has so little dramatic action on the

surface. What we perceive as normal lives seem unspectacular, if you're accustomed to drama and "suspense films" – the traditional narrative structure in the cinema. In order to provide intensity and tension for our story every single moment of the film has to be structured with all the more precision and vitality.

This affects the acting and also the precision of the form. And after all, that's the real utopia in art.

OCTOBER NOVEMBER deals with complex subjects such as dying and death. How can a film narrative do justice to such existential questions?

You do justice to the big questions by posing them with the greatest possible precision. That's a passionate, life-affirming act. Simply posing the decisive questions of life is in itself comforting and empowering. Only suppressing them is pessimistic. But I also think the important thing for a story – for art in general – is not to provide answers, because the answer is personal and must be provided by each individual member of the audience.

In OCTOBER NOVEMBER there are also interesting relationships between locations.

Yes, I like all that about the film as well: the multiplicity of locations, of living spaces. It all represents different aspects of the characters: the city, the little village. Confined spaces and open spaces. Streets and forests, rooms and squares. The closed and the open spaces.

And they're all aspects of our lives as well. Which makes them part of a narrative. One of the great opportunities inherent in cinema is that it enables rooms and landscapes to be more than mere settings

for action. They can reveal their own poetry, they can themselves become narratives.

These places of refuge seem to be more like part of a "natural" unity which the characters also strive for.

For me, civilisation and nature aren't opposites: they define and complement each other. And the countryside isn't presented as idyllic in the film, any more than the city is depicted as a den of iniquity. I try to do justice to the different spaces and locations in filmic terms. They are the locations of the story, which then makes them poetic places. The poetry of an apartment is of a different nature to the poetry of a mountain lake. Perhaps I increasingly have the need to link these different poetic qualities. Not as opposites, but as syntheses.


Nature also seems to be a place where memories return, linked with a claim of ownership. When they are walking by the lake Sonja says to the doctor something like: "That's my bench."

She says that more like a joke, or in a flirtatious way. Even when she was a child Sonja didn't really feel secure in her family. So she constructed a place – this mountain lake – as her own place of childhood, and kept it in her memory as such. This place in nature is a kind of mythical home for her.

To what extent do religious questions have a role to play in your films? The metaphysical issues that your films raise are those that every religion poses as well. Is that connected with a "silence behind objects" that interests you as a filmmaker?

The silence behind objects interests me a



A man and a woman are sitting on a wooden bench in a park. The woman is on the left, wearing a light blue jacket and a grey scarf, looking towards the right. The man is on the right, wearing a dark jacket, looking towards the right. They are both looking out over a lake and a forest. The background is a lush green landscape with trees and a body of water. The lighting is soft and natural, suggesting a sunny day. The overall mood is peaceful and contemplative.

*"I think you are over
estimating the effect I have
on women."*

Andreas

CAST

Nora von Waldstätten	Sonja	Petra Zeh	Pilgrim's Guide
Ursula Strauss	Verena	Carsten Krohn	Kellner
Peter Simonischek	Father	Julia Lechner	Make-Up Artist
Sebastian Koch	Andreas	Velin Morice Marcone	Unit Manager
Johannes Zeiler	Michael	Wolfgang Zarnack	Director
Andreas Ressler	Hannes	Brigitte Zeh	Assistant Director
Sebastian Hülk	Jan	Sven Petersen	Camera Assistant
Samuel Finzi	David	Christoph Nickel	Gaffer
Barbara Schnitzler	Sonja's Agent	Hunor Schauschitz	Boomer
Judith Engel	David's Wife	Mattias Wolf	Assistant
Claudia Martini	Fan of Sonja	Yvonne Keursgen	Guests at Dinner
Jörn Hentschel	Taxi Driver	Bodo Wagener	
Wolfgang Grossmann	Chauffeur	Hsiu-Hua Schlecht	
Alexander Lhotzky	Dr. Gerold	Manfred Schlecht	
Katharina Biró	Secretary	Valerie Lillibeth	
Randolf Destaller	Priest	Tino Kieschnik	
Jorres Risse	Producer Mormann	Stefan Fent	Actors in the Café
Reinhard Scheunemann	Agent's Husband	Wilhelm Iben	
		Daniel Keberle	
		Julia Koch	
		Magda Kropiunig	
		Karola Niederhuber	



NORA VON WALDSTÄTTEN *stars as* SONJA

After a number of extraordinary performances on the theatrical stage, in the cinema and on television, the Austrian actress **Nora von Waldstätten** – who has made Berlin her home – is considered one of the most remarkable young talents in German-speaking lands.

For her performance in **SCHWERKRAFT** (Director: Maximilian Erlenwein) she was awarded the 2010 Max Ophüls Prize for Best Young Actress.

Films (selected)

- 2011 **WORLD WITHOUT END**
Director: Michael Caton-Jones (TV-Film)
- 2009 **CARLOS**
Director: Olivier Assayas
- NACHSCHICHT VII**
Director: Lars Becker (TV Film)
- 2008 **SCHWERKRAFT**
Director: Maximilian Erlenwein
- PARKOUR**
Director: Marc Rensing
- TATORT - HERZ AUS EIS**
Director: Ed Herzog (TV Film)
- THE COUNTESS**
Director: Julie Delpy
- 2004 **FALSCHER BEKENNER**
Director: Christoph Hochhäusler



URSULA STRAUSS *stars as* VERENA

With her popularity and the wide range of roles she has graced, **Ursula Strauss** has long been a major figure in the Austrian cinema and television world.

For her performance in **VIELLEICHT IN EINEM ANDEREN LEBEN** (Director: Elisabeth Scharang) she received the 2012 Austrian Film Prize as Best Actress.

Films (selected)

2010 **MICHAEL**

Director: Markus Schleinzner

RUHM

Director: Isabel Kleefeld

2009 **VIELLEICHT IN EINEM ANDEREN LEBEN**

Director: Elisabeth Scharang

MEIN BESTER FEIND

Director: Wolfgang Murnberger

AUF SCHNEIDER

Director: David Schalko (TV Series)

2008 **REVANCHE**

Director: Götz Spielmann

2007 **EIN HALBES LEBEN**

Director: Nikolaus Leytner (TV Film)

2005 **FALLEN!**

Director: Barbara Albert

2004 **CRASH TEST DUMMIES**

Director: Jörg Kalt



PETER SIMONISCHEK *stars as the* **FATHER**

For many years **Peter Simonischek** has been one of the best-known actors in German language theatre. He is also frequently to be seen in movies and television productions.

Starting in 1979 he spent 20 years with the Ensemble of the Berliner Schaubühne, where he mainly worked with Peter Stein but also with other directors such as Luc Bondy, Andrea Breth, Klaus-Michael Grüber and Robert Wilson, appearing in numerous classical and contemporary works. Since 1999 he has been appearing at the Wiener Burgtheater, in works by directors including Thomas Langhoff, Peter Zadek, Andrea Breth, Barbara Frey, Alvis Hermanis and Anselm Weber. Since the end of the 1970s he has also made regular appearances in television and cinema films. Peter Simonischek has been honoured with numerous awards, including the German Audio Book Prize and the Grimme Prize.

Films (selected)

- 2011 **LUDWIG II.**
Director: Peter Sehr, Marie Noëlle
- 2009 **GELIBTER JOHANN, GELIEBTE ANNA**
Director: Julian Roman Pölsler (TV Film)
- 2006 **EINE FOLGENSCHWERE AFFÄRE**
Director: Martin Enlen (TV Film)
- 2002 **HIERANKL**
Director: Hans Steinbichler
- 1987 **FÜRCHTEN UND LIEBEN**
Director: Margarethe von Trotta



SEBASTIAN KOCH *stars as* ANDREAS

For many years **Sebastian Koch** has been one of the most versatile and best-known actors in Germany. He earned great acclaim for his performance in Florian Henckel von Donnersmarck's Oscar-winning drama **THE LIVES OF OTHERS**, while also being presented with several awards for his leading role in Jo Baier's television movie **STAUFFENBERG**. The spectrum of his acting work ranges from German TV thrillers to Hollywood blockbusters.

Films (selected)

2013 DIE HARD - A GOOD DAY TO DIE HARD

Director: John Moore

SUSPENSION OF DISBELIEF

Director: Mike Figgis

2011 GOD LOVES CAVIAR

Director: Yannis Smaragdis

IN THE SHADOW

Director: David Ondricek

2010 UNKNOWN IDENTITY

Director: Jaume Collet-Serra

CAMELOT

Director: Ciarán Donnelly (TV Film)

2009 EFFI BRIEST

Director: Hermine Huntgeburth

2008 IN JEDER SEKUNDE

Director: Jan Fehse

2006 THE LIVES OF OTHERS

Director: Florian Henckel von Donnersmarck

CREW

Screenwriter and Director	Götz Spielmann	Camera Assistant	Nino Volpe Lisa Ganser
Director of Photography	Martin Gschlacht		
Editor	Karina Ressler	Steadicam	Ricardo Brunner Robert Stopfer Benjamin Treplin (Berlin)
Sound	Heinz K. Ebner Uve Haußig (Berlin)		
Production Designer	Katharina Wöppermann Susanne Hopf (Berlin)	Digital Imaging Technician	Rainer Fritz
Costume Designer	Erika Navas	Gaffer	Werner Stibitz
Make-Up Artist	Susanne Weichesmiller Jenny Popova	Project Coordinator	Stephanie Wagner
		Unit Management	Niki Brechelmacher
Casting	Lisa Oláh	Set Management	Philipp Tröstner Stefan Wolf (Berlin)
Sound Design	Bernhard Bamberger	Production Coordinator	Franziska Rauch
Sound Mix	Bernhard Maisch	Postproduction Coordinator	Stefan Fauland
Production	coop99 filmproduktion SpielmannFilm	Production Assistant	Daniel Böhme Anna Wutzl
Producer	Antonin Svoboda Martin Gschlacht Bruno Wagner Götz Spielmann	Accountant	Eva Trenka
		Team Assistant coop99	Doris Leitner
Assistant Director	Katharina Biró	Still Photographers	Nikolaus Albert Stefan Oláh
Script/Continuity	Libertad Hackl Zoe Simijonovic (Berlin)		



"Everyone is powerless against thoughts. They just come."

Father

COOP 99 FILMPRODUKTION

coop99 was founded in 1999 by three authors/directors Barbara Albert, Jessica Hausner, Antonin Svoboda and cinematographer Martin Gschlacht. In 2002 coop99 was joined by Bruno Wagner as producer and line producer.

Since their formation coop99 have produced around 25 films and managed to position themselves as one of the most notable Austrian film production companies in the Arthouse sector.

Two European film awards (Darwin's Nightmare for Best Documentary 2004 and Sylvie Testud for Best Leading Actress in Lourdes 2010) as well as winning the **GOLDEN BEAR** at the Berlinale 2006 for Best Film (for Grbavica by Jasmila Zbanic) attribute to the company's biggest successes. Alongside a number of films in Berlin, many coop99 productions were invited to be screened as a part of the official programme at the Cannes Film Festival as well as the Venice Film Festival.

In 2009 both projects Lourdes and Women Without Men won no less than 7 awards in Venice. Amongst them the **SILVER LION** for Best Director which went to Shirin Neshat and the prestigious **FIPRESCI AWARD** awarded by the International Federation of Film Critics which went to Jessica Hausner.

Many national film awards, numerous invitations and honours at international festivals – i.e. the **SILVER LEOPARD** in Locarno 2008 for März by Klaus Händl - complete the productions' recent history. Another highlight of coop99's success was the nomination of Darwin's Nightmare for Best Documentary at **THE ACADEMY AWARDS 2006**.

coop99 in Postproduction

AMOUR FOU

Feature film by Jessica Hausner

coop99 Filmography (selected)

- 2012 THE DEAD AND THE LIVING**
Feature film by Barbara Albert, A/D/RO/PL
- 2012 THE STRANGE CASE OF WILHELM REICH**
Feature film by Antonin Svoboda
Coproducted by Novotny&Novotny Filmproduktion, A
- 2011 THE WALL**
Feature film by Julian Roman Pölsler
Based on the novel by Marlen Haushofer, A/D
- 2010 NA PUTU – ON THE PATH**
Feature film by Jasmila Zbanic, BHI/A/D/CRO
- 2009 WOMEN WITHOUT MEN**
Feature film by Shirin Neshat, G/A/F
- 2009 LOURDES**
Feature film by Jessica Hausner, A/F
- 2006 GRABVICA**
Feature film by Jasmila Zbanic, A/BHI/D/CRO
- 2005 SCHLÄFER**
Feature film by Benjamin Heisenberg, A/D
- 2005 SPIELE LEBEN**
Feature film by Antonin Svoboda, A/CH
- 2004 DARWIN'S NIGHTMARE**
Documentary by Hubert Sauper, A/F/B
- 2004 THE EDUCATORS**
Film feature by Hans Weingartner, D/A
- 2004 HOTEL**
Feature film by Jessica Hausner, A/D



"Where is heaven? Because the only thing up there is outer space, and nobody can live there except for maybe a few astronauts."

Hannes

SPIELMANNFILM

founded 2006. After REVANCHE in 2008 (in Coproduction with Prisma Film), OCTOBER NOVEMBER is the second production by SpielmannFilm. This time together with long time friends of coop99 filmproduktion.





"This belief in the individual is what enables the concept of solitude to be constructed, along with the feeling that goes with it. But I don't believe in the independent, closed self; I think every person is part of an immensely complex network of relationships."

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