



"NOTHING IS AS SWEET AS CRIME,
AS LONG AS YOU'RE NOT THE VICTIM."

GANGSTER GIRLS

A FEATURE-LENGTH DOCUMENTARY
BY TINA LEISCH

SPECIAL MENTION AT THE VIENNALE 2008

“Gangster Girls by Tina Leisch is testimony to how truly invaluable the use of theater work can be in an Austrian penitentiary, the women’s prison in Schwarzau. The formal trick of masking the protagonists allows the film to unmask a legal system and its execution. We bestow this film with our honorable mention and wish it many viewers!”

Jury of the Vienna Film Prize

Gangster Girls (Tina Leisch) is the most fascinating discovery among the documentary films coming out of Austria at this year’s Viennale. Inmates at the women’s prison Schwarzau with thick layers of make-up on their faces perform stories on the stage, in the kitchen, the sewing room, and in the cells. Are they their stories, and where does the theater start?

Salzburger Nachrichten online / 17 October 2008

With Gangster Girls, the Viennale has actually been able to make an Austrian discovery: Perhaps it is not perfect, but this documentary film by emerging director Tina Leisch remains interesting throughout, offering fascinating insight into an Austrian women’s prison.

Michael Höck, ORF.at

GANGSTER GIRLS

Documentary, Austria 2008, 79 Minutes (52 Minutes TV-Version)

Directed & written by **Tina Leisch**

Written & produced by **Ursula Wolschlagler & Tina Leisch**

Director of Photography **Gerald Kerkletz**

Additional Camerawork **Leena Koppe**

Editor **Karina Ressler, Tina Leisch, Julia Pontiller,**

Music by **Eva Jantschitsch**

Sound Recordist **Klaus Kellermann**

Assistant Director & Choreographer **Sandra Selimovic**

Featuring **Miranda, Sophia, Chantal, Fabienne, Sammy, Amélie, Roberta, Renée,** and **Cindy, Jason, Justin, Big Joe, Joker, Dominik, Ennis,** and **Djejob**

The Film GANGSTER GIRLS was enabled by the dedication of **GOTTFRIED NEUBERGER**, head of the penitentiary for women Schwarzau, **MARGITTA ESSENER**, head of the penitentiary for male minors Gerasdorf and their personnel, especially: **SUSANNE SCHLOSSTEIN, SANDRA KAINDLBAUER,** and **JOHANN RENNER** in Schwarzau, as well as **MICHAEL HEILING,** **NORBERT SIGART** and **DORIS KRENSEIS** in Gerasdorf.

They are caught in between heroin trips and toy pistol muggings, between mad shopping sprees and depths of misery. They learn English and jail slang. They crave for substitute happiness smuggled into their cells and the next leave.

At the only women's prison in Austria, Schwarzau, drug mules, robbers, and frauds share their cells and their yearnings for love, tobacco, and shower gel. They dream of their children who are far away or one of the inmates from Gerasdorf, the prison for male juveniles, brought to the women's prison once a week for a co-ed theater workshop.

What put them behind bars and what is prison doing to them?

The young women's improvised answers on stage are often entirely different than those that they give in intensive interview tableaux. This gives rise to a complex picture, drawn by the prisoners themselves, of the social space of the prison.

Filmed during the work on the theater piece "Medea bloß zum Trotz," the film foregoes pictures of rattling key rings, ornery guards, surveillance cameras, and monitors. Rather than directing our view to the daily incapacitation of confinement, the film moves primarily in the narrow freedom offered by the theater group, in which the young prisoners dance and flirt, letting sparks fly for a few hours a week as they practice creativity, wit, and pathos rather than discipline.

The film makes no claim of portraying the omnipotent disciplinary machinery of the prison, yet one nonetheless constantly senses how it works its way into the picture with an unseen power.



I just won't accept it! Some people bury their kids in concrete and get four or five years and people like me get three years for some stupid nonsense.



I was never violent, but since I've been in jail,
I'm really aggressive, violent and wicked.

The worst thing that can happen to a prison is that the inmates get out of control, A situation that causes the “peace and order” (a pair of terms that appear seventeen times in Austrian penal law, “order” alone, eight times) to waver. Smooth alignment to the prison machinery is what really counts – everything else is of minor importance. For the prison, good inmates are ones who fit into their given roles without contradiction or friction, who carry out the work assigned to them without objections, show absolutely no conspicuous behavior, do not complain, and refrain from anything that might be used to question the system – as a whole, act as though they have no problem taking on the assigned role of entirely passive assimilation. Here is one of the reasons why prison achieves so little as a “reformatory institution.” Perfect adjustment to prison leaves a person incompetent for life.

A prisoner’s drop in status upon entering the institute almost compulsively generates the impulse to assure one’s identity, threatened by the institute’s rules, through contrary behavior, which is what makes a strict system of control necessary in the first place. Not only are criminal values learned and adopted in prison, but also the ability to exploit contradictions between the norm and actual behavior, to talk of assimilation and practice deviance when confronted with officials, but at the same time, to talk of opposition and practice betrayal when dealing with prisoners, ultimately bringing others into the corruption. In prison, one learns more about dealing with illegality than simply finding out how to break into safes and find accomplices. Prisons generate, at least in part, the behavioral abnormalities that they are set up to prevent.

Prisons do not diminish the crime rate: they can be extended, multiplied, or transformed, the quantity of crime and criminals remains stable, or worse, increases. (...) Detention causes recidivism; those leaving prison have more chance than before of going back to it. (...) The prison makes possible, even encourages, the organization of a milieu of delinquents, loyal to one another, hierarchized, ready to aid and abet any future criminal acts. For the observation that prison fails to eliminate crime, one should perhaps substitute the hypothesis that prison has succeeded extremely well in producing delinquency, a specific type, a politically or economically less dangerous – and, on occasion, usable – form of illegality; in producing delinquents, in an apparently marginal but in fact centrally supervised milieu; in producing the delinquent as a pathologized subject.

Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*



My relationship with my children is a difficult one because I grew up in a children's home. I love my children but I was never able to show them my love. My daughter said: "Mum, I'm not angry with you. Where could you have learned it, If you never experienced love yourself?" That's painful for me. When I watch a happy family on TV, I think: " Why couldn't my life have been like that?"



I didn't hurt anybody. Well, ok, financial loss... That can be returned. And the insurance will pay.
But I do regret it if only because I'm not with my daughter.
The offence as such I do regret.

INTERVIEW WITH BRIGADIER GOTTFRIED NEUBERGER, DIRECTOR OF THE SCHWARZAU PRISON

Why do you have a co-ed theater group at Schwarzau?

The world is made up of men and women, while in prison the sexes are strictly segregated. Coeducational projects serve to produce a bit of normality. For the young men from Gerasdorf, especially, it is also very important pedagogically that they learn to work with women on an equal basis rather than just trying to chat them up.

The theater group also corrects the public image of inmates in that one sees: these are entirely normal people. That helps to prepare an atmosphere that will ease the prisoners' re-entry into society.

What are the difficulties with this sort of project?

Prisons are built to lock people in. To explain to the staff members: we are going to open up a bit now, despite being a prison, stirs mistrust in some at first, as they have had the experience that everything that comes from outside is criticism. Then strangers come and do theater here, what do we need that for? For some it took a while to work against the paranoia hype. And some do not want to even see what impact might be possible here.

How do you respond to the critique of the penal system, that prisons don't serve to reform, but instead, first and foremost, to nurture criminality?

It is certainly not that severe. One has to keep in mind the prisoner subculture and set up the prison in such a way that people do not forget how to shape their own lives. With the exception of youths and the mentally ill, most of the inmates led a normal, independent life before prison. Criminals are not criminal 24/7. These are normal people who for various reasons committed a crime. Naturally, with longer sentences especially, there is the danger that social competences remain dormant for too long. It is our job, especially in the final two years before release, to make sure that the women relearn them. And with regard to the term "reform": that's a philosophical question. Am I a better person simply because I did not steal a Mercedes? I don't know about that.

If the prison has a moral sanction, then that is to make an effort to offer people help so that they can deal with society better afterward. In many cases that happens successfully, but not all. Responsible for the success here is, in part, the prison, and in part, the prisoner, but a major role is played by the society that the prisoner enters when they are released. Are there people and institutions that support them, help them in the labor market? The critical phase here is mainly the six to twelve months after release. If these are managed, then the probability of recidivism is slight.

What are the differences between the prisons in Gerasdorf and in Schwarzau?

For the male juveniles in Gerasdorf it takes a long time for them to develop trust, open up, until they believe you and want to have conversation. It is a great deal of work to even get to the point where it is possible to be effective.

With the women this work isn't necessary. Women take the initiative in looking for conversation, confrontation. Here, the work involves being able to fulfill the need, to have time for this communication. Physical violence is a typical male problem. Women are more violent towards themselves, slip into depression, mental illness, dependencies, then into criminality.

That means that in Gerasdorf one must invest a lot more into anti-violence training, and in Schwarzau, on the contrary, one needs more resources for therapeutic measures to strengthen the women's self awareness.

In both Gerasdorf and Schwarzau, a remarkably high percent of the inmates are victims of violence. More than eighty percent of the male juveniles and the women have experienced massive violence, and among the young men the estimated figure for unreported rapes is extremely high.

What are your ideas for improving the women's penal system?

Key factors after release are work and employment opportunities. There is a huge deficit in terms of measures to allow inmates to earn qualifications during their prison terms. We need a lot more opportunities, especially low-level short training programs, after all, not all of the women are here for several years. There are far too few in the women's prison. And then, it would be good to further expand the therapy options.

Do you see alternatives to locking people up?

Of the 9,000 inmates in Austria, there are probably 5,000 who don't have to be locked up in prison. But you have to do something with them. Not intervening at all is also not possible. You can't let a juvenile with a steady record of violent behavior to simply continue doing what he's doing. At the lower level there are models: community work, diversion, "sweating instead of sitting." But money is necessary to extend such alternative models to more severe crimes. And then there are the people who are truly dangerous. In science fiction films there are cultures without weapons, without violence. But unfortunately one never sees in the films how they got to the stage where that works.



Medea (playing the judge):

Jason of Jolkos, charged with high treason.

Jason:

I am innocent. I am nothing but a little tree that the dogs of fate lift their legs and piss on.

Medea (playing the judge):

Didn't you give her the choice: accessory to theft or no more love?

Jason:

I'm just a man.

Prosecutor:

Didn't you incapacitate her with a targeted shot of brilliant romance?

Jason:

She was begging for it.

Prosecutor:

If you hadn't of stolen that fleece, you could have had a happy life.

Jason:

The conditional is not one of my strong points.

Medea (playing the judge):

May I reproach you with the following sentence:

"As long as you two stay together, no one can have anything on you, regardless of what you do." Does that ring a bell?

Jason:

I heard it, I think, in a Brazilian soap at some point.

Prosecutor:

The trial has concluded that Jason of Jolkos deliberately and freely incited Medea to the burning of history. He made a bowl of her cultural manor for his greedy hellhounds. He used them for years as false teeth to eat wild meat, and then he forgot about this magnificent *Mrs. Stanley knife* for a gold engraved coffee spoon from *Girлие*. I recommend capital punishment. No extenuating circumstances.

Jason:

She wanted it all like that. I am not guilty.

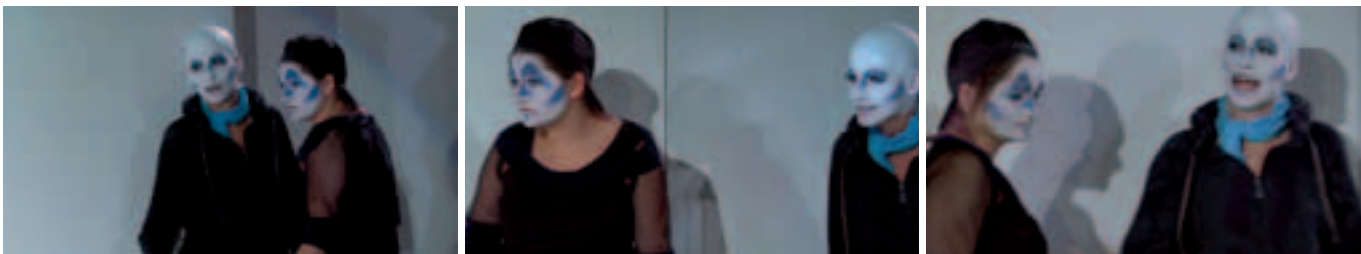
Medea (playing the judge):

In the name of revenge, Jason of Jolkos is found guilty of breaking hearts, of leading a sham existence, of high treason, of marriage betrayal, of brainwashing children, of breaking souls, of counterfeiting memory, of selling out dignity, of scrupulously stealing the future. He is sentenced to lifelong banishment in the realm of joylessness: A fate worse than death.

From the play "Medea bloß zum Trotz" by Alma Hadzibeganovic and Tina Leisch based on prisoners' improvisations

Right from the start, this film reveals more than simply overcoming the contradiction between visual chronicle and the necessity of anonymity: Mouths, faces disappear under heavy, skillfully applied make-up; hair is hidden under wigs or caps. In this way, people become fictional characters to a certain extent, but the circumstances under which they live remain real.

Isabella Reicher, Der Standard / 17 October 2008



Gangster Girls—the artistic product of months of close collaboration is now available, impressive, disturbing, touching, maybe even beguiling.

Barbara Huemer, Augustin online / 10/2008

With Gangster Girls, Tina Leisch sets new standards in the cinematic exploration of the Austrian penal system.

Ramón Reichert, Viennale Falter '08

The film opens a whole new perspective for everybody involved. *Julia Pühringer, Kurier online / 20 October 2008*

MASS EVERY SUNDAY, BUT CULTURE ONLY ONCE IN A BLUE MOON.

Plea for equality of gods and muses, at least in terms of their function as IAT (Imperial Arrest Turnkeys).

by Tina Leisch

When a person is lying on the ground in a sorry state, the time has come for priests. Protestant pastors, Catholic priests, Evangelical parsons, Jehova's Witness preachers, and Muslim Imams go to the prisons to catch souls, like a fisherman heads for the seas.

For many prisoners they are welcome visitors. After all, they are commonly the only conversation partners who are not members of the prisoner subculture or obliged to the incarcerating institution. Usually one can at least speak openly with the priest about things that can't be shared with social workers, psychiatrists, or therapists—and also not with fellow prisoners. Although the leitmotif of today's justice is re-socialization and therapy rather than revenge and punishment, therapists and social workers are still part of the prison machinery. What one entrusts to them becomes an argument for or against reducing one's sentence or early release. To this extent, many prisoners are extremely interested in painting an advantageous picture of themselves in their eyes. (Naturally, there are exceptions: people who refuse to simulate re-socialization and at the price of paying the full punishment do not conceal from the institution their chosen occupation as criminal.)

Prisoner subculture, on the other hand, often has very rigid rules for assigning or denying status. There, too, it is often necessary to be careful with confessions to avoid dropping down the rungs of the hierarchy.

The question is, however, why does a secular state reserve the turnkey function exclusively for the gods, and not let the muses in? Why are voluntary helpers naturally allowed to visit prisoners in the name of God, Allah, or Jehovah and hold

discussion groups, prayer nights, or confession, but those who want to do the same in the name of Melete (contemplation), Clio (history), Melpomene (tragedy), Terpsichore (dance, light entertainment), Thalia (comedy), Euterpe (flute and song), Erato (love poems), Urania (astronomy and astrology), Polyhymnia (sacred poetry and pantomime), or Calliope (philosophy) often bang their heads against a brick wall.

Prisoners in Austria have the right to one cultural event each quarter. The prison guards who are responsible for supervising leisure time pick something—often according to their own tastes. Cultural projects by artists with prisoners are only possible in a few institutes in which progressive directors appreciate the potential of working with art. Only in extremely exceptional cases does the department of justice pay the artists.

Meanwhile, cultural work has gained in importance as many people are sitting in prison because the culture or subculture that they belong to follows different rules than those valid in the mainstream culture that makes the laws. In order to recognize the mutually contradictory rules of the various societies in this dilemma of identification and loyalty, one has to be able, at least, to keep them at an arm's length: which is very difficult in the mandatory tight-knit prison community.

Theater provides some freedom to playfully try out conflict situations and behavioral patterns in an enjoyable way without being thrust into the often narcissistically grievous therapy situation of reflection about one's own life=failure.

In this respect, I advocate immediately handing the muses the keys to the Austrian prisons. Those who want to work with the prisoners in their name can, of course, do so. Should prisoners request courses in writing love poems, workshops for story writing, or dance theater, then such wishes should be fulfilled just as readily as the request for confession or holy communion. Amen.



**In jail I learned a lot about drugs. Before that I knew nothing.
In that respect jail gives you a perfect schooling
I didn't know before how you cook it, now I know.**



When she comes from the shower, she puts cream on her whole body even in her hair. She uses the hair dryer on her whole body. – She lies down on the floor, legs upward, stark naked. She says she's doing Yoga. Without clothes. Nobody wants to see that. – We think, she's a lesbian. She shows me by her gestures that she likes me. That bothers me.



Director/Writer TINA LEISCH

"The step from theater work to film work is not only a change of media, but also an entirely different machinery for the production of meaning and desire. I am extremely interested in what significance the film will have for the protagonists."

Film, text, and theater worker; designs theater experiments in social conflict zones. Worked at Steinhof with alcoholics and mentally ill criminals on the history of the Nazi murder of patients; carried out research in the Corinthian partisan regions for a play about the massacre of a peasant family by a Nazi police battalion; developed with the inmates at the juvenile detention center Gerasdorf, the hip-hop drama "Date your Destiny." She was awarded a Nestroy prize in 2003 for her staging of George Tabori's "Mein Kampf" with residents at the Meldemannstrasse residential home for men. Co-founder of kinoki (www.kinoki.at), Volktheater Favoriten, and Verein Persman (www.persman.at)

Filmography

1999 **Vergiß Europa!** A black and white film. sw 33 min, 2003 **riefenstahlremix**, Documentary Video. 33 min

Theater Work

1994 Brechts **Dreigroschenoper**, *Volktheater Favoriten*, 1996 **Penthesilea, a Dog Opera after Kleist**. *Volktheater Favoriten*, 2002 **Mein Kampf** by George Tabori in the hostel for the homeless *Meldemannstraße* (NESTROYPREIS FOR BEST OFF-THEATERPRODUCTION), 2003 **Elf Seelen für einen Ochsen- enajst dus za enega vola** *Festival der Regionen*. 2004 **Irgelichter am Spiegelgrund** (*Text together with Lennart Lakatos*), 2005 Elfriede Jelineks **Stecken, Stab und Stangl** with pensionary Migrants, 2006 **Date your Destiny** (*Theaterproject in the penitentiary for male minors Gerasdorf, Text together with Alma Hadzibeganovic*), 2006 **Liebesforschung/istrazivanje ljubavi/Rodimos e kamlipesko** (*Koncept and Text together with Ljubomir Bratic and Boban Stojkov, Directed by Tina Leisch*) 2007 **Medea bloß zum Trotz** (*Theaterprojekt with prisoners of the penitentiaries Gerasdorf and Schwarzau*)



Writer/Producer URSULA WOLSCHLAGER

"The exciting thing about documentary work is penetrating worlds that seem especially remote to you and then discovering your own reflection in them. In the case of Gangster Girls, this is an unsettling thought at first that nonetheless gains more substance and fascination the closer one gets."

Has worked in the area of film since 1995, initially as production manager; over the years, she concentrated more on the area of content and became active as an author; awarded the Carl-Mayer-Drehbuchförderpreis (screen writing prize) in 2002. From 2004–2007 she was responsible for development, dramaturgy, submission, financing, and completion of Austrian productions and international co-productions at Lotus-Film GmbH. In 2008, she founded *Witcraft Szenario OG* together with Robert Buchschwenter. She now works independently in development, dramaturgy, and production (www.witcraft.at)

Filmography (selection)

As Production Manager: **Die totale Therapie** (D: Christian Frosch), **Luna Papa** (D: Bakhtiar Khodounasarov), **Beyond the Ocean** (D: Tony Pemberton), **Tag für Tag ein Boulevardstück- die Kronzeitung** (D: Nathalie Borgers)

As Script Adviser or Development Producer: **Slumming** (D: Michael Glawogger), **Freigesprochen** (D: Peter Payer), **Vaterspiel** (D: Michael Glawogger), **Contact High** (D: Michael Glawogger), **Winds of Sand**, **Women of Rock, the Toubou Women's Caravan** (D: Nathalie Borgers, in Postproduction)

As Producer:

Das Tor zur Hölle (8x45, D: Max Gruber), **Kotsch** (Directed by Helmut Köpping)



Director of Photography
GERALD KERKLETZ

"The possible value of a picture can only be found in what it represents. It is necessary to constantly comply with that and thus resist vain beauty."

Freelance cameraman; studied at the Academy of Applied Arts, in the Department of Visual Media, and at the Filmakademie Wien.

Filmography of Camerawork *(selection)*

März (Händl Klaus), **Tschuschenpower 3-5** (Jakob M. Erwa), **Amo Beethoven** (Stefan Bohun), **Daemonen** (Sebastian Meise), **Codename Figaro** (Anja Salomonowitz), **Felix Ende** (Thomas Schwendemann), **Dreynschlag** (Marco Kalantari)



Editing
KARINA RESSLER

"Emancipation has progressed when women, too, rob banks; that is to say, when they become actors in a society that reserves aggression for men."

Studied at the Filmakademie Wien; freelance film editor

Fiction Editing *(selection)*

Revanche (Götz Spielmann), (NOMINATED FOR THE OSCAR 2009, BEST FOREIGN LANGUAGE FILM)
Ein Augenblick Freiheit (Arash T. Riahi), **42plus** (Sabine Derflinger), **Fallen** (Barbara Albert), **Schläfer** (Benjamin Heisenberg), **Hotel** (Jessica Hausner), **Blue Moon** (Andrea Maria Dusl), **The Virgin** (Diego Donnhofer)

Documentary Editing *(selection)*

Wer hat Angst vor Kathy Acker (Barbara Caspar), **Volver La Vista** (Fridolin Schönwiese), **Der Schnitt durch die Kehle** (Kurt Palm), **Weg in den Süden** (Reinhard Jud), **Zur Lage** (Barbara Albert, Michael Glawogger, Ulrich Seidl, Michael Sturminger), **Postadresse Schläglmühl** (Egon Humer), **Ist der Teufel wirklich ein Kind** (Margarete Heinrich)



Music
EVA JANTSCHITSCH

"The music for 'Medea bloss zum Trotz' was composed for the play and, in part, developed in conjunction with the actors."

Studies of visual Media at Karel Dudesek & Peter Weibel University of applied Arts, Vienna. Since 2004 working mainly under the alias **Gustav** in electronic music production. Various albums and performances from Amstetten until Zaire.

Music Composition & Production for Theater & Film projects *(selection)*

Orlanding the Dominant - Eine queere Burlesque, (SV Damenkraft, Tomka, Gustav), **Draussen tobt die Dunkelziffer** (Director: Schorsch Kamerun), **The Great Television Swindle** (maschek.), **Bei Schüssels / Beim Gusenbauer** (maschek.), **Medea bloss zum Trotz** (Director: Tina Leisch), **5 1/2 Roofs** (Director: Sepp Brudermann), **Conceptual paradise** (Director: Stefan Römer), **Auf Grund : Happy Ends** (Director: Tanja Witzmann), **Ende gut alles gut** (Director: Niklaus Hebling)



– Did you have a professional training before you were put behind bars? – Me? No. Why do you ask? – Just asking.
– My girlfriend was a beautician. She always groomed me. Face massage. Manicure, pedicure, removing of hair with wax...



I'm not interested in what the others have done. For me it's only a person and her character that counts, no matter what she did even if she killed 50 people. I only care about what she's like and not why she's here.



**Assistant director
and choreographer:
SANDRA SELIMOVIC**

"All of our efforts to present something great, to make art, are of no value if we don't touch any hearts, perhaps not even our own. How should changes take place in people if we don't let ourselves become completely engaged?"

Freelance actress, filmmaker, acting coach, therapeutic theater workshop coach.

Selection of film roles:

1994 *Operation Dunarea*, ORF, 2006 *Tischmädchen*, Kupetzky, ORF 2007 *Soccer Bitch*, *Identities Filmfestival*

Selection of theater roles:

1995- 2008 *Ensemble member of Theater Wozzek, Dschungel Wien (Amsterdam, Glaube, Liebe Hoffnung and many others)*, 2002 *Eine burgenländische Hochzeit, Kulturforum Südburgenland*, 2003 *Biographie, Gruppe 80* 2004 *Die Fahrt im Einbaum, Gruppe 80*, 2006 *Date your Destiny, penitentiary for male minors Gerasdorf Liebesforschung*, *dietheater Künstlerhaus*

Projects as Coach and Director:

Since 2005 *Theaterworkshops in the detox and rehab centre Grüner Kreis*, 2006 *short film Soccer Bitch*



**Sound
KLAUS KELLERMANN**

"It is bittersweet to be behind bars with so many women."

Sound recordist

Freuds verschwundene Nachbarn (Director: Kurt Mayer), Prater (Director: Ulrike Ottinger), ORF: *Liebesg'schichten und Heiratssachen, Alltagsgsg'schichten, Am Schauplatz, ZIB, Studio Wien, Land und Leute, Natur und Garten, Universum u.v.a.m.*

Make up: **MONIKA LABAJ, ELISABETH VOLLENHOFER, WILTRUD DERSCHMIDT** Additional Camerawork: **LEENA KOPPE, ANDREAS WINTER, JUDITH BENEDIKT** Additional editing: **JULIA PONTILLER**, Costumes: **SANDRA SEKANINA** Editing consultant: **KURT HENNRICH, ANDREA WAGNER, JOANA SCRINZI** Additional sound recordists: **ATANAS TSCHOLAKOV, WOLFGANG MOHAUPT, GAILUTE MIKSYTE, DANIEL FRITZ, CLAUDIUS BENISCHKE** Camera assistants: **ANDREAS WINTER, LEENA KOPPE** Light: **THOMAS SCHINDLER, THOMAS MÜNSTER, LEENA KOPPE, STEPHAN LUDESCHER** Theater light: **MÄCKS** Sound Design: **STEFAN ROSENDRUNG** Colour corrector: **KURT HENNRICH** Mixing: **CHRISTOPH AMANN** Assistant Editors: **JUDITH BENEDIKT, DANIEL HÖSL** Title Graphics: **NIC PROKESCH** Translations: **CICEK DILLICE-CAN, GERDA LEISCH, FABIAN CLARK, LISA ROSENBLATT, NORMAN SHETNER** Stage construction: **FRIEDRICH ANGERLER / HAUSWERKSTÄTTE 1** Additional Make up: **ALEXANDRA DIMI, USCHI FILIPP, BARBARA FRÖHLICH** Photographer:

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"AFTER ALL, NO ONE IN PRISON LIKES TO SEE SOMEONE CHEATING SOMEONE ELSE."

(...) Sandra was with me in my cell and I said to her so often that she shouldn't do that, or else she should get her things out of the cell, get rid of the needles, so they don't find anything when they frisk the cells because I didn't want to have any problems since I was the only one who was able to go out on leave. I begged Sandra day after day to get rid of the stuff. She simply didn't do it. Then she said that she had thrown away the needles, but she was lying to me. She kept on doing it. Shortly before finishing work, I went to the guard and asked if I could talk with her briefly, alone. It was hard for me to tell her. Tears welled up in my eyes, I cried and my whole body shook, because I was so sorry to betray Sandra but I couldn't see any other way out of it because we were searched so often. I practically said nothing. The guard asked: "Is it about drugs?" I nodded. She asked if it were in my cell, I nodded, the other guard asked if it were Sandra, I nodded. She asked me where it was all hidden, and I told them. The guards informed the commando that they should frisk our cell more often.

Of course they also told them where Sandra had hidden the stuff. They told me that they would also look through my things, for appearances. So that it wouldn't be obvious that I had told. When I got back to the cell, we weren't allowed in because they were frisking it.

It really was not an easy decision. Actually everyone knew that I had said something, but naturally I denied it.

After all, no one in prison likes to see someone cheating someone else. But what was I meant to do?

I don't know if it was right of me to betray Sandra or not. I don't know until today. Back then I thought that it would be better for me to say something because I was the only one in these cells that had leave, and that would have seemed the most obvious thing that I had brought it to her. OK, and maybe it really did help her and she's clean now? Although I heard from someone that she's still hooked, I don't know if it's true or not, but I can imagine quite well that she never stops taking drugs.

Notes from the diary of "Sammy Kovacs", one of the protagonists of Gangster Girls

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