

 66<sup>e</sup> Internationale  
Filmfestspiele  
Berlin  
Forum

# THE DREAMED ONES

INGEBORG BACHMANN  
AND PAUL CELAN  
WITH ANJA PLASCHG  
AND LAURENCE RUPP

A FILM BY  
RUTH BECKERMANN

[www.thedreamedones.com](http://www.thedreamedones.com)

SCENARIO INA HARTWIG, RUTH BECKERMANN CINEMATOGRAPHY JOHANNES HAMMEL SOUND GEORG MISCH EDITING DIETER PICHLER  
CASTING LISA ÓLAH SOUNDDSIGN GERHARD DAURER, ANDREAS PILS, BERNHARD MAISCH PRODUCTION MANAGER HANNE LASSL  
ÖSTERREICHISCHEN FILMINSTITUTS, ORF FILM- UND FERNSEHABKOMMEN AND FISA © RUTH BECKERMANN FILMPRODUKTION 2016

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89 MIN  
Austria 2016

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## Awards

- ° **Grand Diagonale Prize: Best Austrian Feature Film**
- ° **Best artistic editing of a Feature Film - Diagonale, Graz**
- ° **Prix des Jeunes Special Mention**
- ° **Prix International de la SCAM - Cinéma du Réel, Paris**

For its delicate utilization of simple elements, for its subtle interplay between text and performance, and for its creation of a space of reflection and resonance between past and present we attribute the Scam Award to THE DREAMED ONES.

## ° **Ring of Filmart (Bildrausch Filmfestival Basel)**

One plus one equals three in precious films. One voice, one face, one text result in a third dimension of a relationship, a relationship built on impossible claims and doubts. A woman and a man, two poetic oeuvres that the director masterfully stages. (...) Ruth Beckermann directs “The Dreamed Ones” with generous sensuality, and she avoids letting a solemn approach blur her vision. The film tells the story of a dance of words between Ingeborg Bachmann and Paul Celan in a post-war Europe that is still ravaged by Nazi ideology and the Holocaust. But the film is also a cinematic gesture that dignifies these two lovers and makes them relevant in the here and now. The film captivates us by its sober form that renders it all the more impressive and which touches us profoundly. The poetry of the unspeakable and the ineffable is also the enigma of the kind of cinematic art that Ruth Beckermann shares with us.

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## Festivals

- Internationale Filmfestspiele Berlin (Berlinale)
- Festival of Austrian Film (Diagonale, Graz)
- Cinéma du Réel (Paris)
- Art of the Real (New York)
- New Austrian Cinema (Moscow)
- Filmkunstfest (Schwerin)
- International Women's Film Festival (Dortmund, Cologne)
- DOK.fest (Munich)
- DokKa (Karlsruhe)
- Visions du Réel (Nyon)
- Bildrausch Filmfest Basel
- Moscow Jewish Film Festival
- Pula Filmfestival
- Fünf Seen Filmfestival (Starnberg)
- London Film Festival
- Scanorama European Film Festival (Vilnius)
- Thessaloniki International Film Festival
- Sevilla European Film Festival
- FIC Valdivia
- Doc Buenos Aires
- Doc Festival (Lisbon)
- Toronto International Film Festival
- Torino FF
- Filmmaker (Milano)
- RIDM (Montreal)

**THE  
DREAMED ONES**  
DIE GETRÄUMTEN

**A FILM BY  
RUTH BECKERMANN**

**Content\_short**

**THE DREAMED ONES (DIE GETRÄUMTEN)  
A FILM BY RUTH BECKERMANN**

The themes of love and hate are depicted in the movie DIE GETRÄUMTEN (The Dreamed Ones). At center stage are the two poets Ingeborg Bachmann and Paul Celan, who came to know each other in post-war Vienna. Their dramatic postal exchange creates the textual basis of the film. Two young actors meet in a recording studio to read the letters. The tumultuous emotions of proximity and distance, fascination and fear captivate them. However they also enjoy each other's company, arguing, smoking, discussing their tattoos and favourite music. Yesterdays love, todays love and tomorrows: where the lines are blurred lies the heart of the film.

German/digital/16:9/89 min

# THE DREAMED ONES DIE GETRÄUMTEN

A FILM BY  
RUTH BECKERMANN

## Content\_long

### THE DREAMED ONES (DIE GETRÄUMTEN) A FILM BY RUTH BECKERMANN, COLOUR, 89 MINUTES

The themes of love and hate are depicted in the movie DIE GETRÄUMTEN (The Dreamed Ones). At center stage are the two poets Ingeborg Bachmann and Paul Celan, who came to know each other in post-war Vienna. Their vivid postal exchange creates the textual basis of the film.

The dramatic, ecstatic, but also infinitely sad love story between Bachmann and Celan begins in 1948 when she is 22 and he is 27. It ends with the suicide of Celan in Paris in 1971. For Bachmann, he is the love of her life, however she never stops seeing him as a stranger and even harbours slight fears towards him. He was a Jew from Czernowitz, whose parents perished in the Holocaust while she came from a milieu of National Socialism. Growing up in Carinthia, Bachmann witnessed little of the war and persecution. Love and friendship, but also doubts and disruptions permeate their lifelong relationship and in a moment of doubt Bachmann asks: "Are we only the dreamed ones?".

Two young actors, Anja Plaschg and Laurence Rupp, meet in a recording studio to read the letters. The tumultuous emotions of proximity and distance, fascination and fear captivate them. However they also enjoy each other's company, arguing, smoking, discussing their tattoos and favourite music. Yesterday's love, today's love and tomorrow's: where the lines are blurred lies the heart of the film.

**THE  
DREAMED ONES**  
DIE GETRÄUMTEN

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RUTH BECKERMANN



Anja Paschg, Laurence Rupp.  
© Ruth Beckermann Filmproduktion

# THE DREAMED ONES

DIE GETRÄUMTEN

A FILM BY  
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## Biografies

### RUTH BECKERMANN

Ruth Beckermann was born in Vienna where she also spent her childhood. After her studies in journalism and history of art in Vienna, Tel Aviv and New York, she took her degree as Dr.phil in 1977 at the University of Vienna. She since contributed as a journalist to several Austrian and Swiss magazines.

In 1978 she (co-)founded the distribution company filmladen in which she was active for seven years. In this period Ruth Beckermann started to make films and to write books. Since 1985 she works as a writer and filmmaker.



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## **ANJA PLASCHG**

Anja Franziska Plaschg (\*1990) is a musician and singer, internationally known under her stage name Soap & Skin. Her last album 'Narrow' reached #1 in the Austrian charts. In 2010 she was awarded the "European Border Breakers Award" from the European Commission.

In addition to this, she works as a composer in film, theatre, and occasionally as an actress.

## **LAURENCE RUPP**

Born in 1987 in Vienna. First experiences in film at the age of 11. Studied Environmental and Resource management at the University of Agricultural Sciences in Vienna. After this Laurence Rupp completed further studies in 2014 at the Max Reinhardt Seminar in performing arts. Since 2013 he is a member of the Burgtheater ensemble.

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## Filmography

### THE DREAMED ONES

2016, 89 min, DCP, colour, Feature Film Premiere: February 13th 2016 Internationale Filmfestspiele Berlin Festivals: Cinema du Réel, Bildrausch Filmfest Basel, Visions du Réel Nyon, Toronto IFF etc.

### THE MISSING IMAGE

2015, Multichannel-Videoinstallation at Albertinaplatz Vienna

### THOSE WHO GO THOSE WHO STAY

2013, 75 min, HDV/DCP, colour Premiere: October 25th 2013 Viennale (Vienna), Gartenbau Kino Festivals: Diagonale, Visions du Réel Nyon, FID Marseille etc.

### JACKSON/MARKER 4AM

2012 , 3.35 min, HDcam, colour Premiere: January 22th 2012 Filmcasino, Vienna Festivals: Diagonale, Bafici, MARFA etc.

### AMERICAN PASSAGES

2011, 120 min, DV/35mm, colour Premiere: March 30th 2011 Cinéma du réel, Paris Austrian Premiere: Viennale (Vienna) Festivals: Bafici Buenos Aires, Duisburg, Montreal, East Silver, Diagonale etc.

### MOZART ENIGMA

2006, 1 min, DV/35mm, colour International Festivals as part of the Sixpack-tour dedicated to the Mozart memorial year

### ZORROS BAR MIZWA

2006, 90 min, DV/35mm, colour Premiere: March 10th 2006 Cinéma du Réel, Paris Festivals: Viennale (Vienna), Bafici Buenos Aires, Chicago etc.

### HOMEMAD(E)

2001, 85 min, DV/35mm, colour Premiere: Internationale Filmfestspiele Berlin Festivals: Cinéma du Réel Paris, Diagonale Graz

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## FLEETING PASSAGE TO THE ORIENT

1999, 82 min Premiere: Viennale (Vienna), Urania Festivals: Internationale Filmfestspiele Berlin, München, Karlovy Vivary, Jerusalem, Vancouver, Feminale Köln, Kassel, Lussas etc.

## EAST OF WAR

1996, 117 min Premiere: 1996 Viennale (Vienna), Stadtkino Festivals: Internationale Filmfestspiele Berlin, Cinéma du Réel Paris, Nyon, Pesaro, Jerusalem, Duisburg etc.

## TOWARDS JERUSALEM

1991, 87 min Premiere: Delphi-Filmpalast Berlin Austrian Premiere: Votiv-Kino Vienna Festivals: Internationale Filmfestspiele Berlin, Troja (Portugal), Montreal, Rom, Florenz etc.

## PAPER BRIDGE

1987, 95 min, colour and bw, Premiere: Zoo Atelier Berlin Austrian Premiere: Stadtkino Vienna Festivals: Internationale Filmfestspiele Berlin, Hamburg, Troja (Portugal), Edinburg, Montecatini, New York, Jerusalem etc.

## DER IGEL

1986, 34 min, colour, realised with students of the university of Salzburg

## RETURN TO VIENNA

1984, 95 min, colour and bw, Premiere: Stadtkino Vienna Festivals: Leipzig, Jerusalem, Cinéma du Réel Paris, San Francisco, Florenz etc.

## THE STEEL HAMMER OUT THERE ON THE GRASS

1981, 40 min, colour

## SUDDENLY, A STRIKE

1978, 24 min, colour, Festivals: Leipzig, Oberhausen

## ARENA SQUATTED

1977, 78 min, bw, Premiere: Action-Kino Wien

# THE DREAMED ONES DIE GETRÄUMTEN

A FILM BY  
RUTH BECKERMANN

Interview: Karin Schiefer on Ruth Beckermann, January 2016

## THIS LOVE HAS THE CHARACTER OF A DREAM

Ruth Beckermann discusses her latest project *The Dreamed Ones*, based on the correspondence between Ingeborg Bachmann and Paul Celan, which marks a departure for her by venturing into feature film territory.

**Our conversation about your last film, *Those Who Go Those Who Stay*, ended with the following sentences: “It is necessary to make the »hors champ« much more powerfully visible. Maybe it would be a good idea to make a film about everything that you can’t film.” Is it possible that using a literary text, with voices and listening – different sensory perceptions, different artistic forms of expression – has opened a window that permits *The Dreamed Ones* to venture into new film territory?**

**RUTH BECKERMANN:** This new film certainly does explore new territory. In *The Dreamed Ones* I not only worked with actors for the first time but also adopted a completely different approach; at the beginning I didn’t know precisely how far I would move away from the essay film. The idea of using a literary text as the basis developed from a meeting with the literary critic Ina Hartwig, and over the course of a year I developed the screenplay for the film together with her. It went through a large number of versions, about 25. We met when we were both on the jury of the Wartholz Literature Prize. As we were driving from Vienna Airport to Reichenau/ Rax we got talking about the exchange of letters between Ingeborg Bachmann and Paul Celan, which had been published a few years earlier under the title *Herzzeit (Heart’s Time)*. Ina was working on a book about Ingeborg Bachmann. That’s how our collaboration began, and we very quickly submitted an exposé.

**Both Ingeborg Bachmann and Paul Celan are very linguistically intense voices in post-war German-language poetry. How do you find a film language that corresponds to this linguistic concentration? How did you approach the scenic writing involved?**

**RUTH BECKERMANN:** The idea that two people (not necessarily actors) should

play voice artists recording the letters in a sound studio for an audio book or radio show was there from the very start. But originally it was only going to be part of the film. The plan was that the voices would shift OFF and I would then film at the places where Bachmann and Celan lived – not documentary style, in their homes, but in a very associative, free, modern sense. In Paris, Munich, Zurich and Rome. At the beginning I was thinking in a more essayist direction, and I'd already filmed some sequences and recorded sound at a number of places. Before we did the filming with the actors I arranged a run-through with friends to establish whether the script was powerful enough for such a radical reduction. I think by then I was secretly hoping it would turn into a sort of *Kammerspiel*, an intimate psychological study. When we started filming the two actors, Anja Plaschg and Laurence Rupp, were so powerful that the condensed version worked fine. After the first few scenes my editor Dieter Pichler and I looked at each other and said: "That's it – we stay in the room".

**Does the density of the language make it necessary to condense it drastically in this way?**

**RUTH BECKERMANN:** Definitely. But the subject was in the foreground. A love story that is so romantic and tragic is very powerful in itself. The language the two of them use is incredible. Under those conditions you can condense the material a great deal. I like doing that anyway. But initially I was interested in something completely different: how would young people today respond to these letters and the language they use? It was an experiment. I wanted to see what young people today would make of the letters. Bachmann and Celan were very young when they met, after all: she was 22, and he was 27. I wanted to use young actors, and I wanted to be able to imagine the words triggering something inside them – both individually and in their relationship to one another.

**The casting was very surprising in that you placed a member of the Burgtheater ensemble, Laurence Rupp, together with Anja Plaschg, one of the great protagonists of the young Austrian music scene. Why did you choose these two?**

**RUTH BECKERMANN:** I knew I wanted Anja Plaschg at a very early stage. I did look at other actresses, though, because I was aware that the role would place very high demands on someone who wasn't a professional actress. But I kept on coming back to her, because as well as being a very strong personality she is exactly the right personality for Bachmann's words. It was difficult to find an interesting man. Actors from Germany were out of the question, because both of these poets were from our „Austrian home“. That restricted the field a lot, since he also had to embody a counterpoint to Anja. Laurence Rupp is very

adaptable. You can see him becoming more mature, growing older during the course of the film.

### **How did you confront the two actors with the text?**

**RUTH BECKERMANN:** Naturally they all read from the letters during the auditions, although that was only of limited use. The voices of the two actors were important, as well as something quite old-fashioned: whether they had „depth“. We didn't rehearse at all. Our deal was: „We start filming right away, and we film everything“. The interaction that led them back to everyday life was all planned: whether it took place in the canteen, in the concert hall, during cigarette breaks. However, it was planned in a way that left a lot open. I didn't know what was being rehearsed in the concert hall, for example. The fact that it was a piece by Wolfgang Rihm which perfectly suited the mood of the film is what I'd call the luck of documentary films.

### **Both the relationship and the correspondence between the two of them is characterised by an intense interplay of closeness and distance (on numerous levels). Was this search for a balance between closeness and distance something like a guiding principle in making the film?**

**RUTH BECKERMANN:** Johannes Hammel, the cameraman, did an outstanding job of expressing that in the positioning of the camera. He always adopts the right distance. We used hand-held cameras for everything, including the long shots, because I was determined not to create an academic, theatrical psychological drama. I wanted the images to be alive. To vibrate and to include constantly the possibility of reaction.

### **An exchange of letters is a literary form that has a clear documentary aspect, both in a biographical and socio-historical sense, but also something very subjective and – considering the time lapse dictated by the delivery of the letters and the huge amount that remains unsaid between two people who know each other very well – something highly fictitious which the reader himself fills in. Did this literary genre appeal to you as a format that encompasses the transition between the documentary and the fictional?**

**RUTH BECKERMANN:** Definitely. The correspondence between the two of them has a strong fictitious element in any case. Sometimes it actually reminded me of troubadour songs. Bachmann and Celan also had a literary relationship with one another. In fact their physical relationship was very short. Two months in the spring of 1948 and then, almost 10 years later, perhaps one more month. But they conducted a literary dialogue throughout their entire lives. I wouldn't describe these letters as purely documentary. They also have a soaring

quality. There is so much in them. The real love story of course, but also so much about concepts of love, and about life itself. And the subject of the Holocaust and the post-war period. The idea that a young Jew from Cernowitz and a young woman from Carinthia should meet in Vienna in 1948 and fall head over heels in love is fascinating and very romantic. One of our basic questions was: „What were the subjects the two of them wrote about? What do these texts mean today?“ For example, today you might be able to imagine a love story in Israel, or another country marked by a major conflicts, between two people from hostile camps, even though that wouldn't have the same tragic quality as after the Holocaust, when one side had been intent on exterminating the other. This aspect – that two people from completely opposing groups should meet up – was very important to us as well. It creates more intensity and makes their love even more powerful.

**A love that had so many facets... How would you analyse this complex relationship between the two of them?**

**RUTH BECKERMANN:** If I think about my own response as a reader, at the beginning I was much more on the side of Celan, but the more I became involved with the relationship, the better able I was to understand Ingeborg Bachmann. All through her life she tried to help him, to hold him, to carry him. He kept on pushing her away. On the other hand, I do understand that it was difficult for him to accept her attempts to write almost from the side of the victim. Throughout her whole life she never talked about her father, who had been a member of the Nazi party. And I can imagine that it was all too much for him. As time went by he became more and more paranoid, although right from the start he was easily offended, unfair, jealous of her success and generally a macho. In the end she writes to him: „You want to be the victim“. Based on his role as victim, he made her into a victim, but she wouldn't permit it. She becomes stronger and stronger, more confident. She was beautiful and had an incredible erotic attraction, she was very open to relationships and extremely gifted socially. She had the talent of being able to market herself well, and she was what you would call today a networker. Celan wasn't like that at all. It's all very complex, and perhaps I'm oversimplifying it. There is so much in the letters, and in the film too I hope, on the level of what is possible in love, about proximity, understanding and not understanding. That's not limited to their period. Can a man and woman understand each other at all? And to what extent? The two of them are relatively successful, I'd say.

**The correspondence describes a love that was lived but at the same time, to a much greater extent, a love that wasn't lived. Did that influence your choice of title, *The Dreamed Ones*, which is taken from one of Bachmann's letters?**

**RUTH BECKERMANN:** This love has the character of a dream.

Interview: Karin Schiefer

January 2016

Translation by Charles Osborne