

## drehbuch**VERBAND** Austria

### **Austrian screenwriters association**

Currently we have 111 members

35 of these are Rookie (junior) members and receive special rates

Our events including seminars and discussions were attended by more than 925 visitors (2014).

#### **Anniversary**

Last year drehbuch**VERBAND** Austria celebrated its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary and the drehbuch**FORUM** Wien its 20<sup>th</sup>. With many guests from the film industry and our members we celebrated our jubilees in late spring with a festive party and had a huge media response to our jubilee and our work.

#### **Copyright Act**

In July 2015 the Austrian parliament has passed an amendment of the Austrian Copyright Act. Discussions on the main issue – namely on extending the blank tape levy to digital media such as hard disks in notebooks, PC, tablets or handy – have been lasting since many years.

Henceforward, the Amendment is entering into force by 1<sup>st</sup> of October and provides for a private copy levy on storage media which is suitable for copies of works under copyright.

The Austrian Screenwriters Association together with other different associations of the film industry and with the support of the German Screenwriters Association lobbied for a fair system foreseeing and allowing an equitable remuneration on behalf of authors. During the – very fast – process of amending the Austrian Copyright Law our positions met with much understanding on the part of the Social Democratic Party especially of the ministry of culture, albeit with little effect. Due to the big influence of the Austrian Chamber of Commerce representing mainly interests of industry the amendment reads like a wish-list of the Austrian trading companies with electronic goods.

There are at least the following points which must be identified as burdensome from the rightsholders' perspective: The ACA provides for a legal cap in a maximum amount of 29 million euro (thereto fixed before reimbursement for exports or professional/commercial usage). The maximum cap is lasting for a four-year period (2016 – 2019) and is valid for two different levy systems (blank tape and reprographic remuneration levy). With this, in a European unique form the Austrian legislator connected two levy systems which are remunerating completely different uses and also different categories of authors.

About 17 criteria (mostly formulated on behalf of user interest) for the amount of the “equitable remuneration” have been introduced into the ACA. The criterion saying that the maximum amount of the tariff per media must not exceed 6 percent of the average price is very dangerous from the rightsholders' perspective.

Thus, it will make it difficult for our Copyright Collecting societies, who are legally obliged to deal and to collect the fair remuneration, to negotiate a levy in a fair amount.

As to the recent ruling of the Austrian Highest Court of Justice there already is a levy to be paid on digital storage media in Austria. The Copyright Act is – seen from the perspective of rightsholders – useless and only reducing the chances to get a fair remuneration.

Meanwhile there are plans to apply to the Constitutional Court. This supreme institution will – so we hope – recognize the new Copyright provisions (the 29 mio gap and the 6%-rule) as being unconstitutional and in contradiction to the provisions of Berne Convention.

### Contracts for screenwriters

After last year's presentation of the model contracts for scriptwriters for cinema feature film, television and film treatment, we extend this offer for co-author and script editor contracts. With these two contracts in addition we hope to cover almost every object of agreement concerning scriptwriting.

Our aim is to establish standards and practices in the domestic film industry and to strengthen the independence of the authors in contract negotiations.

The model contracts are used as a template in whole but also in parts, they are broken down into individual components for better usability and adaptation. Each element of the contract contains a commentary to add clarity and in some cases examples ensure better adaptability.

The contracts were created with our lawyer after intensive work especially in the communication with our members. We understand this publication as a work-in-progress process, where we welcome suggestions and ideas. The feedback from the authors is very positive, it strengthened their position toward the producers and they could achieve that most production companies included the wordings of the model contracts.

### Negotiations with Literar Mechana / collecting society

In mid-October 2014 we had our first meeting with the managing director of the collecting society with the goal to improve the collaboration, to increase transparency and to achieve more participation. In the latter case we succeeded to bring screenwriters through membership in an association which is a shareholder of the collecting society. Thus we indirectly we have now influence on the decisions of Literar Mechana. Although this and other improvements have been obtained final aims have yet to be reached and negotiations will be pursued.

### ORF - Austrian Broadcasting Association

Our personal talks with the ORF and our attempts to make the ORF change their exploitative conditions for writers have remained unsuccessful so far. We therefore formed a team to work out new strategies and to find allies in the Austrian film branch.

Together with major production companies and other people in the film sector we hope to get this subject up to speed again.

### Thomas Pluch Prize 2015

Every year at the Diagonale, Festival of Austrian Film in Graz, the DrehbuchVERBAND Austria is awarding the best national screenplays that were produced. In 2015, this prize was awarded for the 23th time. The award is named after Thomas Pluch, one of the founders of the Drehbuchverband Austria. Endowed with 22.000 Euro it is one of the biggest film awards in Austrians' film industry. This year's winners were:

- Thomas Pluch prize for best screenplay

For the best full-length feature film or a feature-length TV movie: **Karl Markovics** for **Superwelt (Superworld)**

- Thomas Pluch Special Jury Award

For a screenplay for particularly outstanding aspects

the jury is free to define the category: **Veronika Franz** and **Severin Fiala** for **Ich seh Ich seh (Goodnight Mummy)**

- Thomas Pluch price for short or medium-length cinema feature films:

**Rafael Haider** for **Esel (Monkey)**

Members of this year's **international jury** were: Senta Berger (actress, producer, AT/DE), Dimitré Dinev (author, screenwriter, BG/AT), Maria Köpf (producer, managing director Zentropa Berlin, now Managing Director of Filmfonds Hamburg, DE).

Members of the **national jury** included: Hilde Berger (screenwriter, actress), Oliver Neumann (producer, editor), Jakob Pretterhofer (screenwriter).

## **drehbuchFORUM Wien** screenwriters forum

### Let's talk about scripts

#### **Panel - Discussions**

Let's talk about scripts is our main program to call attention to the work of the screenwriters. In several discussions with screenwriters about the latest Austrian films we on the one hand reach the movie audiences, on the other hand writers can share their experiences with the panellists. The popularity among the participants is increasing every year, at the first 3 events this year almost 170 visitors came.

### scriptLAB docu / scriptLab fiction

#### **script-development program**

In 2013 we finally succeeded to extend our script development program scriptLAB also to documentaries. Script LAB helps authors to optimise the script in the early phase of writing, it is available to both professional and also young writers. The authors are working in close cooperation with a script consultant and are financially supported by the Austrian Screenwriters Forum. With this efficient, low cost program we contribute to the diversity of projects, the innovative character and to the increase in quality of the scripts. The writer/filmmaker can take direct advantage from a growing acceptance on the producers' side. scriptLAB fiction will continue as before. Since 2006 722 projects have been submitted of which 95 have been promoted. 22 script development projects are now available as a screenplay and are on their way to be adapted for the screen, 4 have already been released in the theatres, 3 are in postproduction.

### United Writers

#### **A Weekend-Feedback-Workshop for professional screenwriters and filmmakers**

In our program United Writers 4 professional scriptwriters or auteur-filmmakers have the opportunity to get feed back for their scripts. The workshop is moderated by an experienced script-consultant, but the main interchange is between the writers, on the same level, each of the 4 scripts gets equal time, feed back for half a day.

The projects can be in varying stages between an elaborated treatment and various versions of the script. In order to achieve the best possible focus the workshops took place outside of Vienna, somewhere secluded. Due to the great success and because of the high demand for participation in 2015, United Writers will take place twice a year.

### Less is more or: The Limits of Control -

21.3.2014 **Panel discussion**, Diagonale Filmfestival Graz

How documentary and feature film interacting on the aspects of dramatic composition:

For many years documentary style have affected the narration of feature films. In contrast, documentaries use the classic story design of fictional films. How do both those forms influence each other positively? Screenwriters and directors talked about their experiences.

### Workshop Phil Parker

25.6.2014

#### **Transmedia – new screenwriting opportunities for writers and their creative partners**

With the option of developing your characters and stories for a web series, e-book, play, films, graphic novel or games where do you start? Key to meeting this new creative challenge is the concept of dramatic worlds and collaboration. Phil Parker, Director of BCre8ive.eu, looked into how you develop a dramatic world, and who do you need to work with to develop your initial idea for a transmedia world.

### Aktuelle Impulse – current impulses

#### **Talk with Scientists and Non-Fictions authors about their new publications**

In 2015 we continue our new series of events: Aktuelle Impulse - writers of non-fiction literature report about their field of studies.

## Lecture and Workshops with Linda Seger 18. - 21. 6. 2015

### **MAKING A GOOD SCRIPT GREAT/SHAPING THE STORY AND EXPLORING THE THEME**

#### **- Lecture: The creative process and the craft of collaboration**

This lecture, the introductory opening event to her seminars is open to participants of the whole film industry. Linda Seger talks about the many ways of working as a creative screenwriter and the crafts that are needed to be successful.

In addition to that she goes deeper into the screenwriting process – from the initial concept to the final rewrite – providing specific methods that will help craft tighter, stronger, and more saleable scripts. Therefore she analyses the teamwork between the writers, producers and script consultants and gives guidance for improving cooperations.

#### **- 2-Day Screenwriting Seminar**

Topic of the first day was Story, Structure, Theme and Images.

The seminar helped to develop the skills for telling a compelling and dramatic story and to articulate the skills you know intuitively. Above that, Linda Seger showed how to use images as metaphors making the film more visual and expressing the theme with “showing“, not telling.

Focus of the second day was the character. Linda Seger looked at the motivation of the protagonist, the character goals, how to create conflict and at the transformation of the character. Creating the character means researching the character: context, culture, creating details (attitudes, values, emotions), developing backstory (physics, sociology, psychology), and establishing personality and behavior.

#### **- Script Consulting Seminar**

This Seminar explored the work of the Script Consultant, including “How to Write a Report,” and “How to Work With Writers Effectively.” But it’s not enough to be right about the problems. A script consultant also needs to be constructive and diplomatic and should be familiar with the needs and working principles of the screenwriter.

## **Arbeit Alltag Welt –Everyday’s Work, Unknown places**

### **Excursions**

To inspire writers creativity, we offer excursions to places, where someone could not go so easily as a private.

#### **Austrian Airlines 17.11.2014**

With a guided tour through the hangars and the numerous worksites, we gained an insight into the activities and areas of the work of the skilled workers and mechanics. We also had access to the interior of an aircraft with explanations about technical details. Afterwards we could ask skilled workers and apprentices about their training and everyday work.

#### **General Motors/Opel Vienna 8.10.2014**

Another event was an excursion to the biggest engine and gearbox factory in the world, the General motors/Opel work near Vienna. A guided tour through the impressive factory building showed us the work at the assembly-line, automation and robotics.

Finally, three workers and a communication manager gave us a picture of their everyday operation.

#### **Detectives 23.06.2015**

Our excursion led us to visit a professional detective Bernhard Maier, whose detective agency primarily is concerned with investigations of in-house crime and fraud detection in the financial services industry. He described his real workday, reports of interesting cases and gave us a contemporary picture of the daily work of a detective.

#### **District Court Meidling**

##### **13.03.2015**

In the district courts marriages end in divorce, action for enforcement were ordered and offenders were sent to jail. Judge Oliver Scheiber directs the District Court Meidling and told us a lot about his work: from everyday life at the court, of the role of the judge as a social worker, from the difficulty of finding the truth, to the problems of the judiciary and about his work on how he gets insight into the lives of people. He knows about the real conditions and social

inequities, knows about the tragedy of gambling machines or the pursuit of young petty offenders, while adults sometimes remain not guilty.

### **Models of cooperation: scriptdevelopment in teams - a matter of trust**

Discussion and Networking

**30.6.2015**

As a kick-off event for possible collaborations between scriptwriters and directors we discussed questions concerning the working together in the process of script development.

After that we offered short one-on-one talks to meet colleagues of other professional fields. Designated target was to explore possibilities of working together or perhaps forming teams for further projects.

### **Coming up 2015**

#### **Non Linear Storytelling**

##### **Lecture and Seminar with Linda Aronson (UK, Australia)**

One of the busiest screenwriting gurus on the international circuit, Linda Aronson is widely regarded as the world expert on nonlinear and complex film and TV structures. She is also a multi-award-winning writer who's spent more than thirty years as a writer for companies in Australia, UK, New Zealand and USA, with credits for TV drama series, serials, mini-series, children's TV, drama documentary, feature film, stage plays, four novels, short stories, radio drama, journalism and four books on writing craft. Additionally, she has been employed to create TV drama series and storylines, been a script judge/selector in many contexts, including the Emmys, and now works all over the world as a consultant and teacher. Her latest screenwriting books are *The 21st Century Screenplay* and *Screenwriting Update*. Teaching includes NYU, Columbia, Berkeley, American Film Institute, The Great American Pitchfest, London Screenwriters' Festival, The Script Factory London, BBC TV Drama Writers' Festival, FAMU (Prague), DFFB Germany, CEEA Paris, Netherland Film & TV Academy, Swedish Film Institute, Sources 2.

(tbc)

#### **Trans-script**

This symposium is about the exchange of experiences and knowledge between screenwriters and other film departments. What does camera operators, editors, productions and costume designers, the art and sound department need to know to work effectively? How has the screenplay to be written to specify the author's ideas for the further work of the relevant departments?

In several panel discussions/Werkstattgespräche representatives of the departments will discuss the subject, report about their experiences and consider improvements for further teamwork.

#### **Focus: Literary adaptation**

After a very a short introduction by our lawyer Harald Karl on the legal aspects of literary adaptation we had a successful and well attender session the prize winning screen writer Milan Dor (e.g. *Das Pferd auf dem Balkon / A Horse on a Blacony*) about three of his literary adaptations with selected scenes and lots of insights of the adaptation process.

Now we are planning a panel with Josef Hader, Wolfgang Murnberger, Wolf Haas - 3 well known Austrian writers (and filmmakers, etc.). They have already written 4 successful screenplays based on novels from Wolf Haas, directed by Wolfgang Murnberger and starring Josef Hader.

[www.drehbuchverband.at](http://www.drehbuchverband.at)

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