

drehbuchVERBAND Austria **Austrian screenwriters association**

Currently we have 130 members (Oct 2020), 23 of these are Rookie (junior) members and receive special rates. Our events including seminars and discussions were attended by more than 1340 participants (2019).

Corona Crisis

From the intensified situation in the course of the Corona crisis, we supported and initiated extensive campaigns and petitions on a national and international level in order to reduce the effects on the authors and the entire art and culture branch. It was important for us to create an overview of the state subsidy and emergency measures (via a weekly newsletter), to advise the members and to communicate omissions and improvements in consultation with the umbrella organization of Austrian filmmakers. A central aspect was to make politicians and the general public aware of the catastrophic situation of filmmakers and creative people. All of this remains one of the most important tasks to be done.

Contracts for screenwriters

Our model contracts for scriptwriters for cinema feature film, television and film treatment, as well as the contracts for co-authors and script editors find a ready market. The continuous strive to establish standards and practices in the domestic film industry and to strengthen the independence of the authors in contract negotiations seems to be successful.

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 adaption. Each element of the contract contains a commentary to add clarity and in some cases examples to ensure better adaptability. The contracts were created 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 for ongoing edits.

In 2020 we will catch up on an important aspect of the employment contracts: a model option contract will be drawn up by our lawyer based on the experience of our members by the end of the year.

Drehbuch 2020 / Screenplay 2020

The German initiative Contract 18 inspired us to launch a similar initiative for contracts but adapted for the Austrian market.

The paper will cover the conditions for a fair and successful collaboration between script, directing and production / broadcaster and include the sections development, production and exploitation. So far, these conditions have been negotiated internally, in the next step, which is happening right now, we are looking for a dialogue with the associations of directors, producers and representatives of TV stations.

ORF - Austrian Broadcasting Association

Our personal talks with the ORF and our attempts to make the ORF change their disadvantageous conditions for writers are going on.

After the successful negotiation outcome of our long-term talks with the ORF on valorisation of the screenplay fees, we concentrate on discussions about the changes of the general terms and conditions, further improvements to the contracts for scriptwriters and general enhancement of the writers in the area of development and production. These discussions also take into account the demands of our initiative "Screenplay 2020". Due to the rigid structure of the ORF, we are preparing for longer and tough negotiations.

Initiative copyright contract law

For months we have been involved in discussions and meetings that deal intensively with the implementation of the new copyright law.

In working groups with collecting societies and colleagues from film, music, literature and other creative people, positions are worked out and presented to the politically responsible. The main concerns at the moment are online usage, in particular the de minimis limits for the liability of online platforms, the definition of organizations that can be represented and the options for appearing in public.

Thomas Pluch Prize 2020

The Drehbuchverband Austria is awarding the best national filmed screenplays every year at the Diagonale, Festival of the Austrian Film in Graz. In 2020, the prize was awarded for the 28th time, but because of Covid19 the festival was canceled and the award ceremony was rescheduled in September.

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 Austrian film industry.

The winners are:

- Thomas Pluch prize for best screenplay of a full-length feature film or a feature-length TV movie:

- **Once Were Rebels by Johanna Moder**

Once Were Rebels depicts two urban, liberal couples in their 30s who decide to help a Russian friend escape to Austria. Pavel, a dissident, is in very real difficulties. Though initially thrilled by

this adventure, the Austrians soon find the very foundations of their friendships and relationships are threatened – mainly because this kind of help can be understood in different ways, but also because the man they rescue refuses to behave as the helpers feel he should.

- Thomas Pluch Special Jury Award

For a screenplay for particularly outstanding aspects, the jury is free to define the category:

- ***The Trouble with Being Born* by Sandra Wollner**

Elli is an android and lives with a man she calls her father. Together they drift through the summer. During the day they swim in the pool and at night he takes her to bed. She shares his memories and anything else he programs her to recall. Memories that mean everything to him but nothing to her. Yet, one night she sets off into the woods following a fading echo... The story of a machine and the ghosts we all carry within us.

- Thomas Pluch prize for best short and medium-length film

- ***Fabiu* by Stefan Langthaler**

80-year-old retiree Arthur lives in a modest council home in Vienna. For quite some time he has lovingly been caring for his seriously ill wife Martha, with only female nurses assisting him. With the arrival of Fabiu, the new male Hungarian care worker, his routine is broken.

Members of the international jury: Wolfgang Kohlhaase (author, DE), Dorothee Schön (author, DE), Jacqueline Surchat (author, scriptconsultant, CH)

Members of the national jury: Marie Kreutzer (author, director, AT), Nina Kusturica (author, director, producer, AT), Gregor Schmidinger (author, director, AT)

drehbuchFORUM Wien

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 audience is increasing every year, at the last 7 events this year we had about 480 participants who joined us in lively discussions.

trans script – the script from the perspective of other departments

The series trans script relates the work of other departments to the practice of screenwriters. By what means do other departments work on characters or suspense and how can the script support their possibilities. We started this series in 2015 with the cinematographer Sophie Maintigneux, 2017 we continued with editing with Karina Ressler and in 2018 with production designer Katharina Wöppermann. For November 2019 sound and sound-design will be the main topic.

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 single, private person.

A virtual excursion to the jealousy consultation with Dr. Harald Oberbauer

April 2020

One speaks of pathological jealousy when the quality of life is severely restricted by the possessive behavior, even though there is insufficient evidence of the partner's infidelity. Morbid jealousy is not an independent disease, but a symptom of different disorders. We visited psychiatrist and expert in this field Dr. Harald Oberbauer virtually in Innsbruck. We wanted to know all about jealousy, specific cases, the resulting consequences and the possible forms of therapy. And also whether, under the current quarantine regulations, the problems in relationships come to a head, or perhaps even relax: How do you deal with jealousy in a confined space? Is there any reason to be jealous at the moment or is it a lot about fantasies anyway?

Harald Oberbauer is a psychiatrist at the Innsbruck Clinic. With his jealousy consultation at the Clinic for Psychiatry, Psychotherapy and Psychosomatics in Innsbruck, he has created a contact point for jealous people that is unique in German-speaking countries.

Religious community

June 2020

We started a new series of excursions that will bring us closer to congregations of different religious communities. It is not the religion itself that should be in the foreground, but the social structure, the people behind it, and those who keep the "herd" together.

As the first congregation we visited the closest to us, the parish of St. Ulrich in the 7th district of Vienna. The activities of the parish include church services, children's and youth groups, events and celebrations, as well as the high offices at the major festivals of the church year, organized by the St. Ulrich church music association, which has been in existence for over 100 years. The parish also has a kindergarten and an after-school care center.

Father Nikolaus Poch has been the parish moderator there since 2018: "I would like to preface my task with a short sentence from Irenäus von Lyon: "The glory of God is the living person". I am convinced that faith in God can strengthen people in their vitality, joy and resilience - I would like to contribute to that." His duties include preparing and leading church services, pastoral care, holding funerals and leading the church community.

script-development

scriptLAB fiction / scriptLAB docu script-development program

scriptLAB helps authors to improve their 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. Thus the writer/filmmaker can take direct advantage from the growing acceptance on the producers' side.

Since the program was founded, 1091 exposes have been submitted 158 of these were funded; in 2019 there were 75 exposes. 29 script development projects are now available as screenplays and are on their way to be adapted for the screen, 7 are already being filmed, 3 are currently made into films.

Since 2013 we have extended our script development programme scriptLAB also to documentaries. With that we take into account the frequent blending of the boundaries between fiction film and documentary and the need for script development of documentary films. More than 160 projects have been submitted, 30 were selected for the program, 5 are in preparation for being filmed, 3 are currently be made into films, and two had already a cinema release.

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 feedback to their script. The workshop is moderated by an experienced script-consultant, but the main interchange is between the writers themselves. Each script gets feedback for half a day.

The projects can be in varying stages between an elaborated treatment and various versions of a finished script. Due to the high demand United Writers takes place twice a year, giving 8 scriptwriters per year the opportunity to work on their scripts by this successful model of collaboration.

IF SHE CAN SEE IT, SHE CAN BE IT

Figures of women beyond clichés - competition

The two-stage competition for screenplays takes place for the fifth time in 2020/2021, this time focused on the genre of comedy. The aim of the competition is to promote the heightened representation of differentiated and complex female characters beyond the clichés for the Austrian cinema. The response in the last four years was surprising: The enormous number of submissions was unexpected and has shown that there are enough ideas to portrait women away from traditional stereotypes.

Prizes are awarded for a total amount of 40.000 Euro in two stages, the prize money will benefit the screenwriters. In addition the screenwriters are given script-consultant support to the equivalent of 10.500.- Euro to develop the story. In the first step 5 scripts are being selected by a jury to be worked into treatments. In the second step one of these five treatments will be expanded into a feature length screenplay.

Additionally, we invited 20 authors for a pitching, where they had the chance to present their exposés to female producers. This competition is financed by and conducted in cooperation with The Austrian Film Institute.

table reading for dialogues

june 2020

Due to the very positive feedback, we organized table reading for dialogues a second time in 2020. This model of supporting writers and actors in dialogue writing, which has proved very successful in the Writers Guild of Great Britain, is intended to provide assistance with the development of individual screenplay scenes in the script phase. The competence of actors in dialogue scenes is exploited by winning them to read selected passages of the screenplay with distributed roles.

Each project has 90 minutes to read and discuss the screenplay scenes. In a moderated conversation, the impressions are shared with the actors and the other authors, possible solutions were debated.

Table reading for dialogues is not a public event but a closed round of participants.

Workshops / Masterclasses

Masterclass mit Maren Ade

30. - 31.3. 2019

Award-winning German scriptwriter, director and producer Maren Ade came to Vienna for a two-day masterclass. During the two days, the focus was on the writing of scripts, the research and development of the characters, the interim texts, as well as the work with the actors in the various phases of script writing. On the basis of concrete examples of filmed rehearsal scenes from *Toni Erdmann*, she gave an insight into her work as a director. The core questions that Ade posed were: How does a character develop into a multi-layered character and its implementation and how does she translate her vision into a language that can be played by the actors?

Before the Masterclass we showed the three most important feature films of Maren Ade in cooperation with the FC GLORIA Kinosalons: *The Forest for the Trees*, *All Others* and *Toni Erdmann*. All three including Q&As with the Maren Ade and the leading actors.

Erzählen ohne Netz (Narrating without Net) – Workshop by Kathrin Resetarits

The structural template of the plot-centered film, its limitations and effects

October 2019

Based on the lecture "Heroes' Factory" on June, 2018 Kathrin Resetarits held the workshop "Narrating without Net" and thus questions canonical narrative structures.

The topics relevant to our society increasingly demand narrative forms outside the plot-centered structural template. Education and guidebook literature do not keep up with this development - it still deals almost exclusively with the canonized structure. Everything that deviates from this is described, if at all, only in relation to it.

Subjects not called into questions have to be questioned, fundamental narrative techniques, which begin earlier than the dogmas of Hollywood production, must be worked out. Subjects such as bonding and activating the viewer, recognizing and working out the inner theme as a focus and common thread, the binding and closing of structures, perspective and relationship to the figure, advantages and challenges in narrative without net should be treated. The award-winning screenwriter (Thomas Pluch Screenplay Award for Light), actress (Ensemble Prize for L'Animale) and teacher of the Film Academy Vienna and DFFB Berlin Kathrin Resetarits will question this canonized narrative structure based on examples from her work.

Typewriter plus ... screenwriting software compared

November 7, 2019

Screenwriting softwares are similar to office armchairs: The most expensive or the ones that “can” the most do not have to be the optimal choice for everyone. Some want it comfortable, others prefer it as simple. Finding the writing software that is best tailored to individual needs takes a lot of time in view of the now quite considerable range. It was our aim to reduce this effort by presenting a few relevant programs, discussing their special features as well as advantages and disadvantages and answering specific questions about them.

We asked everyone to actively participate in the exchange, whether with tips and tricks, questions or problems, any form of participation was welcome.

Part 1

In the first part we presented the most important products, compared them and discussed the advantages and disadvantages. Mainly it was about Final Draft, DramaQueen, Celtix, Fade In, Movie Magic Screenwriter and Writer Duet. On this occasion we went live to Berlin to discuss specific questions with the developers of Drama Queen.

Part 2

In the second part, we also covered programs that can be useful for screenwriting, such as Scrivener, Highland, and Word.

For participants in the event, there were discounts on the purchase of Final Draft and Drama Queen.

Up-Coming

Masterclass with Helen Jacey on the conception of TV miniseries

October 20, 2020, via zoom

TV Miniseries Development - Online Masterclass with Helen Jacey.

On the occasion of the script competition *Heldinnen in Serie*, in which we designed and organized the mentoring program, we were able to win Helen Jacey for a masterclass on mini-series. The seminar deals with the creative development of a mini-series from conception to pilot project. Helen Jacey will refer to the first season of the miniseries *Top of the Lake* (by Jane Campion and Gerard Lee) to illustrate the dramaturgical elements. In the analysis of the series, the participants will deal with how decisions about representation in development affect characters and how differentiated female figures can be created.

Netflix - Dream Stream - Dream and Reality

April 2021

We dedicate a special event to Netflix, to which we invite international and Austrian scriptwriters with Netflix experience. Using concrete examples, we hope to learn more about the operation of this platform and the opportunities and limitations for screenwriters.

A concluding panel will highlight different perspectives and discuss the challenges of this field of work for scriptwriters.

www.drehbuchverband.at

www.drehbuchforum.at