



NGF GEYRHALTERFILM & LOOKS FILMPRODUKTIONEN
PRESENT

OFFICIAL SELECTION
tiff
TORONTO INTERNATIONAL
FILM FESTIVAL 2017


OFFICIAL SELECTION
FESTIVAL DE SAN SEBASTIÁN
2017

MARIA DRAGUS

DEVID STRIESOW

M A D E M O I S E L L E
P A R A D I S

A B A R B A R A A L B E R T F I L M

2017 / AUSTRIA - GERMANY / 97 MIN / SCOPE

WORLD SALES
FILMS DISTRIBUTION
5, rue Nicolas Flamel
75004 Paris, France
info@filmsdistribution.com
Ph.: +33 1 53 10 33 99



WWW.MADEMOISELLE-PARADIS.COM

PUBLICITY
K2 PUBLICITY
Kara MacLean
kara@k2publicity.com
Ph: +1 310.254.4934
Kevin McLean
kevin@k2publicity.com
Ph: +1 310.955.7220

SYNOPSIS

Vienna, 1777. Maria Theresia (“Resi”) Paradis, 18 years old, is blind, and a pianist of remarkable talent. Resi lost her eyesight literally overnight when she was three. After countless failed medical experiments, her overprotective parents seek out a controversial “miracle doctor,” Franz Anton Mesmer, as their last hope for a cure. For Dr. Mesmer, the chance to successfully treat the young girl could lead to fame and fortune.

Resi moves into the estate of the doctor and his wife, where in the company of other patients she tastes personal freedom for the first time. And Mesmer’s treatments seem to have almost immediate success. However, Resi soon notices that as her sight is beginning to return, her musical virtuosity is declining. She becomes aware that being part of society as a seeing person comes at too high a price if it can mean the loss of her inner world of music.

SHORT SYNOPSIS

Vienna, 1777. The blind 18-year-old “Wunderkind” pianist Maria Theresia Paradis lost her eyesight overnight when she was three years old. After countless failed medical experiments, her parents take her to the estate of controversial “miracle doctor” Franz Anton Mesmer, where she joins a group of outlandish patients. She enjoys the liberal household in a Rococo world and tastes freedom for the first time, but begins to notice that as Mesmer’s treatment brings back her eyesight, she is losing her cherished musical virtuosity.





DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

When I first read about Maria Theresia Paradis, I fell in love immediately. I am fascinated not only by her character—this gifted and sensitive, big, blind, and not too attractive child who is shoved around by her parents and by society—but also by the glimpse her story provides into the bourgeois and aristocratic society of Rococo Vienna. *MADEMOISELLE PARADIS* tells the tale of a social system based on prohibitions and repression, and of women who try to come to terms with it and find their own space and freedom within its restrictive structures.

Thus, I understand *MADEMOISELLE PARADIS* not as an escape into the aesthetics of the past, but as a variation on a perpetual and deeply human issue: the constant tension between subordination and adaptation on the one hand, and the determination, on the other hand, to rise above the ordinary.

Beyond that, I want to take the audience on an emotional and sensual journey that challenges the concept of genius in the context of a historical narrative, and that draws our attention to our own often subconscious sensations and their significance in our own lives.

MADEMOISELLE PARADIS is about what and how we see, and about when and whether we should trust what we see.

Barbara Albert



MARIA DRAGUS

ACTRESS ("MARIA THERESIA PARADIS")

Actress Maria Dragus is currently in production on Working Title and Focus Features' MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS, for director Josie Rourke and opposite Saoirse Ronan and Margot Robbie.

She was most recently seen in Jakob Lass' TIGER GIRL, which had its world premiere at the 2017 Berlin Film Festival. The film follows two female friends who band together to fight the establishment.

At the age of 15, Maria launched onto the international scene with her supporting role in Michael Haneke's drama THE WHITE RIBBON, for which she won the German Movie Award in 2010 for Best Supporting Actress. The film won the Cannes Film Festival's Palme d'or in 2009.

In 2011, she was seen as the sister of the RAF terrorist Gudrun Ensslin in Andres Veiel's film WHO IF NOT WE.

Last year, Maria starred in the critically acclaimed 2016 Cannes Film Festival selection GRADUATION [BACALAUREAT], which won the Best Director Award and was a nominee for the Palme d'Or.



Maria was named one of the Shooting Stars at the 2014 Berlin Film Festival. She is an accomplished ballerina, having spent seven years at the acclaimed Dresden Palucca School. She speaks fluent German, Romanian, English, and French.

DEVID STRIESOW

ACTOR ("FRANZ ANTON MESMER")

Actor Devid Striesow, born in 1973 in Bergen Auf Rügen, studied acting at the Schauspielschule Ernst Busch in Berlin where he graduated in 1999.

After his graduation he played diverse roles in many theatre plays, for example, at the Deutsches Schauspielhaus Hamburg and at the Düsseldorfer Schauspielhaus under Jürgen Gosch.

Striesow's roles have included Stefan Ruzowitzky's Oscar winner THE COUNTERFEITERS [DIE FALSCHER] (2007), Tom Tykwer's THREE (2010), Julia von Heinz's I'M OFF THEN [ICH BIN DANN MAL WEG] (2014) and Micha Lewinsky's A DECENT MAN [NICHTS PASSIERT] (2014).

Striesow is the winner of the Deutscher Filmpreis (German Film Awards) as well as numerous other honors.

BARBARA ALBERT

DIRECTOR

Born in Vienna in 1970, Barbara Albert studied directing and screenwriting at the Vienna Film Academy. After having introduced her short films at several festivals, her first feature film *NORDRAND* was internationally acclaimed after its screening in the competition of Venice Int. Film Festival in 1999.

In the same year Barbara Albert founded the production company coop99, together with Martin Gschlacht, Jessica Hausner and Antonin Svoboda. She worked as producer on *GRBAVICA*, *DARWIN'S NIGHTMARE*, *SLEEPER* and *LOVELY RITA*. As a writer she has worked together with the writer / directors Jasmila Zbanic, Andrea Staka, Ruth Mader and Michael Glawogger.

After *FREE RADICALS*, *FALLING* and *THE DEAD AND THE LIVING*, which premiered in the competitions of San Sebastian, Venice and Locarno, *MADemoiselle Paradis* is Barbara Albert's 5th feature film. Her films have received numerous awards. She is a teacher and vice president of the Film University Babelsberg "Konrad Wolf" in Potsdam and has been living in Berlin since 2010.

In 2016 she co-founded Berlin-based production company CALA Film, together with the producers of *MADemoiselle Paradis*, Martina Haubrich and Michael Kitzberger.



**MICHAEL KITZBERGER
/ NGF NIKOLAUS
GEYRHALTER
FILMPRODUKTION**

PRODUCER

NGF Nikolaus Geyrhalter Filmproduktion is an internationally renowned Austrian production company for documentary film, theatrical and TV, established in 1994 by Nikolaus Geyrhalter, with Markus Glaser, Michael Kitzberger and Wolfgang Widerhofer joining as partners in 2003. More than 60 documentaries have been released worldwide (mainly through AUTLOOK Film Sales, a company cofounded by NGF) or shown on major public channels since then.

In 2010, Michael Kitzberger produced NGF's first fiction feature, THE ROBBER [DER RAUBER] by Benjamin Heisenberg, which celebrated its world premiere at the 60th Berlinale Competition and is currently optioned for remake by Film Nation (with director J.C. Chandor on board).



In 2011, he produced a second fiction feature MICHAEL by Markus Schleinzer, selected for competition at Cannes Film Festival. MADEMOISELLE PARADIS is NGF's fourth fiction feature.

NGF's most recent accolades include the European Film Award 2015 for MASTER OF THE UNIVERSE [DER BANKER] by Marc Bauder, the premiere of THE VISIT by Michael Madsen in competition at Sundance Film Festival 2015 and of OVER THE YEARS [UBER DIE JAHRE] and HOMO SAPIENS by Nikolaus Geyrhalter at Berlinale Forum 2015 and 2016.

**MARTINA HAUBRICH
/ LOOKS FILM**

PRODUCER

LOOKS Film is one of Germany's leading production houses for documentaries, established in 1995 by Gunnar Dedio.

From 2004 until 2016 Martina Haubrich was running the Berlin office of LOOKS and produced more than 20 documentary films and -series which were shown on major public channels such as ARD, ZDF, ARTE, PBS, Netflix, and were sold internationally with great success.

Her feature film productions such as MICHEL PETRUCCIANI by Michael Radford, MICHAEL KOHLHAAS by Arnaud des Pallières and FROM CALIGARI TO HITLER [VON CALIGARI ZU HITLER] by Rüdiger Suchsland premiered at Cannes and Venice film festivals.

Among others, Martina Haubrich, together with Barbara Albert and Michael Kitzberger, established CALA Filmproduktion Berlin in 2016 and produces fiction and documentary films for cinema and series for the international market.



CAST

Maria Theresia Paradis	MARIA DRAGUS
Franz Anton Mesmer	DEVID STRIESOW
Joseph Anton Paradis	LUKAS MIKO
Maria Rosalina Paradis	KATJA KOLM
Agnes	MARESI RIEGNER
Mesmer's Wife	JOHANNA ORSINI-ROSENBERG
Johanna, The Cook	STEFANIE REINSPERGER
Miss Ossine	SUSANNE WUEST
Count Pellegrini	CHRISTOPH LUSER

CREDITS

Directed by	BARBARA ALBERT
Screenplay	KATHRIN RESETARITS
Adapted from the novel	“MESMERIZED” by ALISSA WALSER
Published by	MACLEHOSE PRESS
Director of Photography	CHRISTINE A. MAIER
Production Design	KATHARINA WÖPPERMANN
Costume Design	VERONIKA ALBERT
Makeup Artist	HELENE LANG
Editor	NIKI MOSSBÖCK
Location Sound Recordist	DIETMAR ZUSON
Musical Director	LORENZ DANGEL
Sound Design	CHRISTIAN CONRAD
Rerecording Engineer	ALEXANDER KOLLER
Fortepiano & Grand Piano	SONJA LEIPOLD
Casting	LISA OLÁH
VFX	MATTHIAS HALIBRAND
Grading	STEFAN CIUPEK
Co-Production & Project Development	WITCRAFT SZENARIO OG URSULA WOLSCHLAGER ROBERT BUCHSCHWENTER GERHARD HANNAK MICHAEL KITZBERGER ALEXANDER SÄIDOW JAN MÜLLER MICHAEL KITZBERGER WOLFGANG WIDERHOFER NIKOLAUS GEYRHALTER MARKUS GLASER MARTINA HAUBRICH GUNNAR DEDIO
Production Manager	
Line Producer	
Production Manager - Germany	
Line Producer - Germany	
Producers - NGF	
Producers - LOOKS	
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