

Mongrel Media
Presents

MICHAEL H.

profession: director

A film by Yves Montmayeur
(90 min., Austria/France, 2013)
Language: French

Distribution



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High res stills may be downloaded from <http://www.mongrelmedia.com/press.html>

SHORT TEXTS

MICHAEL H. profession: director

Only rarely has one come as close to the person and artist who is Haneke as one comes whilst watching this documentary from Yves Montmayeur. Rarely has one understood so well how this man and his vision have established themselves over the years as groundbreaking and exemplary in the international world of film. Haneke's wisdom, humanity, and unbending will to keep the eyes of his ever-growing audience open instead of lulling them into a state of delusive mainstream bliss have, even now, secured him a place in the cinema-Olympus.

MICHAEL H. profession: director

is simultaneously an appraisal, analysis and appreciation of Michael Haneke's radical cinematic creations. Beginning with Haneke's most recent global success, AMOUR (Palme d'Or, Golden Globe, five Oscar nominations) Yves Montmayeur, long-time companion and friend of the director, unfurls Haneke's career up to his first conceptual films, from its beginnings to the present. Montmayeur creates a montage of film clips, interviews with the filmmaker and his actors, and background scenes from the shoots to make a playful portrait which familiarizes the audience congenially with the works and working methods of the by now world famous film artist.

MICHAEL H. **profession: director** – Production Synopsis

*How can violence be shown on screen?
How is the family crumbling at its core?
And, thinking further, how does evil creep into our
so-called highly-developed society?*

These questions, which have determined Haneke's filmic creations since their inceptions, haunt his works to this day. In his documentary, Yves Montmayeur follows the director and friend for 10 years during his filming, in order to bring Haneke's philosophical and moral cosmos to light.

Haneke is a theorist of pictures: In the practice of decoding an image and *Mise en Scène*, certainly the most battle-scarred of his contemporaries. When he expresses an opinion about the media, he does this mostly from this perspective, incidentally. But Michael Haneke is also a great "Auteur," as charming as he is inaccessible. A genuine Viennese *Monsieur Arkadin* who tries, repeatedly, to erase the traces of his past.

Yves Montmayeur's documentary switches to the other side of the Hanekeian mirror, by accompanying him on a route which he took between Vienna and Paris, Northern Germany and Romania. In this way he comes close to the person Haneke, both at work and in everyday life, in order to illuminate a previously unknown side of the Hanekeian Oeuvre, which reveals a fascinating moralist. Haneke knows like no other, how to point out the dirty dregs of current Western society.

During shootings of diverse films and appearances at the Cannes Festival, we directly see moments of intense reflection about his work and, simultaneously, we witness the blossoming of a creation which is born under extreme tension. His greatest actresses, from Isabelle Huppert to Susanne Lothar, comment on Haneke's consequent and visionary approach to the world and describe the unique features of his directing.

In his Viennese private sphere, however, behind the mask of the recognized "Auteur," we encounter a man who is trapped in his loneliness, who is at the mercy of his existential fears and doubts about humanity, which he shares, as he confesses, with his colleagues from the past. Just as they do, the director of 'The Piano Teacher' too understands perfectly how to reveal the uncanny side of our modern world which has lost all illusions, and to mourn the loss of meaning in our existence.

MICHAEL H. **profession: director – DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT**

Again and again, Michael Haneke says that he does not want to talk about himself. "My private life should not influence the way in which my audience sees my films."

In order to make a documentary about a director who categorically rejects the exploration of his private life, a more open approach is required in order to break through the "professional" and strict distance which is consciously established. For this reason, I decided to portray Haneke at work. Only through the almost holy intimacy which arises during creative endeavor can the man behind his work be revealed.

In the past twenty years, Michael placed his trust in me in the form of long and short, public and private interviews about his ideas concerning film. And I could understand more and more how his world view engendered a particular filmic approach.

As a result of this complicity and friendship, most of the "Making of" of his films were entrusted to me. And even here I could follow the human challenges, his obsessive characters and artistic doubts and, sometimes, I could even contribute something or other during the origination process of the films.

From the Cannes Film Festival, where "Amour" was awarded the Golden Palm, my documentary journeys back to Haneke's early film sets in France and Germany right up to his first steps as a cinema director. In this way, we can discover, piece by piece, the complexity of the film craftsman that is Michael Haneke.

Yves Montmayeur

YVES MONTMAYEUR - Director

Since 1999 Yves Montmayeur has been making documentaries with a focus on contemporary Asian cinema and directors from Japan, Hong Kong and South Korea. However, he also films portraits of eccentric filmmakers and unusual personalities such as the Chinese director Johnnie To, the cameraman Christopher Doyle, and the Italian actress and director Asia Argento. His films are screened at festivals worldwide. Yves Montmayeur works regularly for the ARTE TV program "Tracks" on the subject of cinema, music and visual arts and moderates press conferences at the Cannes Film Festival.

FILMOGRAPHY (a selection)

- 2013** **MICHAEL H. Profession: Director. A portrait of Michael Haneke**
- 2012** **L'Incertitude des choses.** Variations on the new Flemish Belgian cinema
- 2011** **Pinku Eiga:** Inside the Pleasure Dome of Japanese Erotic Cinema
- 2010** **Johnnie Got His Gun!** A portrait of Johnnie To
- 2009** **Viva la muerte!** Autopsy of Spain's new cinema of the fantastic
- 2008** **Les Fantômes de Kiyosh.** An essay film about Kiyoshi Kurosawa
- 2009** **Yakuza-Cinema.** The Japanese gangster film
- 2007** **Les enragés du cinéma coréen**
- 2007** **In the Mood for Doyle.** A portrait of Christopher Doyle
- 2005** **Ghibli et le mystère Miyazaki**
- 2004** **Nice to Meet You, Please Don't Love Me!** A portrait of Asia Argento
- 2004** **Electric Yakuza, Go to Hell!**
- 2003** **Hong Kong Stories**

Technical Information

90 min OV

Original language: German / French

with English, German or French subtitles

HDcamSR / 25 fps / 16:9 / Sound: 5.1 and Stereo

DCP / 24fps / 16:9 / Sound 5.1

ProRes 422