

HOUSE WITH A VOICE

Germany | 87 mins | 2024
a film by Kristine Nrecaj and Birthe Templin
produced by Filmkantine UG



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Film Details

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| International Title | HOUSE WITH A VOICE |
| Original Title | HOUSE WITH A VOICE |
| Production Year | 2024 |
| Production Country | Germany |
| Production Company | FILMKANTINE UG |
| Genre | DOCUMENTARY |
| Directors | Kristine Nrecaj, Birthe Templin |
| Producer | Katrin Springer |
| Production Consultant | Ruoyao Jane Yao |
| Cinematographer | Alfred Nrecaj |
| Editor | Evelyn Rack |
| Running Time | 87 mins |
| Status | |
| Original Language | Albanian |
| Subtitle | English |
| Trailer | https://vimeo.com/839659151 |

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CineComplete Postproduction

IN ASSOCIATION WITH
YLE Sari Volanen

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Logline

HOUSE WITH A VOICE is about six women in a patriarchal society, about six different life stories and one mutual decision: giving up femininity and living as men to gain a voice, to experience personal freedom and to fight for equality. To be a real Burrnesha.

Short Synopsis

HOUSE WITH A VOICE tells the story of six Burrneshas who, for different reasons, have decided to take on the social role of men. They have done this to circumvent patriarchal structures, to avoid misogynistic attacks, to support the family economically, to avoid compelled marriage and to be free. Our characters communicate with us intimately as they talk about their lives and bring us closely into their personal journey. They speak about freedom and oppression, about the promise of sacrificing their lives for the sake of their families' survival. But also about the breaking of gender barriers and the power of the human mind to decide who we want to be.

The film turns stereotypes and projections of gender discussions upside down. The Burrneshas expand our awareness of human life and its universal conditions but in the end their story shows that the essences of life, which are identified as female, are held as less valuable, even less worth living. And that this remains so, worldwide.



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Director's Statement

Kristine Nrecaj

My great aunt was a Burrnesha. She lived in a remote village in the northern Albanian Alps. A house without a man has no voice in the village community. As a Burrnesha, my great aunt had something that other women didn't have. She had a voice. She was free in her decisions and she could move freely in public. She combined both the masculine and the feminine. During the summer holidays of my childhood, I experienced, again and again, the injustices to which women in Kosovo and Albania are subjected and how razor-sharp the gender boundaries are defined. Even today. The Burrneshas break through these boundaries, and there are only a few of them left in Albania. For me, making **HOUSE WITH A VOICE** is dealing with my upbringing, my DNA and with the fact that I want to bring awareness into the world that female and male principles are still not of equal value. Even though I grew up in Germany, I experienced the patriarchal structures on a daily basis, at home and in society. The issue of equality is still one that needs to be considered with relevance. Femicides and gendericides still prevail, and every two minutes, a woman dies in the world due to pregnancy or the birth of a child. Being disadvantaged or marginalized because of gender hurts a lot. However, the solution cannot be that women have to behave like men in order to be recognised or respected, or not to experience assault. Women are trained from an early age to have a "male gaze". It quickly becomes clear how a woman has to look or behave in order to survive in the patriarchal society. I noticed that I had to learn the "female gaze" and am still in the process of learning it. My view of myself and my world was male-dominated, and I want my teenage daughter to experience it differently. Some women managed to survive in this strikingly toxic, male-dominated environment by behaving like men. Things have started to change, but there is still a long way to go. I hope my movie will help the evolutionary process to that point, that we feel from the bottom of our hearts that males and females are of equal value.

Birthe Templin

As a little girl I stood in the middle of a group of children and couldn't understand why girls weren't allowed to take part in a test of courage. So, I went to the hairdresser with my mum, had my hair cut, came back, and was allowed to participate. Already as a child I had, like many children, the natural impulse to want to decide freely what I may or may not do. What I say or not. Who I am or who I am not. I have always found the social distribution of roles between men and women questionable. A photography exhibition about Burrneshas initiated **HOUSE WITH A VOICE** for me. Don't I live the same in different gradations? I no longer even notice how naturally and unconsciously behave like men to be taken seriously. Or because I believe that I will be safe then. For women in the 20th century equality is theoretically no longer an obstacle. Theoretically. Practically, the men of this world have internalized their superiority and the women their inferiority. But we belong together, man and woman. Hatred and oppression find its root in hatred towards oneself. It sounds corny, but I believe that the key out of this, to heal, lies in finding self-love of everyone. The Burrneshas have chosen the path of self-determined life with all its consequences. None of them regretted their decision. Isn't that what we should all do? To remain true to oneself and to live according to it. Regardless of gender and conventions, regardless of society-made restrictions and boxes. Perhaps therein lies the secret of meaning and happiness. The experience with the Burrneshas has expanded my mind. I hope that the spark will also spread to the audience.

Directors' Biography and Filmography

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Kristine Nrecaj was born in Bavaria and had Albanian roots. After graduating from high school, she studied theater and film at the Free University of Berlin. In 2003 she made the documentary film "Kosowo". In 2014, her fictional short film "Of Dogs and Lions" was screened at national and international film festivals. It received the award for best director and best female lead at the Kosovo Film Festival. She developed a script for a long fiction movie which was selected at "Debut im Ersten ". 2016, she started developing a feature-length documentary about Burrneshas in Albania. 2018 her movie "The sworn virgin and the Girl" was screened at national and international film festivals. 2020 she completed a training as a non-medical practitioner in psychotherapy. In 2021 she made the documentary "Noa-remembering against forgetting ", which themed the relationship between her daughter Noa and her mother suffering from dementia.

Filmography

"HOUSE WITH A VOICE" (Director/Writer, Feature-length Documentary, In Post-production)

"Noa - Remembering against forgetting " (Director/Writer, Mid-length Documentary, 2021)

"The Sworn Virgin and the Girl "(Director/Writer, Mid-length Documentary, 2018)

"Of Dogs and Lions "(Director/Writer/ Producer, Short Fiction, 2014)

"A man runs through the desert "(Director/Writer, Short Documentary, 2007)

"House of Emigrants"(Writer, Short Documentary 2005)

"Kosowo" (Director/Writer/Producer, Documentary, Mid-length, 2003)



Directors' Biography and Filmography

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Birthe Templin is an independent film director based in Berlin. After growing up in Northern Germany and Argentina she was educated in Filmmaking at the London Film Academy and Andrzej Wajda Master School of Film Directing in Warsaw. She directed and partly produced with her production company ipanema film award winning fiction and documentary films for cinema, TV, Museums and educational platforms: *Lübbos wife is waiting*, *What remains*, *The sworn virgin and the girl*. Next to her current cinema documentary *House with a voice* she is preparing to change the format with a feature length fiction film.

Filmography

HOUSE WITH A VOICE (Director/Co-Writer, Documentary, Feature-length)

THE SWORN VIRGIN AND THE GIRL (Director/Writer, 2019, Documentary, Mid-length)

THE SUNSHINE YOU GIVE (Director/Writer/Producer, 2017, Documentary, Short length)

WHAT REMAINS (Director/Writer, 2009, Documentary, Mid-length)

LÜBBOS'S WIFE IS WAITING (Director/Writer/Producer, Short, 2004)



Producer's Biography

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Katrin Springer studied film- and theater studies, Russian studies and media consulting. In 1989 she worked as a director's assistant, production manager, line producer and production consultant for national and international film productions. In 2009 she founded her own production company Filmkantine and has been producing documentary formats ever since. Since 2010 she has been teaching film production at film schools in Germany. From 2015 to 2020, she taught filmproduction at Filmuniversität Babelsberg KONRAD WOLF and conducted research in the Eisenstein research project "Collisions" on the use of new technologies in the transmission of cultural heritage. She is committed to sustainable and green film production. Since May 2022, she has been the director of the ÖKOFILMTOUR, the Brandenburg festival of environmental and nature films.

Production Company info

FILMKANTINE UG

www.filmkantine.de

FILMKANTINE was founded in 2009 and is a European independent film production based in Berlin. We develop and produce market-oriented high-quality creative documentaries for television, cinema and other distribution channels for the national and international market.

Our aim is to narrate exceptional stories that entertain and reach out to the viewer, move them and let them question their usual perspective. The films are substantially challenging and stylistically demanding, are exciting and informative, accessible and always very well researched, with a unique identity and inked with a distinctive signature.

Filmkantine builds on close working relations with creative talents and financial partners. We see ourselves as a documentary movie manufacture where all films are taken care of individually due to our sincere working processes.

All films were successfully screened at international film festivals and on television and received several awards.

Production Company FILMKANTINE Filmography

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Completed:

HOUSE WITH A VOICE, documentary by Kristine Nrecaj and Birthe Templin 85 Mins., GER 2024

LOST IN LIMBO, documentary, directed by Johanna Bentz, co-production with ZDF/3SAT, 45 Mins., GER 2022

REMEMBERING AGAINST FORGETTING, documentary, directed by Kristine Nrecaj, 25 Min., GER 2021, KIKA / MDR

THE SWORN VIRGIN AND THE GIRL, documentary, directed by Kristine Nrecaj AND Birthe Templin, 45 Mins., GER 2019

ANYA AND SERYOZHA, documentary, directed by Ivette Löcker, 30 Mins., GER 2018

CINEMA: A PUBLIC AFFAIR, documentary by Tatiana Brandrup, 100 Mins., GER 2015

THE PATENT WARS, documentary by Hannah Leonie Prinzler, co-production with ZDF/ARTE, developed at the Documentary Campus Masterschool, funded by nordmedia, GER 2010, 52 Mins & 80 Mins., GER 2014

NUCLEAR POWER PLANT FOR SALE, documentary by Jörg Hommer, in co-production with SWR, 30 Mins., GER 2012

THE EDUCATION OF AUMA OBAMA, documentary by Branwen Okpako, coproduction with ZDF/Das kleine Fernsehspiel, 79 Mins., GER 2011

HACKNEY LULLABIES, short documentary by Kyoko Miyake, 11 Mins., GER 2011

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Cinematographer's Biography



Alfred Nrecaj is a filmmaker and founder of NBBSTUDIO GmbH a renowned film production company.

He supported the short fiction film "Of Dogs and Lions," in which he served as a producer. Additionally, he did collaborate on various projects with his sister Kristine like the documentary "The Sworn Virgin and the Girl," in which he served as a cinematographer. He also worked from the beginning as a cinematographer on HOUSE WITH A VOICE. Another key project was "Noa - Remembering Against Forgetting." Here, he worked as a cinematographer and was responsible for editing and grading.

For many years, he has produced high-quality commercials for television & social media and worked with global companies such as Mercedes, BMW, Zeiss, Bang & Olufsen & Mitsubishi. Recently he was involved in creating a TV and SoMe campaign for e.on, one of the biggest energy provider in Germany and filmed a short documentary in India for an NGO, about optometrists and their work within tribal villages.

Cinematographer's Filmography

"HOUSE WITH A VOICE" (Cinematographer, Feature-length Documentary, In Post-production)

"Noa-remembering against forgetting" (Cinematographer, Editor, Mid-length Documentary, 2021)

"The Sworn Virgin and the Girl" (Cinematographer, Mid-length Documentary, 2018)

"Of Dogs and Lions" (Producer, Short Fiction, 2014)

"Kosowo" (Cinematographer, Editor, Producer, Documentary, Mid-length, 2003)

Editor Biography

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Evelyn Rack is a film editor and media artist. After receiving her diploma in cultural studies, geography and sociology at the University of Bremen, she began studying directing and film editing at Filmarche Berlin e.V. in 2006. This was followed by studies in film editing at the Film University Babelsberg Konrad Wolf, where she graduated as Master of Arts with distinction.

She has worked on more than 50 shorts and features presented at the Berlin International Film Festival, Tribeca Film Festival, Dok Leipzig, Sitges Film Festival, MIFF, Encounters, Louvre Paris, Documenta Kassel and Cannes Shorttigger, among others. Her latest works WE MIGHT AS WELL BE DEAD (Berlinale 2022 - opening film Perspektive Deutsches Kino, winner Tribeca Film Festival 2022, shortlist for the German entry to the 95th Academy

Awards) and FAMILY LOVE (competition Max Ophüls Preis, winner Astra Film Festival 2022) received international recognition. Her most recent works ARARAT and DRIFTER celebrated their world premieres at the 2023 Berlin International Film Festival, the series FEELINGS, whose first two episodes she edited, was also presented at the 73rd Berlinale. For the 73rd Berlin International Film Festival, Evelyn was selected as both Berlinale Talent and Perspektive Match Talent.

Editor's Filmography

In production:

THE DOCTOR SAYS I'LL BE ALRIGHT BUT I'M FEELIN' BLUE (WT - release 2024, fiction feature)
AB MORGEN BIN ICH MUTIG (WT - release 2024, fiction feature)
HOUSE WITH A VOICE (WT - release 2024, cinema documentary)
LOVE TILL 120 (WT - release 2024, cinema documentary)
DIE FEIGE SCHÖNHEIT DER SELBSTERKLÄRTEN VERLIERER (WT - release 2024, fiction feature)

Completed (selection):

ARARAT (2023, fiction feature)
DRIFTER (2023, fiction feature)
FEELINGS (2023, fiction series)
WIR KÖNNTEN GENAU SO GUT TOT SEIN / WE MIGHT AS WELL BE DEAD (2022, fiction feature)
NESTWÄRME / FAMILY LOVE (2022, cinema documentary)
DRUCK (2022, fiction series)
WIR (2021, fiction series)
DISPLACED (2020, cinema documentary)
IM STILLEN LAUT / A QUIET RESISTANCE (2019, cinema documentary)
DER ENGEL DER GESCHICHTE / THE ANGEL OF HISTORY (2019, short documentary)
UND WEINEN KÖNNEN / 5 WAYS TO CRY (2018, short fiction)
ADELHEID, KORNELIUS & THE DEATHS (2018, cinema documentary)
DAS MENSCH / PINKY PROMISE (2018, short fiction)
SEKUNDENSCHLAF / MICROSLEEP (2017, short fiction)

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