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# THULE TUVALU

A FILM BY MATTHIAS VON GUNTEN



WHEN THE ICE MELTS IN THULE  
TUVALU DROWNS IN THE OCEAN

HESSEGREUTERT FILM in coproduction with ODYSSEEFILM presents THULETUVALU

LARS JEREMIASSEN SUSANNE JEREMIASSEN RASMUS AVIKE MALIA AVIKE QULUTANNQUAQ SIMIGAQ PATRICK MALAKI TAKUQA MALAKI LAUTI MALAKI VEVEA TEPOU KAIPATI VEVEA FOINI TULAFONO

director of photography PIERRE MENNEL sound VALENTINO VIGNITI editors CATERINA MONA CLAUDIO CEA sounddesign ROLAND WIDMER mix FELIX BUSSMANN music MARCEL VAID producers VALENTIN GREUTERT SIMON HESSE written & directed by MATTHIAS VON GUNTEN

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# THULETUVALU

A film by Matthias von Gunten

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# CONTENT

Film content	2
Press release	3
Interview with Matthias von Gunten	4
The protagonists	8
Thule and Tuvalu	9
Consequences of global warming	11
Festivals and awards	12
Credits	13
Technical specs	14
Bio/Filmography Matthias von Gunten	15
Bio/Filmography main crew	17
Filmography HesseGreutert Film AG	20

## FILM CONTENT

### Short synopsis

Thule lies in the extreme north of Greenland, Tuvalu is a small island state in the Pacific Ocean. In spite of this huge distance and their polarity, the two places are intimately related by a stroke of fate: whilst in Thule the ice is retreating ever further and turning into seawater, in Tuvalu sealevel is perpetually rising. The film deals with the people in Thule and Tuvalu whose lives are changing forever.

### Long synopsis

THULETUVALU is about people from two entirely different ends of the earth who are increasingly bound together by the ongoing process of global warming, people who in both places are being confronted with the fact that they must change the very essence of their existences.

The film tells of hunters in Thule in North Greenland, the northernmost point on Earth, who still, like their ancestors, spend most of the year at temperatures up to 40° below zero in clothes made of hide and who go out hunting with dog-drawn sleds to feed their families and their dogs. And it tells of the island dwellers of Tuvalu, who live on narrow coral reefs in the endless Pacific and who, like many generations before them, nourish themselves with fish, coconut and the vegetables they themselves cultivate.

At both locations the film participates in the partially archaic lives of these so disparate worlds – that of the icy north and that of the tropical Pacific island. Over its course, not only the dissimilarities but also ever more connections and commonalities become apparent: it is seen at both locations that regardless of whether it's a matter of hunting or fishing, a sled ride or the construction of a canoe, the sea, the primary source of nourishment, is that which determines the entire existence of these people. In both places we experience how this close, dependent relationship on nature has established enduring and specific approaches for lives led for centuries at such remove from the rest of the world.

In observing the protagonists, it becomes ever plainer how the melting of ice in the north alters the seasons, the landscape and also entire lives, just as the thus-ensuing rise in sea levels means the inhabitants of Tuvalu are exposed to the threat of having their homeland one day sink beneath the waves. Together with the main characters of this film, we experience how these changes to their environments increasingly determine their plans and thoughts. They struggle to take a stance between hope and fury, resignation and confidence. And some of them even find themselves forced to draw a line beneath their previous existence and to start all over in an entirely different life.

The stories from these two locations merge during the course of the film to become one narrative in which the protagonists increasingly assume the form of first and finest seismographs, registering a transformation that will one day touch everyone on Earth.



*If the inland ice of Greenland should ever melt entirely, sealevels would rise world-wide by seven metres.*

### **Press release**

Matthias von Gunten (whose works include «Max Frisch, Citoyen» (2007), «Ein Zufall im Paradies» (Coincidence in Paradise) (1999), «Reisen ins Landesinnere» (Journeys into the Interior) (1988), has completed a new cinema documentary, «ThuleTuvalu», which is to have its world premiere on April 27, 2014, within the international competition at the Visions du Réel in Nyon. Immediately thereafter it is to participate as part of the World Showcase section at the Hot Docs in Toronto and at the the international competition at the DOK. Festival in Munich. It will be released at cinemas in Switzerland in October, 2014.

Employing impressive images, director Matthias von Gunten describes the lives of the inhabitants of Thule in Greenland and Tuvalu in the South Pacific, lives that due to climate change are being altered forever since the ice in the north is retreating whilst sealevels are perpetually rising in the south.

In «ThuleTuvalu» the filmmaker succeeds in creating a touching portrait of people whose joint fates are intimately linked though they live at two completely distant corners of the world.

## INTERVIEW WITH MATTHIAS VON GUNTEN



*Matthias von Gunten, in selecting Greenland and the island state of Tuvalu, you chose locations for your new documentary film that were isolated not just from your native Europe but in an absolute sense. What was the original cinematic idea for «ThuleTuvalu»?*

Most of all it was the insane image that these two extremely isolated places are what you might call physically linked - given that ice melting at one of them corresponds to sealevel rise at the other. I could almost see this system of «communicating pipes» and imagined, when thinking of the people of Thule and Tuvalu, that global patterns were crystallising in this enthralling microcosm.

*A documentary could hardly hope to be more global than «ThuleTuvalu», given its locations of Greenland's northernmost inhabited area and the most endangered and smallest island state of the Pacific Ocean. Was it these extremes that fascinated you?*

Yes, that truly was something that stimulated me: the antipodes of Thule and Tuvalu combined certainly stands for something approaching the whole world. I imagined all the time that these two so distant locations would make it possible for me to make tangible what you might call the weight of the world. But I suppose that the incredible dimensions of the Earth, ones that long haul flights give some impression of, are such as cannot really be made perceptible to the senses through cinema.

*How did you research and prepare for filming, given the obvious climatic and cultural challenges?*

My principal was: go look, experience and react to what you come across. Another form of research would not have been possible. That doesn't mean I didn't prepare. I read, searched for addresses in the Internet, made contacts, watched films... But it was plain to me that things would take their own course anyway.

Without this openness and sense that I would find solutions on location, I would have despaired and given up beforehand. But I had significant experience from shooting abroad in the past: regardless of where you go, you meet people and you can always essentially understand them. That sounds terribly banal, I know, but to me it is an extremely important insight that gives me confidence to go anywhere and come to an understanding with people.

*The protagonists, many of whom speak no English, seem to trust you. How were you able to establish this trust and intimacy?*

I think the most important prerequisites are sufficient time, a credible interest in people, and a willingness to reveal oneself. And that was doubtless decisive here. I went to both locations three times before we started shooting, so that I could get to know the people and they me. It's also important that they should see that one understands their situation, that one can enter into their mindset. It's this that established the trust that was essential to this film - after all, it wasn't supposed to be a theme-specific or specialist film, but rather one that lives exclusively from its people and characters. Winning people's trust is something very unspectacular and natural, it doesn't involve any tricks. And if one's interest is not genuine, it doesn't work.

*In terms of equipment, what requires attention when filming in the humid tropics of Tuvalu and in the minus temperatures of Thule's Arctic climate?*

We had astonishing few technical problems. Nothing rusted in Tuvalu despite the damp and salty air, at no time did the electronics grow tarnished - although of course we took extremely good care. We knew of the possible problems in the Arctic in advance - particularly that of going into a warm room carrying a cold camera. We naturally made a lot of tests so we knew that a given tripod would only turn smoothly in the cold if a particular lubricant had been applied. The worst problem was the short battery life in the cold. But we had a system involving the cameramen keeping the batteries against his body. I don't think we had a single large-scale interruption due to technical problems. Though it's true to say that cameras are surprisingly robust these days.

*What size was your crew in Tuvalu and in Thule (and Qaanaaq) and why?*

We only ever travelled as a three-man team: me, the cameraman and the soundman. This proved to be the ideal size. I didn't want a conspicuous, large team at such sensitive locations. Being a threesome made us very flexible, and if we were also somewhat slower, this corresponded to the rhythms of the locations. Another important factor is the composition of personalities. Pierre Mennel and Valentino Vigniti brought along very good attitudes, and I was certain that with the two of them I could undertake an adventure consisting of many unfamiliar situations. In this I was one hundred percent vindicated.

*What was the nicest surprise and what was the largest problem you ran into in Tuvalu and in Thule?*

The largest problem at both locations was approaching the theme of progressive change without forcing people's hands or instrumentalising them. Their lives



aren't just about this matter: over and above it they must come to terms with daily life and maintain a positive attitude. Furthermore, these changes aren't spectacular at first sight. A really tentative approach was required so as to make tangible, alongside these people, the factors they're exposed to. But this is part and parcel of directing, and, let it be noted, my colleagues worked fantastically beside me to take people as they found them. The nicest surprise for me was at the end of shooting in Qaanaaq, when Rasmus came up to me, gave me a small polar bear he himself had carved from bone, then hugged me. I was just so happy.

*«ThuleTuvalu» includes almost no voice-over commentary. Was this a conceptual decision?*

It wasn't planned that way. For a long time I wanted to include a first-person text, but it proved more disruptive than worthwhile. Every time we included a voice it seemed that there was one person too many – what does he want now? The film only started to work when we relied entirely on our protagonists and didn't try to force them excessively into some kind of mental or contextual concept. So I'm glad: there's nothing better, as far as I'm concerned, than making the people you represent as interesting and lifelike as possible.

*How long did the editing phase of the film last, and what were the main questions regarding the dramaturgical process?*

Editing easily took a year, with interruptions, and was nothing but misery. For a long time I simply couldn't see how the film could be made to work. The greatest difficulty was finding a balance between the purely cultural and human-interest aspect, and the context in which these people find themselves. If one only shows their lives, it becomes an entirely ethnographic film. If everything is seen through the lens of climate change, it soon becomes boring. Finding the right proportions here was the greatest challenge.

*Will the inhabitants of Tuvalu and Thule have the chance to see your film (or have they already)?*

They will certainly see the film, the question is only whether as a DVD or whether I will go there myself. In both cases, personal presentation would be the best thing. But given the shipping timetable, this would mean a stopover in Nanumea of at least four weeks, making for a round trip of at least six weeks. In Qaanaaq it would take around ten days. So in total it's quite a time-consuming expedition, and moreover I don't even know how interested they are likely to be. These are both cultures that principally focus on tangible day-to-day factors relating to survival. To them, filmed material is of a very secondary importance.

*In «ThuleTuvalu» you evoke the question of mankind's end. Is there no hope for Thule, for Tuvalu, or for any of us?*

I don't think I'm evoking the question of mankind's end. It's more a matter of an unbelievable and unprecedented transformation: we are changing the entire planet through global warming, and by so doing altering the manner of life of countless people. It interests me primarily in cultural terms. What does this say about us, and what are the consequences? Thule and Tuvalu, as they are today,



will disappear in the foreseeable future, it would seem. And moreover, people will live entirely differently - the people of Tuvalu elsewhere, too. If developments to be seen at both locations continue, then one of the consequences will be that ever more people live the same or similar lives. Everything is moving towards our Western, developed, technological lifestyle. I'm not condemning this, but it makes me somewhat melancholy. This doesn't, however, affect the hopes of people of Thule or Tuvalu or everyone else's. I have faith in everybody's ability to work towards finding good solutions for him or herself.

*On consulting your filmography, it is apparent that several of your films feature anthropological and existential issues – these are most pertinent in «Big Bang» and «Ein Zufall im Paradies» (Coincidence in Paradise), the former addressing the creation of the world, the latter that of mankind. Is it fair to say that «Thule-Tuvalu» is a sort of continuation of this thematic thread?*

I've never thought of it that way. Those two films focus on philosophical questions which, together with scientists, I attempted to incorporate into cinematic action. In this film I am primarily interested in the «condition humaine»: «Thule-Tuvalu» is to me a fantastic departing point to report on people, their experiences their thoughts and their feelings within the insane context of global warming.

## THE PROTAGONISTS



Rasmus Avike, 46, is a hunter feeding a family of six who doesn't know what he will do when he no longer can hunt.



Lars Jeremiassen, 65, has raised four children hunting and believes that humans, like animals, will adapt to these changes. He just doesn't yet know how.



Patrick Malaki, 42, fisherman and canoe builder, father of three, doesn't believe that God will one day let Tuvalu become submerged.



Takuao Malaki, 44, teacher, Patrick's wife, wishes that her children have the chance to emigrate and live in a safe place.



Kaipati Vevea, 41, officer responsible for the flora on the island of Nanumea, father of three, is certain that Tuvalu will be submerged and wants to emigrate with his family.



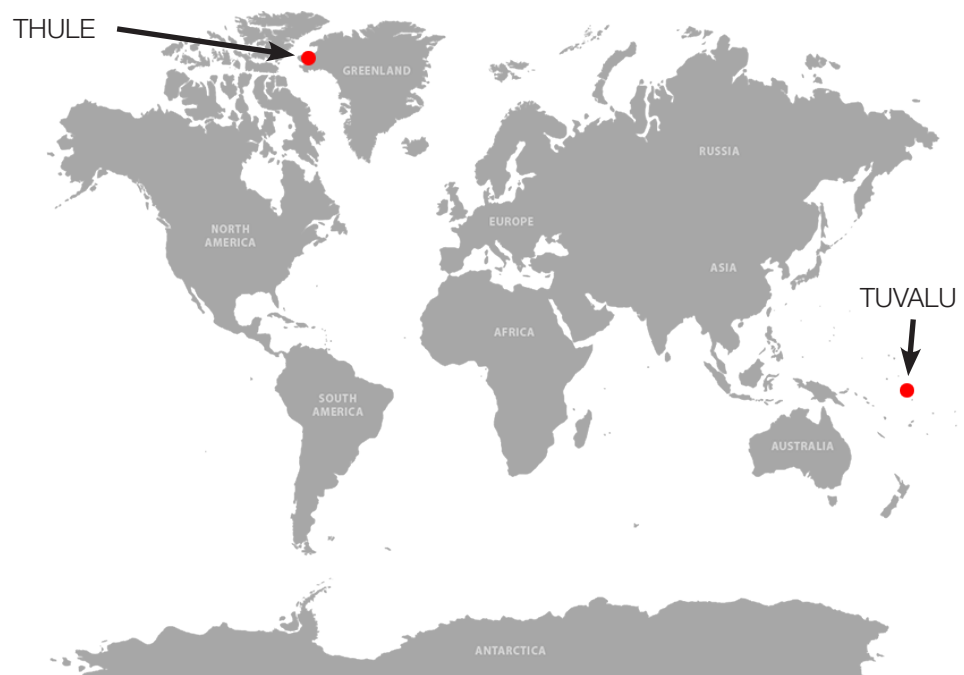
Vevea Tepou, 71, father of 21 kids, first municipal president of Nanumea, believes that the government of Tuvalu must search for a place to relocate the country's entire people to.



Foini Tulafono, 42, former teacher, left Tuvalu with her family of seven due to fears about rising sealevels and now lives in New Zealand.

## THULE AND TUVALU

Thule, in Greenlandic Qaanaaq, lies in the far north of Greenland and is (besides Longyaerbyen, Spitzbergen) the northernmost inhabited point on Earth. (77° latitude, 69° longitude). From Switzerland it takes about three days and many stopovers to reach Qaanaaq. Inuits first settled in the area approximately 2000 years ago. Qaanaaq itself was first founded in the 1950s as a replacement for the original Thule, which had stood for centuries some hundred kilometres south of it. Its inhabitants, however, had to make way for an American airbase and were moved to today's Qaanaaq.



Tuvalu is an island state close to the equator and the international dateline with approximately 10,000 citizens. It is one of the smallest countries on Earth and consists of nine atolls that stretch across approximately 700 km - these are coral reefs that formed atop extinguished volcanoes. Tuvalu's only airport is located in its main town of Funafuti, and it can only be reached from Fiji. The only communications between the atolls are two mid-sized passenger ships that sail every four weeks or so. The islands of the atolls are so narrow that the inhabitable surface of Tuvalu, in spite of its great length, is only some 26 km<sup>2</sup>. The country's uppermost point is about 4 metres above sea level. The first one was colonised about 2000 years ago. Today's inhabitants live like their ancestors, mostly from fishing, coconuts and the pulaka plants they cultivate, plus some few import articles. There is no industry.



Nanumea, our location in Tuvalu, is the most north-westerly of the nine atolls. It can be reached from Funafuti via a three-day ship's passage. It has approximately 600 inhabitants. Nanumea has a primary school, telephone reception and an infirmary with some medication, but no doctor, no dentist, no restaurant and no hotel. Electricity is provided by a diesel generator from 7 AM to 11 PM.



*Tuvalu's fate depends on how much ice melts at the Earth's poles. Its highest point is four metres above sea level.*

## CONSEQUENCES OF GLOBAL WARMING

Research into global warming is a highly complex, multi-disciplined science. Specialists struggle with facts and interpretations around the world. We are limiting ourselves here to some few important specifics that relate to our locations. The UNO's IPCC-Report of 2013 (link below) is a recommended source of more detailed information:

[www.climatechange2013.org/images/report/WG1AR5\\_SPM\\_FINAL.pdf](http://www.climatechange2013.org/images/report/WG1AR5_SPM_FINAL.pdf)

Here we limit ourselves to some few crucial specifics relating to our location.

### **Thule**

The ice sheet across Greenland covers a surface that is approximately 6 times as large as Germany and up to 3000 metres thick. Should all of Greenland's ice melt, sea levels around the world will rise by seven metres.

Warming is proceeding in a stronger and faster fashion at the Arctic than anywhere else on Earth. Each year Greenland loses more ice than the year before. In 2012 it lost about six times as much ice as it did in 1992.

The phases in which the hunters of Qaanaaq can hunt on the ice are growing ever briefer: fifteen years ago there was nine months of stable ice, in 2012 it was only six.

In Qaanaaq different kinds of seals appear from those of a decade ago. Many animals, such as walruses, no longer come at the same time of year as before - but now there are many more fish.

### **Tuvalu**

In Tuvalu the sea has risen approximately nineteen centimetres in the last twenty years. The cause of sea level rise, besides the melting of Greenland's ice sheet, is the melting of Antarctic ice as well as heat-related water-volume increase.

King tides, normally to be found in February, are now occurring all year round because of increased temperatures. These can submerge individual islands.

The rising sea attacks beaches, burrows beneath palms and topples them, penetrates the soil rendering agriculture more difficult, and salts the groundwater, exacerbating the drinking-water situation.

Monsoon-like rainfall, a normal event early in the year that is essential for drinking water supply in Tuvalu, has become weaker or entirely ceased in recent years.

## FESTIVALS AND AWARDS

### Awards

Sesterce d'argent as Best Swiss Film (all sections) at Visions du Réel 2014

Nomination for Swiss Film Prize 2015, categories Best Documentary and Best Cinematography

### World premiere

Visions du Réel 2014, Nyon, Switzerland, International Competition

### International premiere

Hot Docs 2014, Toronto, Canada, World Showcase

### Other festivals (selection)

DokFest 2014, Munich, Germany, International Competition

CinemAmbiente 2014, Torino, Italy, Closing Film

Peace & Love Festival 2014, Borlänge, Sweden, Official Selection

67th Festival del film Locarno, 2014, Switzerland, Panorama Suisse

H2O Environmental Film Festival 2014, Moscow, Russia, Official Selection

Bergen International Film Festival 2014, Norway, Int. Documentary Program

Reykjavik International Film Festival 2014, Island, Official Selection

35th Aspen FilmFest, 2014, USA, Official Selection

38th Margaret Mead Film Festival, New York, USA, Official Selection

CPH:DOX Copenhagen 2014, Denmark, Official Selection, Danish premiere

21st Barcelona Environmental Film Festival 2014, Spain

Green Perspective 2014, Cabo San Lucas, Mexico

St. Louis International Film Festival 2014, USA

Third Anthropological Film Festival, The Jerusalem Cinematheque 2014, Israel

Anchorage International Film Festival 2014, USA

St. Andrews Green Film Festival 2015, Scotland

DocPoint 2015, Helsinki, Finland / Tallinn 2015, Estonia, Official Selection

Zagreb DOX 2015, Croatia

Thessaloniki Film Festival 2015, Greece

Ecofalante Environmental Film Festival 2015, Sao Paulo, Brazil



## CREDITS

### Main crew

Writer & Director:	Matthias von Gunten
Producer:	Valentin Greutert, HesseGreutert Film
D.o.P.:	Pierre Mennel
Sound:	Valentino Vigniti
Editors:	Caterina Mona, Claudio Cea
Composer:	Marcel Vaid

### Financing partners

Schweizer Radio und Fernsehen SRF  
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Paul Schiller Stiftung  
G + B Schwyzer Winiker Stiftung  
Alexis Victor Thalberg Stiftung  
Ecodocs

### Distribution

Switzerland: Look Now!  
North America: Perry Street Advisors  
World sales: Accent Films International

## TECHNICAL SPECS

Length	96 minutes (cinema version)
	52 minutes (TV version)
Original languages	Inuit, Tuvaluan, English
Subtitles	German, French, English
Shooting format	HD, 25fps
Exhibition format	DCP, 25fps

# MATTHIAS VON GUNTEN

## Writer & Director



Matthias von Gunten was born in Basel in 1953. He attended the University of Television and Film in Munich from 1975 to 1980, graduating with his feature film «Quelle Günther». He subsequently worked as an editor, cameraman and director's assistant on various film productions. Since 1986 he has directed numerous documentary films for cinema and television.

With his company ODYSSEEFILM, Matthias von Gunten is co-producer of «ThuleTuvalu».

## Filmography

- 2014 **ThuleTuvalu**, documentary for cinema, 96 mins.  
Script, direction, co-production  
Two places on the edges of this earth make the headlines because of climate change: Thule in Greenland, because there the ice is melting away, and Tuvalu, because this island state in the Pacific is one of the first countries to be threatened by submergence because of rising sea levels. Although for us global warming happens almost exclusively in the media, it is changing the entire existence of the peoples of Thule and Tuvalu. «ThuleTuvalu» narrates in spectacular images how these people must take leave of existences led since time immemorial for an unknown future. International Competition, Visions du Réel 2014; World Showcase, Hot Docs, Toronto, 2014; International Competition, DokFest München 2014
- 2011 **Max Frisch: Zürich Transit – The Failed Film Project**, TV documentary, 52 mins.  
Script, direction, production  
Max Frisch dreamt of making a grand film for cinema and wrote its script: Zürich Transit. There were two attempts by German producers to realise the work. Both failed after some few weeks of filming, and the created footage vanished. Now it is once again available. This film reconstructs the failed project of the grand and not merely tragic destruction of Max Frisch's great dream using fragments of that footage and featuring those who participated back then.
- 2009 **Township Ballet**, TV documentary, 52 mins.  
Script, direction, production  
The story of two young people from the townships of Cape Town, where they participated in a Ballet project for township children (Dance for All). Both of them were so successful that they can now continue their career as excellent Ballet dancers in a professional Swiss company. A film about possibilities, but also about the endless difficulties of liberating oneself from a troubled background and childhood through ballet.
- 2007 **Max Frisch, Citoyen**, documentary for cinema, 96 mins.  
Script, direction, co-production  
With Peter Bichsel, Helmut Schmidt, Henry Kissinger, Günter Grass, Christa Wolf a.o. Max Frisch was the last great Swiss intellectual who was also known and valued beyond the borders of his own country, a figure without real peers these days. This film reviews Frisch's story as a contemporary witness to a backdrop of the closing 20th-century.  
Solothurn Filmfestival 2008, Dok.Fest Munich 2008



- 2004 **Voyage contre la faim**, TV documentary, 51 mins., TSR, TV5  
Script, direction, production  
With Jean Ziegler as Rapporteur Spécial for the right to nourishment in the field in Ethiopia.
- 2002 **Die Wägsten und Besten des Landes**, documentary for cinema, 87 mins.  
Script, direction, production  
Two top Swiss-style wrestlers prepare for the national wrestling competition and compete there as favourites.
- 2000 **Die Kinder von Brancaccio**, TV documentary, 52 mins.  
Script, direction, production  
A Sicilian project from Palermo that attempts to help children escape a Mafia-oriented milieu and lead a normal life. For two years these children live in the children's town of Pestalozzi, then return home. With what success? A film about intervention and hope conflicting with sober reality.
- 1999 **Cioncidence in Paradise (Ein Zufall im Paradies)**, doc. for cinema, 90 mins.  
Script, direction, production: T&C Films  
This film follows top scientists in Africa and America pursuing the dream of discovering how we humans emerged from apes.
- 1998 **Abschied vom Tod?**, TV documentary, 52 mins.  
Script, direction, production: SF  
Two doomed HIV patients receive the newly developed medication that for the first time could stave off AIDS, thereby allowing them to escape for some time the death they had prepared for.
- 1997 **Seitenwechsel**, TV documentary, 52 mins.  
Script, direction, production: SF  
Two bankers complete a social project called «Seitenwechsel», or change of sides. For two weeks they help in a social institution so as to discover different aspects of life and increase their social competence. One lives together with AIDS-sick drug addicts, the other helps in a centre for severely mentally disabled persons. Both make unexpected discoveries and both are pushed to their limits.
- 1993 **Big Bang**, documentary for cinema, 90 mins.  
Script, direction, production: Balzli Filmproduktion  
This film follows how, in observatories in Chile, at CERN in Geneva, and amongst the Pope's private astronomers, scientists are trying to discover the greatest secret ever: how the universe was created.
- 1988 **Journeys into the Interior (Reisen ins Landesinnere)**, doc. for cinema, 90 mins.  
Script, direction, production  
Five people and one place in Switzerland over the course of the year: a very subjective atmospheric picture of my country in the 80s.

## PIERRE MENNEL

**D.o.P.**



Pierre Mennel was born in 1964 in Zürich. In 1986 he became a founder member of the Videowerkstatt Zürich. From 1987 to 1992 he worked as a freelance film technician. He completed his three-year course at the College of Design in 1995, and is now a state-recognised videographer and filmmaker.

### Filmography (selection)

#### Feature films

- 2013 **Vielen Dank für nichts**, directors: Stefan Hillebrand, Oliver Paulus
- 2009 **Pepperminta**, director: Pipilotti Rist
- 2009 **Die Standesbeamtin**, director: Micha Lewinsky
- 2007 **Der Freund**, director: Micha Lewinsky

#### TV films

- 2012 **Nebelgrind**, director: Barbara Kulcsar
- 2009 **Die Standesbeamtin**, director: Micha Lewinsky
- 2006 **Kein Zurück**, director: Sabine Boss
- 2005 **Alles bleibt anders**, director: Güzin Kar
- 2002 **Alles wird gut**, director: Thomas Hess
- 2001 **Romeo und Julia**, director: Daniel von Aarburg
- 2000 **Dragan und Madlaina**, director: Kaspar Kasics

#### Documentaries for cinema

- 2014 **ThuleTuvalu**, director: Matthias von Gunten
- 2013 **Balkan Melodie**, director: Stefan Schwietert
- 2010 **Hugo Koblet - Pédaleur de charme**, director: Daniel von Aarburg
- 2010 **Nel giardino dei suoni**, director: Nicola Bellucci
- 2008 **No More Smoke Signals**, director: Fanny Bräunig
- 2000 **Blue End**, director: Kaspar Kasics
- 1993 **Babylon 2**, 2nd unit, director: Samir

## VALENTINO VIGNITI

### Sound



Valentino Vigniti, born 1981, gained a Bachelor of Arts in Film from the Zurich University of the Arts. He managed to establish himself in the film branch during his studies by working on several projects. He has now worked for several years as a camera man and first camera assistant. He was responsible for sound on the ThuleTuvalu project and also worked as an assistant to Pierre Mennel.

### Filmography (selection)

- 2014 **ThuleTuvalu**, sound, AC, director: Matthias von Gunten
  - 2013 **Lothar**, short, D.o.P., director: Luca Zuberbühler
  - 2012 **Liebe und andere Unfälle**, TV film, AC, director: Tom Gerber
- Several commercials for Sunrise, Lindt, UBS, SBB etc. as D.o.P. and assistant.

## MARCEL VAID

### Composer



Marcel Vaid was born in 1967 and works as a freelance musician and composer for film and theatre. Besides creating musical works and research, producing and recording both musical compositions and arrangements for over 40 feature and documentary films, he has also given masterclasses in Locarno et al., completed commissioned pieces, and is head of the electroacoustic band Superterz.

Marcel Vaid has won numerous awards both at home and abroad for his film music.

### Filmography (selection)

- 2014 **ThuleTuvalu**, documentary, director: Matthias von Gunten
- 2013 **Sitting Next to Zoe**, feature film, director: Ivana Lalovic
- Vielen Dank für nichts**, documentary, director: Stefan Hillebrand, Oliver Paulus
- 2011 **Goodnight Nobody**, documentary., director: Jacqueline Zünd
- 2010 **Sommervögel**, feature film, director: Paul Riniker
- Guru – Bhagwan, his Secretary and his Bodyguard**, doc., director: S. Gisiger
- 2009 **Die Standesbeamtin**, TV film, director: Micha Lewinsky
- Die Dachkantine**, documentary, director: Nicole Biermeier
- Tandoori Love**, feature film, director: Oliver Paulus
- 2008 **Der Freund**, feature film, director: Micha Lewinsky



## CATERINA MONA

### Editor



Caterina Mona was born in Zürich in 1973. She completed basic studies at the University of Zürich in the faculties of English, Film Studies and Philosophy. She then changed to the INSAS Film College in Brussels where she studied editing.

### Filmography (selection)

- 2014 **ThuleTuvalu**, documentary, director: Matthias von Gunten
- 2012 **Appassionata**, documentary, director: Christian Labhart
- 2011 **Die Kinder vom Napf**, documentary, director: Alice Schmid
- 2009 **Daniel Schmid - Le chat qui pense**, doc., final edit., director: P. Hofmann&B. Jaberg  
**Zwischen Himmel und Erde**, documentary, director: Christian Labhart
- 2007 **Max Frisch, Citoyen**, documentary, director: Matthias von Gunten
- 2006 **Aschenbrüder**, Kurzfilm, director: Steve Walker und Markus Heiniger
- 2005 **Erkenntnis**, TV documentary, director: Jeannette Fischer / Sternstunde SF
- 2004 **Ricordare Anna**, feature film, director: Walo Deuber

## CLAUDIO CEA

### Editor



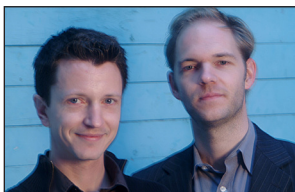
Claudio Cea was born 1977 in Basel. He completed film studies at Vancouver Film School, Canada and at the International Film School in Cologne, where he had the opportunity to learn from renowned lecturers including Barbara Hennings («Aimée und Jaguar», «Marlene»), Patricia Rommel («Das Leben der Anderen», «Nirgendwo in Afrika»), Eric Zumbrennen («Her», «Being John Malkovich»), et al.

His development, which began with the editing of shorts, ranged from writing for magazines and documentary films for SRF to creating music videos and adverts before finally being consummated in his great love of film and documentaries. His editing has featured at the Berlinale, Locarno and Montréal.

### Filmography (selection)

- 2014 **ThuleTuvalu**, documentary, director: Matthias von Gunten
- 2013 **Viktoria - A Tale of Grace and Greed**, Kinospießfilm, director: Men Lareida  
**Dinu**, TV film, director: Simon Aeby
- 2011 **Der Sandmann**, feature film, director: Peter Luisi
- 2010 **Sommervögel**, feature film, director: Paul Riniker  
**Jump**, feature film, writer & director: Bindu de Stoppani  
**Liebling, lass und scheiden**, feature film, director: Jürg Ebe
- 2009 **Rocksteady – The Roots of Reggae**, documentary, director: Stascha Bader
- 2008 **Tag am Meer**, feature film, writer & director: Moritz Gerber
- 2004 **Tiger erdolchen**, short, editor, director: Moritz Gerber

## HESSEGREUTERT FILM AG



Valentin Greutert & Simon Hesse

HesseGreutert Film is an independent production company based in Zurich, Switzerland. It was founded in 2004 by the producers Simon Hesse and Valentin Greutert. The company produces documentary and fiction films for theatrical release as well as television. HesseGreutert Film's track record displays the wide interests of its owners: Just like their fascination for film does not halt at a certain genre, HesseGreutert Film is not limiting itself to a certain kind of film.

Thus, the filmography includes such diverse works as the theatrical documentaries «Max Frisch, Citoyen» and «Rocksteady: The Roots of Reggae», the children's film «Clara and the Secret of the Bears» or the Arthouse feature films «Day at the Seaside» and «Night Rush». With «One Way Trip 3D», HesseGreutert Film produced one of the very first European 3D films in 2010. Many of the films have won awards and have been shown at international festivals.

HesseGreutert Film seeks long-term collaboration with writers and directors, distinguished by partnership and respect to nourish the creative and formal discussion.

The company is a member of the Independent Swiss Filmproducers and the European producer network ACE.

### Filmography (selection)



#### **ThuleTuvalu**

Documentary, CH, 96 minutes, 2014

Writer & director: Matthias von Gunten

Two places on the edges of this earth make the headlines because of climate change: Thule in Greenland, because there the ice is melting away, and Tuvalu, because this island state in the Pacific is one of the first countries to be threatened by submergence because of rising sea levels. Although for us global warming happens almost only in the media, it is changing the entire existence of the peoples of Thule and Tuvalu. „ThuleTuvalu“ narrates in spectacular images how these people must take leave of existences led since time immemorial for an unknown future.

International competition Visions du Réel 2014, World Showcase Hot Docs 2014, Toronto, international competition Dokfest Munich 2014



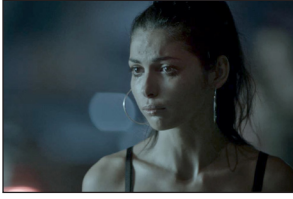
#### **Aimless (Ziellos)**

TV-Movie, CH, 90 minutes, 2014

Writers: Niklaus Hilber & Patrick Tönz, director: Niklaus Hilber

With Joel Basman, Mona Petri, Peter Jecklin a.o.

19-year old Pascal is in constant conflict with the people around him. He has quit his apprenticeship and hangs around aimlessly. When he is drafted into Basic Training, he unexpectedly and for the first time ever discovers how developing team spirit and taking responsibility can lead to recognition, self-respect and friendship – and how good this feels. After graduating from Basic Training, Pascal tries to secure a foothold in his old life and attempts to complete his apprenticeship – but because of his poor grades, nobody seems willing to give him a second chance. His frustration with the harsh realities of society grows until his anger explodes in a fatal event.



### **Viktoria - A Tale of Grace and Greed**

Drama, CH, 88 minutes, 2013

Script: Anna Maros & Men Lareida, director: Men Lareida

With Franciska Farkas, Angéla Stefanovics, Zsolt Nagy, Erika Pölöskey a.o.

Viktoria leaves her home of Budapest hoping for big money in Zürich. By night she stands in the red-light area waiting for customers. She tries to overcome her disgust with thoughts of what she can buy with all the money. Despite her dubious situation, she finds love, friendship, and herself between violence and the world of fast sex.



### **Kursverlust**

TV-movie, CH, 91 minutes, 2013

Script: Jan Poldervaart, director: Barbara Kulcsar

With Judith Hofmann, Michel Voïta, Beat Marti, Pablo Grüning, Sibylle Brunner

A happy mother, a successful professional, a passionate oarswoman - this is how Julia describes herself on meeting Elias. But that's no longer true. She has just capsized while rowing when Elias fishes Julia from the water. The kind Elias seems to live on an unseaworthy boat docked in the harbour and to be happy with his lot. Julia is fascinated. But Elias has a secret.

Nomination for Fernsehpreis Baden-Baden 2013



### **Clara and the Secret of the Bears (Clara und das Geheimnis der Bären)**

Family, CH/D, 91 minutes, 2012

Script: Jan Poldervaart, director: Tobias Ineichen

Co-production with Neos Film, Germany

With Ricarda Zimmerer, Damian Hardung, Roeland Wiesnekker, Elena Uhlig a.o.

Past and present meet in a world of legends and secrets. 13-year-old Clara senses that a curse has been put on the old farmyard of her stepfather, Jon. She is drawn into an irresistible whirlwind of adventures. She alone can save the bears and lift the curse.

Shown at 50 international festivals, e.g. FIFEM Montréal, Solothurner Filmtage, Cinekid Amsterdam, Giffoni Film Fest, Shanghai IFF. Prix Place aux Familles am FIFEM Montreal, Audience Award ICFF Krakau, ANEC Award Giffoni, Audience Award Buster Copenhagen, Award Best Storytelling Molodist Kiev, Award Best Children's Film Minsk ICFF



### **The Cage Door Is Always Open**

Documentary, 87 minutes, 2012

Writer & director: Daniel Young

With Gore Vidal, Bernardo Bertolucci, John Waters, Mohammed Mrabet a.o.

The Cage Door Is Always Open tells the story of writer and composer Paul Bowles and his wife Jane. Though they were both homosexual, they had an intense relationship that led them on a spiritual journey to the point of no return.

Shown at more than 12 festivals, e.g. Zurich Film Festival 2012, Mostra Sao Paulo 2012, Berlinale Panorama 2013.

Audience Award at Torino GLBT Festival



### **One Way Trip 3D**

Horror film, CH/AT, 85 minutes, 2011

Script: Matthias Bauer & Bastian Zach, director: Markus Welter

Co-production with Superfilm, Austria

With Sabrina Reiter, Melanie Winiger, Herbert Leiser, Matthias Britschgi a.o.

A group of young people travels to the Jura to look for magic mushrooms. When they find themselves in the clutches of an insane farmer and his daughter, the trip turns into a nightmare.

Max-Ophüls-Preis Saarbrücken 2011, Brussels International Fantasy Film Festival 2012

Nominiert Taurus World Stunt Award 2012



### **Die Käserei in Goldingen**

TV-movie, 90 minutes, 2010

Script: Jan Poldervaart, director: Markus Welter

With Herbert Leiser, Alois Mojo, Rebecca Indermaur, Leonardo Nigro a.o.

One morning the old and weary cheesemaker Hans finds a stranger in his goat stable. It is an African refugee who is profoundly sick and seeking shelter. A tentative friendship grows between these two dissimilar men.



### **Night Rush (Im Sog der Nacht)**

Thriller, CH/D, 86 minutes, 2009

Script: Moritz Gerber, director: Markus Welter

Co-production with Greenskyfilms, Germany

With Nils Althaus, Stipe Erceg, Lena Dörrie a.o.

Three disillusioned young people rob a bank. Then a civilian loses his life. A flight beset by panic and euphoria begins.

Premiered at Max-Ophüls-Festival in Saarbrücken 2009, Zurich Film Festival 2009



### **Rocksteady – The Roots of Reggae**

Documentary, CH/CAN, 95 minutes., 2009

Writer & director: Stascha Bader

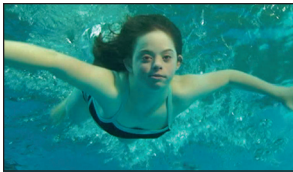
Co-production with Muse Entertainment, Canada

With Stranger Cole, Judy Mowatt, Dawn Penn, Ken Boothe, Hopeton Lewis a.o.

A handful of old musicians and singers meet up to resurrect the songs and sounds of late '60s Jamaican music; they record an album and tell their stories.

Shown at more than 20 festivals, e.g. Slamdance 2010 (competition), Filmfest München 2009, Buenos Aires 2010.

Zürcher Filmpreis 2009, Nomination Swiss Film Prize 2010



### **Elenas Chance**

TV documentary, 52 minutes, 2009

Writer & director: Bernhard Weber

Elena lives with down syndrome. She has attended normal school since kindergarten. She is moving into secondary school next year. Director Bernhard Weber accompanied an integrative class for six months in 2008 to see how and if integrative lessons function.



### **Korichor**

TV documentary, 52 minutes, 2009

Writer & director: Jan Poldervaart

Two worlds collide when the concert-choir from the young musicians' schools of Gjilan in Kosovo and that of Zürich go on tour together in Switzerland. Two worlds that could not be more dissimilar but which attempt to find common ground in music.



### **Day at the Seaside (Tag am Meer)**

Drama, 98 minutes, 2008

Writer & director: Moritz Gerber

With Dominique Jann, Doris Schefer, Manuel Löwensberg, Patricia Mollet-Mercier a.o.

Dave is turning thirty - and sees to his dismay that youth is finally ending. He's a DJ, a record shop owner, and has just got back with his ex, Sarah. He is not, however, happy. Struggling with the obligations of a relationship and his fading dreams, he meets the much younger Alice who, as she reports, is just setting out on a «three-times-round-the-world» trip.

A.o. Hofer Filmtage 2008, Max-Ophüls-Festival 2009, Solothurner Filmtage 2009, Shanghai International Film Festival 2009, Kairo International Film Festival 2009, Festival Nuovo Cinema Europa, Genova 2010, Santiago de Chile 2010.

Berner Filmpreis 2008



### **Max Frisch, Citoyen**

Documentary, 94 minutes., 2008

Writer & director: Matthias von Gunten

With Peter Bichsel, Helmut Schmidt, Henry Kissinger, Günter Grass, Christa Wolf a.o.

Max Frisch was the last great Swiss intellectual who was also known and valued beyond the borders of his own country, a figure without real peers these days. This film reviews Frisch's story as a contemporary witness to a backdrop of the closing 20th-century.

Solothurner Filmtage 2008, Dok.Fest München 2008



### **Tod in der Lochmatt**

TV-movie, 90 minutes, 2007

Script: R. Burkhalter, directors: R. Burkhalter & D. Helfer

With Bettiny Stucky, Leonardo Nigro, Markus Merz, Jasmin Clamor a.o.

The old farmer Gottfried Rösli is found by his daughter Käthi Güdel. He has been shot dead and suspicion falls on Käthi's husband, Sämi, who had been locked in a cantankerous conflict with his father-in-law. But the orthodox investigator Bettina Käser finds this explanation too simple. With her partner, Egger, she heads out to find the truth.

Best Actress & Best Actor at Cinéma Tout Ecran 2007



### **Sonjas Rückkehr**

TV-drama, 90 minutes, 2006

Script: D. Tucker, director: Tobias Ineichen

With Melanie Winiger, Marlon Altenburger, Urs Hefti, Suly Röthlisberger a.o.

It was an accident, says Sonja Knecht. She has served six years in prison for the killing of her husband. Now she wants her son back. But Tim is living with the in-laws, and they have led him to believe his mother is dead. But Sonja will fight against the past and for her child.

Best Swiss TV Movie at Cinéma Tout Ecran 2006