

INSERT FILM presents

ESCAPE TO PARADISE

*The story of a
Kurdish family in
present-day
Switzerland –
realistic, amusing
und dramatic.*

A Real Acting Movie

A movie by Nino Jacusso

with

Fidan Firat

Düzgün Ayhan

Yildiz Nurrettin

Walo Lüönd

guest

Emil Steinberger

35mm – color – CinemaScope – Dolby Digital Surround EX –
90 Min. – Switzerland 2001

www.escapetoparadise.ch

**Competing at the 49th International Film Festival
Donostia - San Sebastián 2001**

Release Switzerland: September 2001

A production of

INSERT FILM

Cinema and television production

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Sehmuz, his wife Delal and their three children have saved themselves by escaping from Turkey to Switzerland. They are temporarily lodged in the asylum centre, together with refugees from Africa and East Europe that can see the funny side of everyday life despite their scars and nightmares. However, their fates do not sound genuine enough for the asylum authorities, this is

what Sehmuz' Kurdish compatriot Aziz claims. He sends Sehmuz to a Swiss who invents a credible story substantiated by documents. Sehmuz persuades Delal to pawn the family jewels and buys a new biography, which he laboriously learns by heart with the help of his children. Yet, at the decisive interview he can no longer remember the weather in Izmir...



The Film

The story of the film is based on true events that have been written and developed into a tragicomedy in cooperation with the people involved. People from eight different cultures have participated in this task. Some of them take part in the film.

The director, Nino Jacusso, works in his feature films with elements of new realism, of which Real Acting is one of the most fascinating elements, real people acting in front of the camera in a dramatized story taken from life.

In his real life Sehmuz Karadag is also a Kurdish refugee and the father of a family who has sought political asylum in Switzerland; the interview official is an interview official of the Canton of Solothurn. Nino Jacusso's actors and actresses have experienced what they act in the same or a similar fashion. In this way they cannot be manipulated in front of the camera although they are playing a role. Their acting approaches the social reality. They are a part of a new reality on the screen. They are Real Actors.



The cast of the main and important supporting parts consists of Real Actors. This differentiates the movie from the Italian neo-realism of the 40s, which used actors and actresses for the main parts. Apart from this there are a lot of connections between Jacusso and the movies of the socio-revolutionary movement. It is important to him to tell stories that deal with the social reality – and therefore with us: a confrontation with reality and truth that takes place on the contents level in *Escape to Paradise*, too. The movie reflects an attitude toward the world on every level, Real Acting becoming its corrective element.

As a consequence of the claim to reality, all the elements that are necessary for film making are subject to the paradigm of Real Acting: light, sound, camera, props, music ...

The rules of the game are declared by the game: every means is allowed if it helps the audience to experience the story realistically. Narrowness, for example, can best be presented by a picture scope as large as possible; therefore it is done in Cinema-scope. Subjective reality in sound can be generated most convincingly by the most sophisticated means possible today, which is the Dolby Digital Surround EX.

Real Acting is more than just a working method. It is a means to an end for the production company Insert Film in Solothurn and for a director and authors who have aimed at offering an emotional cinema experience and still present hard facts. If at the cinema we meet realistic figures whose fate or situation we sympathize with and that make us sensitive for real solutions of conflicts, the film has reached its aim.

Born in Southern Italy in 1955, he emigrated to Switzerland with his parents in 1960 and went to school in Biberist and Solothurn. From 1974 to 1978 he studied at the Hochschule für Film und Fernsehen (HFF) in Munich. In 1986 he received a script scholarship for dramaturgy from the Filmförderungsanstalt (FFA) Berlin. In 1994 he attended the script seminar Ebeltoft (Denmark) with Frank Daniel. He has done media-pedagogic work at schools and universities since 1996.

For his complete work up to now he was awarded the Fachpreis für Film of the Canton of Solothurn: "Nino Jacusso is one of those rare movie makers that have created lasting fictional as well as documentary work, and that have, at an early stage already, developed and found their own characteristic picture language."

(Fachpreis für Film, Foto und Video, 1991)

Films

1975 **Jugendliebe** Experimental film, 20' - movie class S. Portmann, Solothurn

1977 **Kinderspiele** Horror fiction - 12' - HFF München

1978 **Lilith** Fantasy fiction - 20' - HFF München

1979 **Emigrazione** Dokumentarfilm, - 100' - HFF München

1980 **Ritorno a casa** Documentary - 101' - Filmkollektiv Zürich

Awarded the Eidgenössischen Qualitätsprämie (1980) and the Zürcher Filmpreis (1981)

1982 **Klassengeflüster** Real-fiction film - 90' - Odyssee Film, Zürich

Script und direction, co-director Franz Rickenbach

Awarded the FIPRESCI-Preis, Locarno (1982), the Eidgenössischen Qualitätsprämie (1982) and the Zürcher Filmpreis (1983)

1989 **Hauptgasse 7**

TV documentary - 45' - INSERT FILM, Solothurn/ SF DRS

Co-director Ivo Kummer

1992 **Bellinvitu - die schöne Einladung**

Feature film - 90' - INSERT FILM, Solothurn und ZDF, Mainz

Awarded the Preis der Jury, Max Ophüls Festival Saarbrücken (1992), the French Prix du Public (1992) and the Canadian Prix Super Ecran (1993)

1995 **Dreckige Schweiz, saubere Schweiz**

TV documentary - 45' - INSERT FILM, Solothurn/SF DRS

2000 **Transito** TV documentary - 47' - RECK Film, Zürich and TSI, Lugano

2001 **Escape to Paradise**

REAL-ACTING movie - 90' - INSERT FILM, Solothurn

Competing at San Sebastian 2001

Texts

1981 **Nordlicht-Drahtgeschichten** – Short Stories (Anatol Verlag München)

1984 **Klassengeflüster** - Script

1987 **Der Vater** - Script

1992 **Bellinvitu** - Script

1995 **Marie-Claire** - Script

1997 **Escape to Paradise** - Script

Düzgün Ayhan born in Tunceli. Because of my political beliefs I was in prison for a long time. While I was there I was tortured and put under pressure mentally. After my

release from prison I came to Switzerland seeking political asylum. A year later my family joined me in Switzerland.

SehmuZ Karadag,



In the film I play SEHMUZ KARADAG. SehmuZ is born in Tunceli, Anatolia, in 1958 and spends the first seven years of his life at the place of his birth. After his elder brother is shot dead by an Oezel TIM squad during a skirmish, the family move to Elazig, where SehmuZ attends primary school.

At the age of thirteen SehmuZ follows his two elder sisters to Izmir and can apprentice as a carpenter. He is a born craftsman, skilled with his hands. Expressing himself in words is rather difficult for him. But he has his words followed by actions. He joins

an illegal organisation. Here he meets his future wife Delâl. Their common origin brings them closer. They get married in 1982. The activities of the organisation that is forbidden and is checked by security police again and again as well as hindered in their work in public, lands SehmuZ in prison. He is interrogated, abused, tortured.

Despite all the injustice SehmuZ has not lost his belief in the good in human beings. He might appear aloof, his manner being shy, but he is warm-hearted and a tender father.

Fidan Firt was born in Tunceli in 1960. From 1966 she attended schools in Istanbul and 1974 she emigrated to Austria. In 1978 she got married in Switzerland and now has a daughter and

two sons. Since 1990 she has been the organiser of the Kurdish emigrant circle and has been the head of seminars and drama groups.

Delal



In the film I play DELÂL KARADAG. Delâl is born in Tunceli, East Anatolia, in 1960. Her maiden-name is Yildrim. When the army occupie East Turkey and declare Tunceli forbidden zone, her parents leave the villa-ge and move to Izmir. Delâl here attends school and the teachers' seminar, conclu- ded her education with a diploma and works as a teacher for four years. Her cou- sin asks her to work for the secretary's office of a liberation movement. Here Delâl meets the shy and taciturn Sehmuz. The two get married and celebrate their wed- ding in their common home village of Tunceli, which is equivalent to a political act, since Kurdish weddings in the occu- pied territory are a provocation. Sanctions follow: a year after the birth of her daugh- ter Zelâl in 1983, Delâl cannot find a job any longer.

Delâl works as a shop assitant in Izmir and also continues working in the secretary's office of the liberation movement, where she focuses on the situation of the Kurdish women and mothers. She loses a lot of her political hopes. In 1990 she gives birth to her son Baran and three years later to her daughter Berivan.

Delâl is open towards human beings and receptive to new ideas. She has learned to be strict with herself to prevent her own downfall, and she gives this strength to her children. However, just like Sehmuz, she is warm-hearted. A source of her strength is poetry and music.

Walo Lüönd was born in Zug in 1927. To please his father he first trained for a “good profession”. So he apprenticed as a tailor from 1944 to 1947, changing to the stage studio Zurich immediately afterwards. After acquiring a second professional diploma, he could collect his first experience in his debut at the Zurich theatre (Schauspielhaus). 1952 Switzerland became too narrow for him. First he moved to Munich, where he worked at the Kammerspiele among others, then moved to Essen, where he acted under the direction of Erwin Piscator at the theatre of the town and finally settled in Berlin, where Leonhard Steckel engaged him for the Freie Volksbühne. He remained faithful to the divided city for ten years.

Walo Lüönd was still living in Berlin when Switzerland discovered him again, first the theatre scene of the Zurich Neumarkt, then director Kurt Früh: The lasting glory of his second, his Helvetian career begun in 1970, was founded by his inimitable identification in the part of “Dällenbach Kari”. He played further legendary parts in the films “Die Schweizermacher” and “Der Erfinder”. Apart from his work with Piscator, Steckel and Früh he was also formed by his work with Gustav Knuth, Rudolf Noelte and Rolf Lyssy. Besides he also took part in various performances of young director Lukas Leuenberger. A short time ago he played a part in a thirty-part television series and took a role in the film “Der Komiker”. At the time Walo Lüönd lives in the Maggia Valley and the Engadin.

***In the film
I play the
STORYSELLER.***



He is a middle-aged Swiss. As a former state official he has collected experience with asylum authorities and knows the mechanisms of the asylum authorities. He knows that every truth is not necessarily recognised as such. He has turned his knowledge into a profitable business, tries to push the truth on and fabricates well-paid stories and evidence which, so he pro-

mises, stand up to the interview authorities and bring about a positive asylum decision.

He remains a glittering and mysterious personality. It is difficult to judge where the borders between wanting to help and wanting to make money lie for him.

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Producer/Manager

Ivo Kummer

Main fields of activities

Documentaries, features, as well as television, information and commission films.
 Permanent ENG team for television companies both in Switzerland and abroad.

The film and television production company INSERT FILM was founded in 1987 and works together with specialists in the domains of production, script, directing, and technique. The field of activities includes cinema, television and off screen productions. A permanent ENG team produce actual contributions for television news and magazines.

Productions up to the present (Selection)

Documentaries

- 2001 Schicksal und Auferstehen (Walter Wehmeyer)
- 2000 Viva la muerte - Es lebe der Tod (Felix Tissi)
- 1998 Transparence et équilibre (Ivo Kummer)
- 1995 Dreckige Schweiz - Saubere Schweiz (Nino Jacusso)
 - Magjc Matterhorn (Anka Schmid)
 - Windwechsel und Mondnotizen
 - Landschaften-Paisagens
- 1992 Werkportrait Gerhard Meier
- 1990 Hauptgasse 7

Features

- 1999 Who's next? (Felix Tissi)
- 1992 Bellinvitu - Die schöne Einladung (Nino Jacusso)
- 2001 Escape to Paradise (Nino Jacusso)
 - www.escapetoparadise.ch
 - First screening: autumn 2001

Productions in progress

Documentaries

- AX MAYUL - Der Nebelgott (Gertrud Pinkus)
- RockBarock (Pio Corradi, Henrik Rhyn, Ueli Studer)
- Hippie Masala (Ulrich Grossenbacher)