

UNTER DIR DIE STADT



Een film van Christoph Hochhäusler
In Nederland uitgebracht door ABC/ Cinemien

Release 21 april 2011

UNTER DIR DIE STADT - SYNOPSIS

Wanneer Svenja en Roland elkaar tijdens een kunsttentoonstelling ontmoeten is er direct een aantrekkingskracht. Maar ze zijn beiden getrouwd en handelen er niet naar. Dagen later komen ze elkaar bij toeval weer tegen. Tijdens het drinken van een kop koffie spelen de twee met de onverklaarbare fascinatie die ze voor elkaar hebben. Svenja is nieuwsgierig, maar blijft trouw aan haar man. Roland, een invloedrijke bankier bij de bank waar Svenja's man werkt, is gewend om te krijgen wat hij wil. Hij zorgt er voor dat de man van Svenja overgeplaatst wordt naar Indonesie. Svenja, niet op de hoogte van de acties van Roland, kan de verleiding daarna niet langer weerstaan....

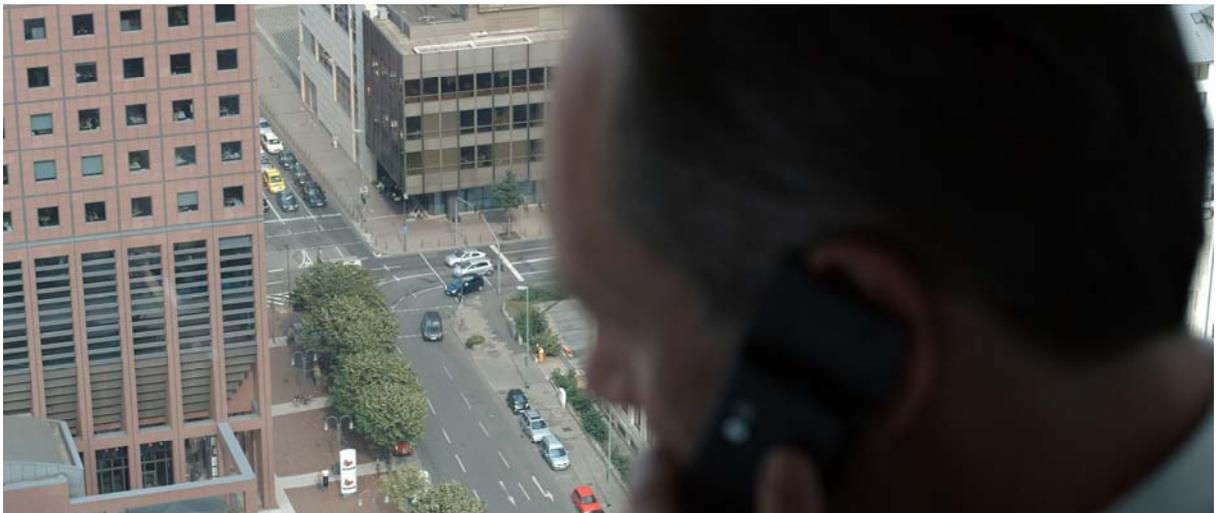
UNTER DIR DIE STADT ging in première in het Cannes competitieprogramma Un Certain Regard. De regisseur, Christoph Hochhäusler, maakte eerder films FALSCHER BEKENNER (I AM GUILTY, 2005) en MILCHWALD (THIS VERY MOMENT, 2003).

UNTER DIR DIE STADT / 110 minuten/ 35 mm / Duitsland 2010/ Duits gesproken



UNTER DIR DIE STADT wordt in Nederland gedistribueerd door ABC/Cinemien.

Beeldmateriaal kan gedownload worden vanaf: www.cinemien.nl/pers of vanaf www.filmdepot.nl.
Voor meer informatie: ABC/ Cinemien, Gideon Querido van Frank, gideon@cinemien.nl



UNTER DIR DIE STADT – CAST & CREW

Svenja Steve.....Nicolette Krebitz
Roland CordesRobert Hunger-Bühler
Oliver Steve.....Mark Waschke
Claudia CordesAndrew Lau
Werner LöbauWolfgang Böck
Herman Josef EschPaul Faßnacht
Uwe MaasOliver Broumis
Frank KressnickRobert Schupp

Director Christoph Hochhäusler
Screenplay..... Ulrich Peltzer, Christoph Hochhäusler
Director of Photography..... Bernhard Keller
Editor Stephan Stabenow
Production design Tim Pannen
Costume design.....Birgitt Kilian
Casting Ulrike Müller
Producer Bettina Brokemper

UNTER DIR DIE STADT - CHRISTOPH HOCHHÄUSLER

De Duitse regisseur werd in 1972 geboren in München. Hochhäusler studeerde eerst architectuur in Berlijn om vervolgens naar de filmacademie in München te gaan. Tijdens deze periode richtte Hochhäusler het filmtijdschrift Revolver op. Nu geeft hij, naast zijn werk als regisseur, les op verschillende universiteiten als Harvard en de DFFB in Berlijn. UNTER DIR DIE STADT is Hochhäuslers derde lange speelfilm. Zijn tweede film FALSCHER BEKENNER (2005) was net als UNTER DIR DIE STADT officieel geselecteerd voor het Cannes competitieprogramma Un Certain Regard.



Filmografie

2010 UNTER DIR DIE STADT
2005 FALSCHER BEKENNER
2003 MILCHWALD

UNTER DIR DIE STADT - NICOLE KREBITZ

Nicole Krebitz (1972) stond als jong meisje al voor de camera. Vanaf hier tiende was zij te zien in verschillende TV-, film- en theaterproducties. Op haar 32^e won Krebitz een Gouden Camera voor haar optreden in de film SO SCHNELL DU KANNST. Maar het bleef niet alleen bij acteren: sinds 2001 produceert en regisseert Krebitz ook haar eigen films. Haar korte film DIE UNVOLLLENDETE werd op het Berlinale in 2009 vertoond.

Filmografie

- 2008 LIEBESLIED (Anne Høegh Krohn)
- 2003 ZWISCHEN TAG UND NACHT (Nicolai Rohde)
- 2002 SO SCHNELL DU KANNST (Vivian Naefe)
- 2000 THE TUNNEL (Roland Suzo Richter)
- 1996 BANDITS (Katja von Garnier)
- 1994 AUSGERECHNET ZOÉ (Markus Imboden)

UNTER DIR DIE STADT - ROBERT HUNGER-BÜHLER

Na een studie aan de toneelacademie in Zurich en een studie Theater en Filosofie in Wenen, ging Robert Hunger-Bühler (1953) aan de slag als acteur en regisseur. De zwitser speelde voornamelijk in televisieproducties, zoals GIER EN TATORT.



UNTER DIR DIE STADT

in de woorden van Christoph Hochhäusler

unexplainable attraction When Roland's wife eventually confronts him about his affair, he says: "I have no name for it." We all consider ourselves rational animals, but we are not, actually. Not the slightest bit. Love might be a deal, but attraction is primal. You meet someone, anyone, and instantly you know you could love or hate him or her. The first thing we know is feeling. That's dangerous, but despite what we believe, all the logic in the world can't protect us from animal instinct. For me, cinema is all about this kind of danger.

longing for the opposite Svenja and Roland are not on the same social level, and they never will be. He's part of corporate aristocracy, and he married into old money for a reason. His whole life is dedicated to the game and its rules. He loves deals and deals love him. Svenja's game is life. She could not care less for the game of big finance. There is this famous phrase by artist Maurizio Nannucci: "You can imagine the opposite." For me, it means that the opposite follows us, like a shadow, like a nihilistic desire to break up with the comfort we have surrounded us with. We want to get real, to wake up. It's a confrontational thing. We have the hope to be awakened by someone, an opposite force. One longs for the opposite. This is perhaps the heart of the film. It's really about losing touch with reality, and about the counter reaction, attaining reality in love, in the body.

svenja I have always seen Svenja as someone coming from a floating, unsteady life. Someone for whom it is difficult to say no. Not out of weakness, she is just open, curious to see what will happen next. Unlike her husband Oliver, who is driven by an image, an idea of a life he wants to achieve. But what's fascinating is how Svenja manages to confuse Roland's – and our – imagination again and again. Svenja is no victim, no puppet on a string.

roland Roland can shape the world to suit his will, at least for some time. He is well aware of his attraction to Svenja and he plays with it right from the start. But he will be taken by surprise that the affair actually matters to him. What comes as a surprise, or more precise: as an accident, is the momentum, the gravity of his feelings.

a challenge and a mirror Svenja is Roland's equal. The only reason she is interesting for him. As a challenge and as a mirror. They resemble each other in their deep sense of loss. They both have no firm ground beneath their feet. Something binds them, but I don't think these two will grow old together.

how power affects love The film is inspired by the biblical story of David and Bathsheba in its basic outline, but with a capitalist aspect. That was the basic idea that I presented to my co-screenwriter Ulrich Peltzer. Someone uses his power for his love and at the same time destroys his love with it. It was just material for us. Many other things were added. This is what I found interesting: How power affects the longing for what we call love. Power transcends (or corrupts) ideology, beliefs, bonds. Power is all about action. Not unlike children destroying sand castles, the powerful love nothing more than the proof of their force.

the banking world During our screenplay research, we read books and articles on the banking world – and this was long before the crisis – partly tell-all books, but also a few basics. Then through friends and acquaintances, we met and interviewed middle and executive bankers, all the way up to the CEO. It was very exciting to penetrate

and delve into this world. The biggest surprise was to see how irrationally this “cutting edge of capitalism” functions, how unpredictable it is also for those who are allegedly steering it. The crisis finally seemed almost logical... in terms of a correction of an unreliable narrative, a world of numbers that simply couldn't care less for reality. Because feedback from the factual world is less direct, an incorrect assessment may take years to have an impact. By then, those responsible have long since moved on to other companies.

fierce competitiveness “Résumés!” says Roland at one point and means it contemptuously. The question of what résumés mean gradually developed into a leitmotif. At one point, a board member says that Oliver's CV is AAA+. That's what it's all about: everything is rated and evaluated... Fierce competitiveness applies to every large company, but it's perhaps more extreme in the banking sector because it's strictly about money, especially in investment banking. Because everyone is working against everyone else, also within their own companies, departments can be systematically provided with one-sided reports, and the result is an unreliable narrative. These are the so-called “meeting report wars”. Competition as a narrative system does not promote the truth, but rather many stories with happy endings, in any case from the perspective of the respective author. If you project this distortion onto the overall market, and given that accountants and rating agencies fail as correctives because they are hopelessly dependent on the firms they are supposed to evaluate, one can imagine very well how the crisis emerged.

frankfurt Frankfurt, where the story is set, also plays a role in the film. I know the city very well, but I have never lived there. I'm not a native and I don't want to sound that way when I describe a place. The only city that I could speak about as a native is Munich. I've been living in Berlin for 10 years and I know a lot about its history, etc., but when you grow up in a city you naturally get more intimate perspectives. Nevertheless, there's a lot in the film that is typical of Frankfurt: money, art, drugs... Frankfurt is Germany's banking center, and as a banking location the number two in Europe. And it's a “global city”, a place just big enough that anything could happen there. Like our story. What I like about this town is contrast. It's both very small and very international, it's grounded in the tradition of Hesse, but tries so hard to be an American city. In many ways, what makes it modern is that it is a fantasy, a simulation.

art and culture in frankfurt There is a lot of money in this town – which is why there are a lot of fine art museums and galleries. Culture seems to be not the antidote, but the cover for big business there. The banks want to show off their wealth. At Deutsche Bank, the heavyweight player of German banking, every floor has its distinct art program – the higher you go, the more expensive the art works. You can tell by the artist in your office the level you have reached, career-wise. In Roland's office in the film, we see works by German artist Günther Förg – the market prices for these paintings equal our production budget. We were able to borrow them thanks to the generous support of the artist. Rolf Breuer, former CEO of Deutsche Bank, had Förg works in his office, too. We tried to be realistic and searched for a mix that is fitting for that world, not one that caters to my personal taste. And all the works of art seen in the film are originals.

a life in glass cases The banking world in the film is basically living and working in glass cases. Transparency always sounds so promising, but in effect, it often only means control. In a glass building, you can no longer hide a short well-deserved office nap. And this control is what triggers the longing for a greedy, dirty life. Today in everyday life, glass surrounds us. In the past, under the table was an off-limits area, a realm of freedom. But with so many glass tables these days, I have to watch out that I'm not wearing the wrong socks. A major theme both in photography and

production design was “reflection”, which in practical terms means glass. Glass creates an illusionary effect – because the world seems close, but it is out of reach, out of touch. The way we create “reality” in our minds is closely connected with the activity of our hands. We verify with hands. Production designer Tim Pannen gave Roland’s office an even more unreal feeling by using white carpets. They create this weightless feeling when you look down on the city from the 27th floor.

the crisis will eventually arrive on the streets One of the reasons investment bankers think of themselves so highly (and so lowly of others) lies in the fact that competition is so fierce that battlefield analogies are somewhat justified. They are warriors, or, to be more precise, mercenaries, fully aware of the fact that their actions can kill bonds, companies, countries and what not. What is disturbing are the increasing repercussions

on everyday life. A phrase that played a role for the film’s ending was:

The crisis will eventually arrive on the streets. This is both a threat and a hope. What is happening does matter, and things have consequences, that no one can permanently escape.

UNTER DIR DIE STADT – RECENSIE

Recensie van Variety
door Boyd van Hoeij

Private and professional spheres clash violently in Christoph Hochhausler's otherwise solemn Teuton drama "The City Below." Impressively assembled and acted, helmer's third outing after "This Very Moment" and "Low Profile" offers a clinical but always interesting observation of an illicit affair against the backdrop of the Frankfurt banking world.

Helmer's first drama with only adult protags focuses on Svenja Steve (Nicolette Krebitz), the jobless wife of white-collar worker Olli (Mark Waschke). They have just relocated to Frankfurt for Olli's new job at Lobau Bank when, by chance, the mercurial Svenja runs into the CEO of Lobau, Roland Cordes (Robert Hunger-Buehler). Sequence, involving the accidental exchange of a cigarette, is one of the many observant and strongly directed scenes that show off Hochhausler's strong visual shorthand, painting his characters and the singular worlds they inhabit in a just a few shots.

The couple's second chance meeting finally leads to a hotel room, though they don't sleep together -- yet. At a recital at Roland's home attended by the Steves, the CEO verbalizes his desire to bed the mysterious woman, though she warns him he can't always get what he wants. Except that he can: A job in Indonesia that's become available after one of Lobau's executives was murdered there unexpectedly goes to new arrival Olli, who immediately leaves for six months, leaving Svenja in Frankfurt.

Perceptive screenplay, by Ulrich Peltzer and the director, suggests that it is almost impossible to really know people because often they themselves don't know the reasoning behind the things they do. Some of the characters' more unusual behavioral traits, such as Roland's obsession with drug users, are never explained, which underlines the helmer's point but also makes it an emotionally cold film in which auds may observe but never really identify with the characters.

The movie also offers a picture of a globalized industrial and corporate world that leaves little room for establishing a separate private life (Roland's always working, while Olli moves for his job to Frankfurt, then Jakarta), perhaps making it necessary for today's power players to have illicit affairs or do illogical things just to be reminded they are still alive (a big-business variation on Hochhausler's main theme in "Low Profile").

Thesping is solid, with the steely Hunger-Buehler finding a formidable opponent in Krebitz, who incisively captures a woman who finds empowerment in doing things on a whim. Van-Lam Vissay impresses in a small role as a passed-over colleague of Olli's.

Sharp widescreen lensing by Bernhard Keller as well as Tim Pannen's production design emphasize the deceptive transparency of the glass-and-steel skyscrapers of the Frankfurt banking district. Cold colors are used throughout, with the notable exception of a hotel where Svenja and Roland make love.

Editor Stephan Stabenow's cutting is equally solid, alternating scenes that immediately build on what has come before with sequences that initially seem unconnected, creating a staccato rhythm that suggests that private lives are just as volatile as the stock market. Benedikt Schiefer's sparingly used score, mainly shrill strings, adds to the general feeling of unease.