

INTERNATIONAL PRESS KIT

Dor Film-West

presents

in co-production with Bayerischer Rundfunk (BR)
and
Hochschule für Fernsehen und Film (HFF), Munich
and in association with
ARRI and Schesch Filmproduktion

with support from
FilmFernsehFonds Bayern

directed by
Vanessa van Houten



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PAPER BIRD aka House of Wishes

„What do we actually need? It is just love, water, food and work. These things are practically free. But why do they continue to elude us?

But somewhere out there is a paradise. And when I have found it you will be the only one to know.“(Charlie)

PAPER BIRD is a story about love, lost childhood and the search for your own way.

Nic, an eclectic 23-year old young man is waiting in Bangkok for his lost luggage. Whilst searching for necessities of daily life, he is pulled into Bangkok. Like Alice in Wonderland, he stumbles with curiosity through a world unknown to him.

When Nic meets Coco her spirit reminds him of a person he once knew in his childhood. He starts to remember his almost forgotten past und begins his journey to look for his „House of Wishes“. Nic is mesmerized by Coco and a love story begins...

Status: completed / September 2007

Format: 101 min, 1.1.85, colour

Language: English

Director: Vanessa van Houten (Karma Cowboy, The Death and the Maiden)

Cast: Thomas Fränzel, Tschagsalma Borchuu, Lars Rudolph

Producer: Danny Krausz (Silentium, Come Sweet Death, Blind Spot – Hitler´s Secretary)

Creative Producer: Natalie Lambsdorff (The Story of the Weeping Camel, The Cave of the Yellow Dog)

Please contact:
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about the cast

Tschagsalmaa Borchuu,

moved with her family from Mongolia to Germany when she was 8 years old. When I met her she was 23 years old and studying fashion design in Den Haag. I first casted her sister, who had done photo shoots in Germany. After the casting she showed me a b&w photo of Tschagsalmaa and said: " you have to meet my sister, she would be perfect for the role". I was mesmerised by the expression and during the casting by her natural way of being. She had never acted before. During the shoot she was self-confident, beautiful, wise, risky and stayed natural. Working with her was a present.

Thomas Fränzel,

I was looking for a very long time to find the right one. I had very specific criteria; I was looking for a nymph like man with multicultural features. I found Thomas at the yearly acting school meeting in Frankfurt. Acting schools from Germany, Switzerland and Austria perform on a small stage for one week. As soon as I saw him perform, I knew he was the one. He was studying in his last year at the Ernst Busch School, Berlin. We rehearsed for 1 month in an empty loft in Berlin and explored the character Nic. I loved his sensibility, curiosity and endless energy.

Lars Rudolph,

Made a lasting impression on me in the role of Severin in the movie "The Inheritors". Since then I always wanted to work with him. When it came to writing the script the role Charly was born. Lars has the looks and in addition the sensibility, crazyness and understanding for the role. He is incredibly intense and precise.



directors notes

It is a movie the search for your inner paradise
It is a movie close to my heart and soul.

As a graduation movie and first feature I explored my own handwriting and story telling. I was interested in the reality, as in filming in a documentary style to make the movie real, mixed with magic realism.

Knowingly I didn't want to take you, the viewer, by your hand and talk you through the movie in addition to what you can already see. I wanted you to have the freedom to feel the way you would feel.

One important thought, in creating the story, was the meeting or clashing of cultures. A western boy, Nic, growing up in a society where anything is possible, where you can be a urban bum, which means you can study, work a bit, but not too hard and still afford a great life. There is no hardship of surviving. A boy who doesn't have strong religious beliefs, or family values. He is lost. He craves love and support but doesn't know how to get it. The strong beliefs he had as a child were long forgotten. When he started studying and working part time, he lost his interest in the future and soon becomes sad. But what makes Nic change? What brings Nic back to the person he once was? What makes him believe again? Which moral values does he have?

Then Nic meets Coco, a Thai girl, who went through the hardship of life. She has strong religious beliefs and strong family values, but became a slave to her past. She lives many paradoxes life writes. She has never asked herself: What do I want in life? Who am I? What do I need?

Nic falls in love with Coco and relives his relationship with his mother. A love that is not to keep.

And there is Charly, who sees himself, when he was young and innocent in Nic. Nic is mesmerised by Charly and is constantly challenged by him. This relationship also has a lot to do with Nics past and relationship with his mother. Nic can also end up like Charly, if he doesn't watch out.

Sometimes it is better in life to go different ways than being together. Some of the people you meet in your life, you might only have a short but strong encounter, which has an impact that is life changing or to come closer to one's self.

Only if you can love yourself can you truly love someone else.

It was very challenging to work with so many different people from different places. Also to be able to work with professional actors, young actors and Tschagsalma who played Coco, who has never acted before.

The story was developed based on true life stories, which I researched in Thailand within the prostitution districts. I spent a lot of time in Thailand learning about the culture and life. In the movie I use strong symbols which come from a Japanese influence from my childhood. The look of the film was inspired by the photographic work by Nan Goldin and Nobuyoshi Araki.



Directress: Vanessa van Houten

Vanessa van Houten was born in San Rafael, California in 1971. She grew up in the Bahamas, Berlin and Augsburg, Germany. After completing studies of Photography and Photo Design at Polytechnic University in Dortmund, Vanessa van Houten relocated to New York to study Anthology Film Archives in NYC. From 1997 – 2007 Vanessa van Houten studied at Hochschule für Fernsehen und Film, Munich in the Department of Feature Films and Telemovies. PAPER BIRD is her first feature film and final graduation film from Film School Munich. Vanessa van Houten works as a Photographer and Filmmaker and lives in Melbourne, Australia.

Filmografie	2007	Paperbird – 101 min, super 16mm, color, feature film set in Thailand, writer and director
	2001	Karma Cowboy – Fictiondocu, director 43min, 35mm, colour, U.S.A. In Cooperation with Sonja Heiss, group production
Shortfilms:	2000	Girls in the Army in Israel , Close-up 2000 – Short reportage, director 7min, Beta, colour, Israel
	1998	Mona - Short film, director, book & production design 11 min, 16mm, colour, Germany
	1997	The Death and the Maiden – Dance film, director, camera 16 min, 16mm, b/w, Germany Festivals: Beirut, Lebanon TV Station: Art Channel, USA
	1996	New York Images – 25min, 16mm, colour, NYC
	1995	Alps – a joint film by 7 directors – Experimental film 55 min, 16mm, colour, Austria
	1992-1994	Growing Silently – Documentary, director, script & sound design, in cooperation with Andreas Fröba 28 min, 16mm, b/w & colour
		Festivals: Film Festival Max Ophüls, Saarbrücken Saar-Lor-Lux, Saarbrücken DocumentaryFilm Festival Munich, Blicke aus dem Ruhrgebiet, Bochum Film Festival Lisabon Documentary Film Festival, St. Petersburg Film show of young Directors, New York
		Prises: Honoured Mention at the Munich Film Festival 3 rd prize at the Bochum Film Festival
Acting as Artist	2004	Mythic places of mankind – 45min, Beta, documentary for Television BR – as the main protagonist
Exhibitions / Photodesign:	2003	Exhibition in the "Haus der Kunst" in Munich – young artist in Germany - photography
Awards:		
Karma Cowboy Prises 2002		Prix Regards Neufs , Award in the Section "Regards Neufs" 1 st Prize (New Views, Young Films)
		Bavarian Documentary Award "The Young Lion" At the Munich Film Festival, Germany

CAST / CREW / TECHNICAL DATA

Director	Vanessa van Houten
Producer	Danny Krausz, Gerd Huber
Line Producer Creative Producer	Alfred Deutsch Natalie Lambsdorff
Screenplay	Vanessa van Houten, Korbinian Greiner, Natalie Lambsdorff
DOP	Philipp Kirsamer
Editor	Susanne Hartmann
Key Cast	Thomas Fränzel (Nic) Tschagsalma Borchu (Coco) Lars Rudolph (Charlie)
Production Design	Andrew Perry
OV Version	English, German, Thai language
Format	Digi Beta, colour, 1:1.85 , Dolby Stereo SR
Year	2007
Length	101 minutes

