

NEW DOCS SPRING 2022

Have a look at our
new line-up!

THE GORALS OF POLAND'S TATRA MOUNTAINS

The Tatra Mountains in southern Poland were once a wilderness of forests and rocky outcrops. Hundreds of years ago, bandits and nomads from the Balkans hid there or looked for new pastures for their animals. Their descendants call themselves Gorals, or highlanders. For a long time, they led an isolated existence cut off from the rest of the world, preserving their own traditions and customs. Today, tourism is their main source of income. It makes life easier, but in the modern world, the Gorals' folk art – their music, ancient chants and unique handicrafts – is in danger of disappearing altogether. Will they be the last to speak the typical dialect and know about true Goral life? Or will they pass on their centuries-old traditions to the next generation?

Human Interest

Film by Sibylle Smolka

Length 45'

Production telekult Film- und Medienproduktion for ZDF/ARTE

Original title Die Goralen der polnischen Tatra / Les goralles, âme bergère des Carpates

Year 2021

The Goral people of the Tatra Mountains in southern Poland lead a very traditional lifestyle. They are committed to passing on their customs to the next generation.





MRNA – HYPE OR HOPE?



mRNA – HYPE OR HOPE?

For many years, mRNA technology seemed unsuitable as a therapeutic approach. But today, it is expected that in the future mRNA will be used to treat a wide range of diseases – including cancer, HIV, malaria, cardiovascular and autoimmune diseases. But how does it work exactly? mRNA vaccines transport the blueprint of a viral protein into cells which then begin to produce the foreign biomolecule. The immune system ramps up its defences against the virus, even though it only knows a small, harmless part of the pathogen. What sounds simple on paper is almost as complex as a landing on Mars in a living organism. Scientists started investigating mRNA a good three decades ago with the aim of developing individual therapies to treat cancer. Today, clinical studies are looking at how heart muscle regenerates immediately after a heart attack with an mRNA-based therapy. People with autoimmune diseases or HIV could also benefit from mRNA preparations and vaccines. Influenza viruses are constantly producing new strains. An mRNA vaccine could be adapted more quickly than conventional vaccines – and would therefore be more effective.

Over 150 different mRNA-based therapies and vaccines are currently being developed around the world. Is mRNA technology the new game-changer in medicine – or is it just hype?

Science

Film by Larissa Klinker

Length 45'

Production docstation Medienproduktion
for ZDF/3Sat

Original title mRNA – Hype oder Hoffnung?

Year 2022

BELARUS: THE SHORT DREAM OF FREEDOM

Protests of historic proportions shook Belarus after the rigged elections in the summer of 2020. Hundreds of thousands of people protested against the state authorities. This was the first time in the decades-long rule of autocrat Alexander Lukashenko that such events had occurred, and the regime brutally suppressed these peaceful protests, incarcerating and torturing protesters. Belarusians in exile in Poland and Germany recount their experiences during the protests. Among others, we meet Alexander Azarov, a high-ranking Belarusian police officer, who has now switched sides and joined Bypol, a union of former Belarusian security officers that publishes secretly filmed footage of torture in Belarusian police units. Natalia and Mikhail Maksimov, former TV journalists with the public broadcaster ONT, were on duty on the day of the election in August, 2020. In Warsaw, Tatyana Khomich keeps fighting for her sister Maria Kolesnikova, the opposition figurehead who faces an 11-year prison sentence. The film interweaves archival footage of key events since the election in Belarus with testimonies from our protagonists. What has happened in Belarus since the 2020 elections? And can the people of Belarus still win the fight for their freedom?

Since the uprisings in Belarus in 2020, many citizens and leading opposition figures have had to leave the country. We meet them in exile in Poland and Germany, where they continue to fight for a better future for their country.

Current Affairs

Film by Irene Langemann

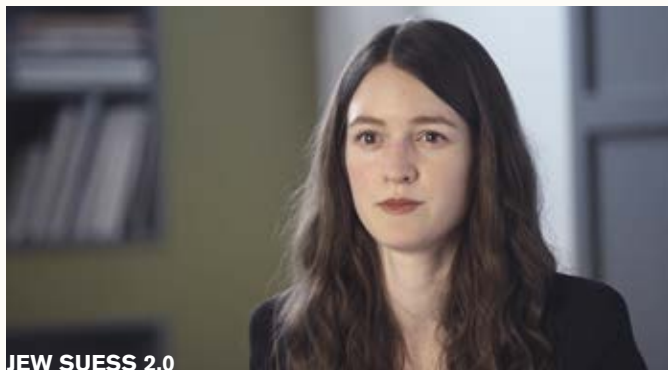
Length 45'

Co-production Lichtfilm with WDR

Original title Belarus: Der kurze Traum von Freiheit

Year 2022





JEW SUESS 2.0



JEW SUESS 2.0

Anti-Semitism is on the rise worldwide, and everyday hostility towards Jews remains frighteningly topical. As a side-effect of the global COVID pandemic, international research and monitoring entities are observing how (old) images of Jews as the enemy and conspiracy theories are being recycled in the digital world. Anti-Semitic content is posted millions of times and shared on video platforms and social media. These memes, media codes and imagery thus reach completely new target groups and have a deep impact on the mainstream. Messenger services are becoming sounding boards for hate and incitement. This film documents the visual roots of this new anti-Semitism, taking a historical look back at the visual propaganda of the Nazis: Do clichés, stereotypes and narratives from Nazi films such as *Jew Süss*, *The Rothschilds* or *The Eternal Jew* continue to have an impact today? Researchers on extremism, international historians, and online activists decode these old and new stereotypes, provide insight into the historical context, and follow the traces of the anti-Jewish conspiracy narratives that seem so closely related to old enemy images from Joseph Goebbels's propaganda ministry.

Anti-Semitism is on the rise worldwide, driven to new extremes by the COVID crisis. This film documents the visual roots of this new anti-Semitism, taking a historical look at the visual propaganda of the Nazis.

Arts & Culture / History / Society

Film by Felix Moeller

Length 77'/52'

Co-production Blueprint Film with RBB / ARTE and ORF, with the support of FFF Bayern and HessenFilm

Original title *Jud Süß 2.0 – Vom NS- zum Online-Antisemitismus / La propagande antisémite - Discours et images d'hier et d'aujourd'hui*

Year 2022

NEW YORK DURING THE PANDEMIC

Spring 2020. New York has fallen silent. Frighteningly silent. The coronavirus has brought this buzzing, vibrant city to a standstill. The streets are empty, the “New York on Pause” rules are in force throughout the city. This film starts in the first days and weeks of the pandemic. Using big screen images, intimate observations, associative, poetic montages and dramatic personal stories, the film portrays the transformation of the city and its unique residents. Over a period of twelve months, we follow the fates of an undertaker, a restaurant owner, a music teacher, an aspiring politician, a hairdresser and many others. In Chinese astrology, the Year of the Rat symbolises potential drama that can only be overcome with determination, wisdom and energy. With its population of nine million, this metropolis is the coronavirus epicentre of the US, with up to 800 people dying every day. Tens of thousands lose their job. But New York wouldn't be New York if it couldn't survive even this crisis. The film shows how New Yorkers overcome resignation and isolation and see the pandemic as a challenge and an opportunity.

In big screen images, intimate observations and dramatic stories, the film portrays New York's transformation during the first 12 months of the pandemic.

Society / Feature Documentary

Film by Tom Bergmann

Length 90'/52'

Co-production Rodeo Film with Tom Bergmann Productions and WDR/ARTE

Original title New York im Jahr der Ratte /
New York au temps de Covid

Year 2022



NEW YORK DURING
THE PANDEMIC

THIRST – WHAT HAPPENS WHEN ALL OUR WATER IS GONE

The most important resource on the planet is in ever shorter supply: water. Temperatures worldwide are rising faster than we feared. What happens when we finally run out of water? This question, which no one would have asked a few years ago, is now becoming vital for survival. In many countries, people are threatened by increasing drought, forced to change their lives or even flee because regions are no longer habitable due to a lack of drinking water. The film explores the consequences for biodiversity: vertebrates are dying of thirst, fish are suffocating and entire forests are withering away. And it's happening right in the heart of Europe! The drought makes it easy for fungi with dangerous spores to grow, and increases forest decay. Disputes already rage over the distribution of precious water resources. We show how the struggle for this scarce resource is intensifying: drinking water, irrigation in agriculture, industrial water – we all want to help ourselves, but can it go on like this? Do we let riverbeds or an entire region dry up so that industry, for instance a beverage producer, can get enough water? Who owns the drinking water?

Current Affairs / Environment

Film by Daniel Harrich

Length 3 x 45'

Production diwafilm for SWR

Original title Durst – wenn unser Wasser verschwindet

Year 2022

Episodes

The Battle For Our Water / Man Versus Nature / The Final Resources

An investigative series that looks at water scarcity from all angles and shows it in all its complexity – leaving us in no doubt that water is the key environmental issue of the century.



THIRST – WHAT HAPPENS WHEN ALL OUR WATER IS GONE

CHILD TRAFFICKING – THE HUMAN TRAFFICKERS’ MAFIA

Crammed into vans and refrigerated trucks, on the road for months, sometimes held in abandoned warehouses or apartments. Beaten, raped, exploited, constantly in fear of their life. Lured by promises of a better future, many children and young adults are smuggled out of Vietnam into western Europe, via Russia, Lithuania and Poland. Berlin is a key hub for human trafficking from Vietnam. The road to questionable happiness costs between 15 and 20 thousand dollars. Victims have to pay off their debts by working in nail salons, as cigarette sellers, drug runners or as gardeners in illegal cannabis plantations. The traffickers decide when the debts are paid off. Their victims are at their mercy for years. It is a highly lucrative business. In this investigative road movie, we follow the trail of the Vietnamese mafia across several European countries to Great Britain, and we ask why these crimes are possible in the first place and how they continue to go almost unnoticed. Our protagonists are high-ranking investigators, witnesses, victims and perpetrators.

Ruthless human traffickers smuggle Vietnamese minors via Russia, Poland and Lithuania to Great Britain. An investigation in which high-ranking investigators, witnesses, victims and perpetrators tell their tale.

Current Affairs

Film by Adrian Bartocha, Jan Wiese

Length 45'

Production RBB

Original title Handelsware Kind –

Die Mafia der Menschenhändler

Year 2021



CHILD TRAFFICKING –
THE HUMAN TRAFFICKERS’ MAFIA



LOCKED UP AND FORGOTTEN? PSYCHIATRIC CARE IN EAST GERMANY

Everyday life in psychiatric institutions in East Germany was defined by dire material conditions, excessive medication administration, coercion and violence. In the early 1960s, dedicated doctors tried to reform mental health care in the GDR. Unsuccessfully. Other attempts to introduce more respectful doctor-patient relationships and to improve the rehabilitation and integration of the mentally ill failed in the 1970s and 1980s. Lack of resources, distrust of state authorities, but also resistance from senior physicians who were afraid of losing their privileges prevented the "democratisation" of psychiatric care. Many SED functionaries believed depression, suicide or alcoholism should not even exist in socialist Germany. In the 1980s, Lothar Tiedtke spent time in a psychiatric institution in Stralsund in the north of the GDR. Being committed to a psychiatric facility aged 19 for what he believed were also political reasons profoundly impacted Tiedtke's life. The qualified shipbuilder is still fighting for his rehabilitation today – so far unsuccessfully. Another patient, Chris Timmler, was not freed until 1989 after spending 10 years in a psychiatric institution. Her diagnosis of schizophrenia proved baseless. This documentary is a powerful portrayal of the struggle to reform "soul work under socialism".

The film looks at the traumatic experiences of patients in East German psychiatric care. A powerful portrayal of the struggle to reform "soul work under socialism".

History

Film by Ulli Wendelmann, Claudia Gründer

Length 52'/45'

Co-production Schulz/Wendelmann

Film with RBB, with the support of the Federal Foundation for the Study of Communist Dictatorship in East Germany

Original title Verwahrt und vergessen? – Psychiatrie in der DDR

Year 2022

PETRO-MELANCHOLY

THE OIL AGE IN THE MIRROR OF ART

No other substance has defined the 20th and early 21st centuries as profoundly as petroleum. The petroleum age is now drawing to an end and we are finally beginning to comprehend just how dependent modern society has become on this substance. Oil has become a black reflection of the last 150 years in the history of mankind. On a journey through our cultural and contemporary past, back to the age of oil, this documentary looks at how profoundly our lives are permeated by the cycles of oil. In encounters with artists such as Ana Alenso (Venezuela), Rena Effendi (Azerbaijan), Michael Hirschbichler (Austria), Albert Scopin (Germany), Monika Grzymala (Germany) and Romuald Hazoumè (Benin), and works of art by Gerhard Richter (Germany), Sebastião Salgado (Brazil), William Eggleston and Steve McCurry (USA), the film shows how oil is inspiring artists around the world to create striking, provocative and political works of art. Their special gaze is a stark reminder of our ambivalent relationship to this substance. This is a unique view of petromodernity and all its implications.

Oil has inspired artists around the world to produce spectacular and controversial works of art. On a journey through cultural and contemporary history, the documentary looks at the petroleum age as reflected in art.

Arts & Culture

Film by Matthias Frick

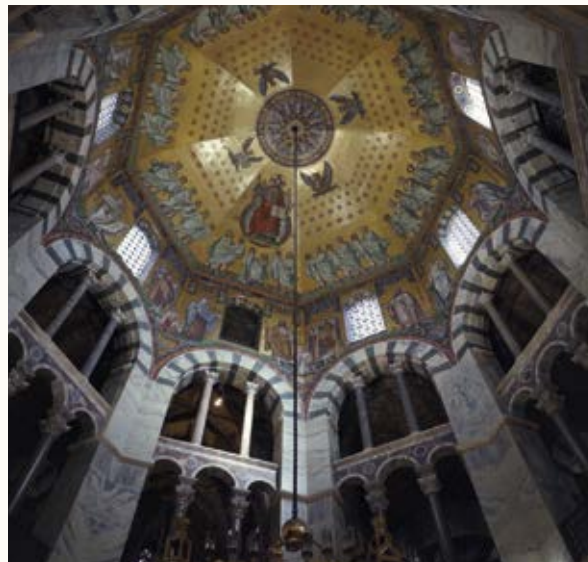
Length 52' HD

Co-production VIVE la DOK and
NAVIGATOR FILM with ZDF/ARTE, with
the support of VAM Innovationsförderung,
Fernsehfonds Austria

Original title Petro-Melancholie –
Das Erdölzeitalter im Spiegel der Kunst/
Le Pétrole – L'art et la matière

Year 2022





UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE – TREASURES FOR ETERNITY

In 2022, UNESCO celebrates the 50th anniversary of its World Heritage Convention – the idea of a global heritage that belongs to all peoples and must therefore be protected by the world community. Its mission is to preserve the world's most beautiful and valuable buildings, cultural landscapes, monuments and areas of outstanding natural beauty for generations to come. This agreement has been ratified by 197 states. The international World Heritage Committee is responsible for deciding what is of outstanding value to humanity. To be included on the World Heritage List, a site must be of exceptional universal significance and of irreplaceable value. Starting out as a short list of twelve "treasures" from seven countries, it now includes over one thousand cultural and natural sites worldwide that are considered worthy of protection. We introduce four very different World Heritage Sites in Europe: Arles, the Amalfi Coast, Tallinn and Aachen Cathedral. Sensual, visually powerful and told from today's perspective, each part in the series illustrates just how decisively these cultural assets still shape our cultural memory and determine our perspectives today.

Arts & Culture

Films by Marion Schmidt, Sven Rech, Grit Leder, Inga Wolfram

Length 4 x 52' / 4 x 45'

Production telekult Film- und Medienproduktion for MDR / ARTE

Original title UNESCO Weltkulturerbe – Schätze für die Ewigkeit / Patrimoine Mondial de l'UNESCO – Trésors c ulturels

Episodes: Arles / Arles, Tallinn / Tallinn, Amalfiküste / La côte amalfitaine, Aachener Dom / La cathédrale d'Aix-La-Chapelle

Year 2022

Mankind's greatest buildings, cultural landscapes and areas of natural beauty must be preserved for the future. On the 50th anniversary of the UNESCO World Heritage Convention, we visit four World Heritage Sites in Europe.

DELICIOUS ITALY

Far from the bustling tourist hotspots, we look at the soul of Italy and find out more about the country through its culinary culture. Each episode is a journey of discovery that intrigues and inspires. Various protagonists offer us a personal glimpse of their everyday lives and invite us to visit their most sacred place: the kitchen. The recipes and ingredients reflect the culture of the country and are flavoured with the spectacular scenery of the individual regions. From the varied backdrops of Alpine peaks and plains, vineyards, national parks and the Piedmont lakes, the journey takes us to Tuscany and the coastal region around Livorno, where food cultures from the last seven centuries come together and wine-growing is considered the work of heroes. In the deep south, we travel through Apulia. The region that forms the heel of Italy's boot is one huge fruit and vegetable patch where all the ingredients of Mediterranean cuisine grow in abundance. With its rich vegetation, Sicily has a bit of Africa, Arabia, Byzantium and Athens, a little Rome and even a touch of Spain. Ancient orchards, olive groves and plantations of prickly pears show themselves in all their magnificence.

On this journey, we find out more about the Italian soul through the culinary culture of its people. From Piedmont to Apulia, our protagonists invite us to take a peek into their kitchens.

Lifestyle

Films by Lorenza Castella, André Schäfer, Francesca D'Amicis, Katja Duregger

Length 16 x 26'

Production Florianfilm Produktion for ZDF/ARTE

Original title Köstliches Italien / Délices d'Italie

Year 2019 - 2022

Episodes

Delicious Piedmont: The Alps /

The Lakes / The Heart of Piedmont /

The Langhe

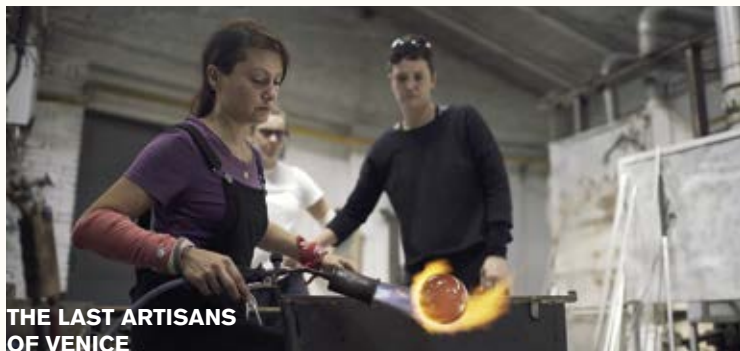
Delicious Tuscany: On the Coast / In the Mountains / Maremma and Val d'Orcia / The Heart of the Country

Delicious Apulia: The Gargano / Terra di Bari / The Land of the Trulli / Salento

Delicious Sicily: From the Coast to the Island's Interior / The Fertile South / In the Shadow of Etna / The Historical North



DELICIOUS ITALY



THE LAST ARTISANS
OF VENICE



THE LAST ARTISANS OF VENICE

Venice has always been a place for encounters, for socialising and personal exchanges. In some respects, it still has something of a village flair with its small stores, narrow alleyways and hidden courtyards. Places where the few remaining Venetians are still to be found. These days, the tourist industry dominates much of Venice and little interest is shown in the city's hidden gems. But we take a look behind the scenes and discover parts of the lagoon city that have nothing to do with tourism and clichés, seen through the eyes of "the last Venetians". They are craftsmen and long-time residents who fill the city with passion, culture and memories. We meet an organ tuner, glassblowers, a weaver, painter, confectioner, gondoliers and representatives of many other trades. They connect the past with the present and keep alive centuries-old crafts. We discover their passion for their instruments and tools, for their materials, for the beauty of Venice, its history and cultural life, far from the hordes of tourists.

We take a look at the lesser known corners of the lagoon city and find out about the lives of "the last Venetians" – long-time residents and craftsmen who still practise sometimes centuries-old trades.

Human Interest

Film by Simona Risi

Length 52' / 45'

Production Alpenway Media for ZDF / ARTE

Original title Die letzten Venezianer /
Les derniers maîtres artisans de Venise

Year 2021

THE VALTELLINA AND ITS MOUNTAINS

Valtellina is one of Italy's most beautiful, yet lesser known Alpine regions, characterised by vast granite walls, imposing mountain panoramas and nature reserves, such as the Stelvio glacier. The valley stretches for a hundred kilometres and is flanked by steep vineyards that are painstakingly farmed. With its dry stone walls, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, it is an area full of traditions and contrasts. Part of northern Lombardy, Valtellina stretches from the ancient trading town of Chiavenna to the Stelvio Pass – where the region borders South Tyrol and Switzerland. High peaks rise at the point where the Eurasian and African continental plates collided, between them meanders the narrow valley. At the foot of enormous granite walls, where some of the region's most famous mountains can be found, is a barely accessible terrain, inhabited by a mountain population that turns out to be surprisingly cosmopolitan. The documentary introduces us to the valley's natural wonders and the special people who live there.

Vast granite walls, imposing mountain panoramas and nature reserves, such as the Stelvio glacier, characterise the Valtellina – one of Italy's most beautiful, yet lesser known Alpine regions.

Human Interest
Film by Alessandro Soetje
Length 52'/45'
Production Alpenway Media for ZDF/ARTE
Original title Das Veltlin und seine Berge /
 Italie : les montagnes de la Valteline
Year 2021



THE VALTELLINA
AND ITS MOUNTAINS



KYRGYZSTAN – THE NOMAD YURT SCHOOL

Many families in northern Kyrgyzstan are spending summers on mountain pastures again just like their ancestors. They breed animals – especially horses – and live in yurts. For the children, this is a special time. With no school for three months, they can enjoy the spectacular, unspoilt mountain scenery and learn about traditional nomadic life. But the girls and boys have to help their parents a lot with household chores and with the animals, so their holidays are not always fun. Some time ago, a yurt school was set up in the mountains, where children can meet, learn and play together during the summer. Instead of going on holiday, Jenya Sharjeva, the head of the village kindergarten, visits the nomad children at the school every day. She wants to improve their educational opportunities with learning and play activities, while also incorporating customs and the children's families. We find out about the traditional nomadic life on the mountain pastures, accompany 12-year-old Alihan and his father to the famous horse market in Karakol, and we're there when teacher Jenya introduces her charges to the modern world and Kyrgyz traditions in the yurt school.

Summer on the mountain pastures – we find out about the traditional family life of Kyrgyz nomad children and we accompany them to the yurt school, where they are introduced to the modern world and Kyrgyz traditions.

Human Interest

Film by Sibylle Smolka

Length 45'

Production telekult Film- und Medienproduktion for MDR/ARTE

Original title Kirgisistan – Die Jurtenschule der Nomaden / Sous la yourte – L'écoles des nomades du Kirghizstan

Year 2022

THE LAND OF A THOUSAND LAKES – THE MECKLENBURG LAKE PLATEAU

The Mecklenburg Lake Plateau is Europe's largest area of interconnected lakes and waterways. The "Land of a Thousand Lakes", as it is known, is a region of superlatives: Müritz is the largest lake located entirely within Germany and the heart of the region, the Feldberg lakes are famous for their crystal-clear water, and Tollensesee is considered the most stunning lake in the region. Müritz National Park is home to sea eagles, storks and wolves, and its beech forest has been designated a World Heritage Site. The wild, sparsely populated region stretches from the source of the river Havel between Berlin and Rostock, to the Peene Delta at Lake Kummerow, the Amazon of the north. From here, you can follow the current all the way to the Baltic Sea. A voyage of discovery along Germany's most beautiful waterways.

Human Interest

Film by André Hörmann

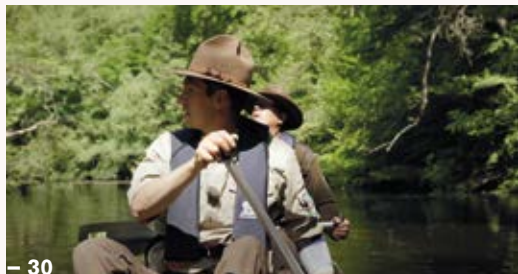
Length 52'

Production telekult Film- und
Medienproduktion for ZDF/ARTE

Original title Das Land der tausend
Seen – Die Mecklenburgische Seenplatte /
Le royaume lacustre – Les lacs du
Mecklembourg

Year 2022

The Mecklenburg Lake District, north of Berlin, is Europe's largest area of interconnected lakes. A voyage of discovery along Germany's most beautiful waterways.



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