



Skuito Romântico

A DISTRUKTUR
FILM

Muito Romântico

A Distruktur Film

Germany/Brazil, 2016 | 72 min | 1:1,78 | 5.1 | DCP

Screenplay, Direction, Editing
Melissa Dullius & Gustavo Jahn

Producers
Melissa Dullius, Gustavo Jahn, Gustavo Beck

Cinematography
Ville Piippo

Assistant Director
Bernardo Zanotta

Sound Design & Mix
Jochen Jezussek

Associate Producers
Zsuzsanna Király, Michel Balagué

With Melissa Dullius & Gustavo Jahn

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Melissa and Gustavo cross the Atlantic to start a new life. They set sail on making films, friends and music, but fear awakens when a secret emerges. A cosmic portal opens up inviting them to expand their journey beyond time and space.



The adventure of Melissa and Gustavo starts aboard a red cargo ship crossing the Atlantic Ocean. It takes them to Berlin, a city of constant movement, where the old has to give space to the new. The couple finds a home and transforms it into the center of their own universe.

As time passes and seasons change, life and cinema become one and their room becomes an ever-changing stage, where friends are invited to play their own roles. In this state of transition Melissa and Gustavo lose sight of their path and their world starts to tremble.

Until one day a cosmic portal appears in their home opening connections between the past, the present and the future, confronting the two travelers with extraordinary discoveries.

MUITO ROMÂNTICO is a stream that carries along hearts and minds. A playful rearrangement of experiences, memories and fantasies into a journey transcending space and time.



Interview with the directors Melissa Dullius & Gustavo Jahn / Distruktur

With very few exceptions, you have been the authors, directors, DoPs, protagonists and producers on all your films, as you are on Muito Romântico. How do you organize your working process or how does it organize itself in and around your lives?

The borders between our work and our lives have been blurred for a long time. We even did this consciously. In a way, the work on our films is what directs our lives, it is what we put before all else, even if we recently came to a point where it's important to alternate the order, and to at least sometimes put life before cinema. It's like a dialogue: Cinema says A, life says B, and at one point you can't tell anymore which gave the impulse. This is the kind of life and process we imagined together and the way we simply can do things. Even Muito Romântico, which is a bigger film for our standards, was still largely made among friends. This translates to a production modus where we play multiple roles: film directors, writers, actors, editors, musicians and lab technicians - when we process the film material ourselves. This self-developed system gives us a lot of freedom to experiment, and it challenges us. Working with very limited financial resources makes it very hard though, and we rely on the support and generosity of many friends and colleagues. This allows us a certain artistic autonomy, but we also know it's almost impossible for us, and in general not sustainable, to continue producing like this on the long term.

Do you always shoot on film? And how does shooting on film play into your particular working style and process?

We began shooting on film back in 1999 in Porto Alegre, Brazil. We made some films in S8mm, not as a duo, but within a collective called Sendero Filmes. And then we kept shooting on film, mainly on 16mm. In Berlin, we are part of a collective too, LaborBerlin, and the way we make films now is not very different from the way we did in the beginning. When working with film, the artistic process relates to time. Film material is obviously completely influenced by and even dependent on time. Besides the rolls having a definite time limit (3 or 11 min) and the fact that you need time between shooting and viewing the footage - for processing, printing or scanning - there are also other time factors that are important in our case. Like for example shooting with expired stock: The ship footage was transferred to 16mm color negative produced in Mexico in 1982. Or processing images years after they've been shot, almost discovering them for the first time, like the sequence with the bike crossing over the autumn leaves.

What was the freedom and what were the challenges involved in making Muito Romântico?

The images of the ship and other images that we shot in Berlin during our first years in the city existed for a long time, waiting to enter the form of a film. Nevertheless, it took us many years to take the step to complete the film. On one side there's a psychological aspect that is quite obvious: If you tell your own story, you kill it in a way by freezing it. So it's normal to feel a bit terrified about making this decision. On the other side, although we had found the idea for the structure - with the ship crossing, the re-staging in the bedroom and our private archive material - we could still not see the rhythm and tone the film should have. It was only when we began to see it as a collage of images and sounds, as an accumulation of belongings, people and thoughts, that the decision was made. Through this essentially hybrid operation, we eventually felt very free and good about organizing and shaping the material that composes this film.

Red and blue, two windows, a duo, a couple: your work and life is a collaboration. What is the philosophy and genesis of your directing-duo Distruktur?

Since we met and started producing films, we have always done editing work together. During the shooting of *Abril* (2002), the second short film Gustavo directed, we fell in love. Then the production paused for a year, a phase of reflection, of research, of watching and presenting films that we liked and of questioning ourselves. When time had come to shoot again, we proposed a challenge to ourselves: How to make the process of filmmaking an experience equally intense for all crew members? As such, the premise of *Éternau* (2006) was an experiment in making a film with the same people, i.e. the technical crew and actors, in front of as well as behind the camera. We all had to change roles continuously and so the responsibility of setting things in movement was shared. We realized that an enormous creative energy resulted from this dialogue and from the exercise of alternating tasks. In Berlin, we started to conceive and produce works as a duo and invented a name for ourselves, Distruktur, a play on words that evokes structure, duality and destruction. Our philosophy is anchored in mutual trust and dialogue. An idea is brought up, and if it resonates we feed it and seewatch it develop until no one remembers exactly where it came from.

Muito Romântico is your first feature-length film and also more narrative and linear in parts than your previous, shorter films. Or do you use these categories yourselves at all?

We always work on creating a narrative, even if we leave pieces open in some films. That can sometimes lead to a sort of disruption: Are our films too narrative to be experimental or too experimental to be called narrative? We feel at ease operating on this border, beyond the comfort zone. Or put differently, we didn't choose it, that's where we found our place.

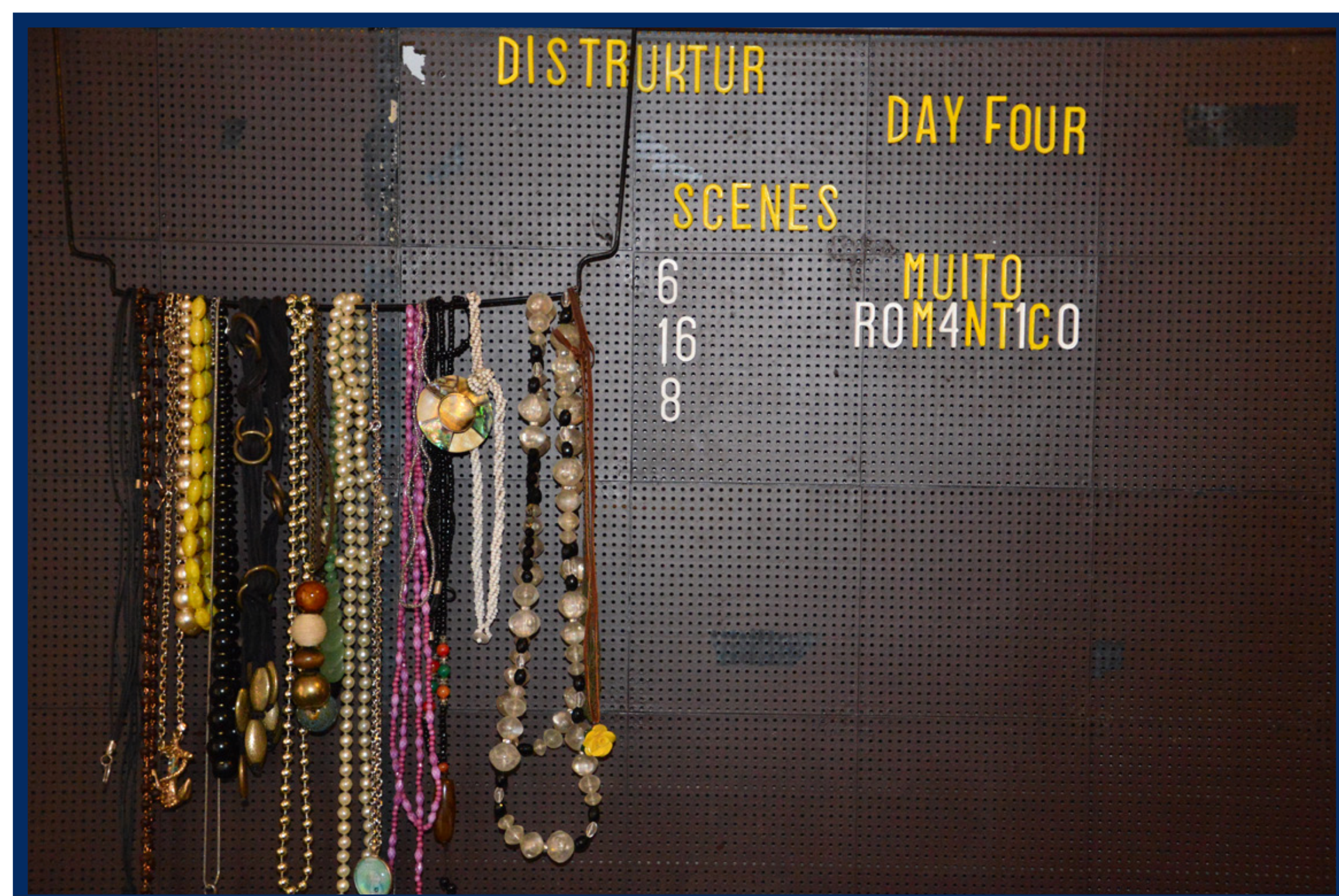
You didn't only document your private lives and travels with a camera over time, you also opened a stage for re-fictionalizing its symbolic meanings and possibilities. Where do fantasy and reality meet in your film and home?

Staging or fictionalizing has always been our method and beyond that it means for us the key to penetrate reality and the past in a profound way. It is a key that opens two doors: You have to trust reality enough to understand that everything that you see and hear and feel has a manifest meaning and nothing hidden behind it. But, in order to see things as they really are you also need to reorganize them, play with them, and infuse yourself with a certain amount of fantasy. We make films to learn more about the world, about ourselves, and, if we do it well, others will also discover new perspectives on the world and themselves. It is a dialogue between life and cinema that produces propositions, enigmas, and directional points to "keep on sailing".

What does the black hole signify to you – a fantasy, a time traveling machine, a dream, something else?

The black hole is essentially a secret. That is what it represented in the script initially, before taking its final form in the film. It is a secret that becomes part of their lives, affecting and transforming them. It is like when you see a path at night and you feel both attracted and terrified by it at the same time. And with a racing heart, you decide to enter it. You advance just a few steps before realizing that there's no going back, because the place you just left is not there anymore, it ceased to exist as it was. In the film, the black hole is something similar to Borges' Aleph. It shows what happened, what will happen, what could have happened or still can happen. And all these possibilities crystallize as image-sound layers superimposed to a point that makes it hard to determine what is fact and what is imagination. This distinction is finally not important anymore. The one thing you should keep in mind is that after going in, there's no going back.





Director's Note

From the shooting of the first images aboard a cargo ship until we finished the editing, it took us 9 years - almost a quarter of our lives - to complete *Muito Romântico*. A journey from Brazil to Germany that will never end and continues to affect us in our lives and work.

Finally we found an answer to the question infinitely repeated:

Why did you come to Berlin?

To make a film.

Travessia, Zuhause nicht Zuhause, Errare Humanum Est

A film in three acts: crossing the Atlantic - contemplation.

Berlin, the wasteland - constant in its permanent state of transformation.

And the bedroom - a stage for shared creation.

A migrant couple in a foreign land, starting over, having nothing but each other to lean on. Sharing the discoveries and fears, the joy and the disquiet that are part of the process of growing together - as artists.

Micro-cosmos expanding to the great Cosmos.

Riverrun

As the stream of a river carries along what it finds on its way, our first feature film is a collection of objects we kept, films and photographs we shot, music we created and works by artists who are important to us.

The characters in the film are mostly friends that we invited to our home to stage possible situations inspired by moments that actually took place or were simply invented.

As this “real fantasy” has its source in our real lives, it rearranges our past and plays with our present. But could it predict the future?

Cine-prophecy

To represent the state of transition we experience together as well as the search for individual freedom within a relationship built on boundless coexistence, we've sent our alter egos on cosmic missions beyond space and time. Projecting ourselves to the stars, we disintegrated in music, movement and colors. Because there's nothing to fear, we keep on moving forward. Together or apart, we'll never be alone.

“Love — is a — stream.

It's continuous. It doesn't stop.”

Sarah Lawson (G. Rowlands) in *Love Streams* by John Cassavetes

Muito Romântico

For Portuguese speakers, the adverb “muito” in the title can be read as both “very” and “too”, in the sense of “too much”, exaggeratedly. “Romântico” speaks for itself, we hope. *Muito Romântico* is also a song by Caetano Veloso, featured on his album *Muito* (1978). The intro to this song is heard at the film's beginning.



Directed by **Melissa Dullius & Gustavo Jahn**

Melissa Dullius (Porto Alegre, 1981) and Gustavo Jahn (Florianópolis, 1980) form **Distruktur** since 2006, when they moved together from southern Brazil to Berlin. They started making films together in 1999, first on Super 8 and later on 16mm, their medium until the present day. After joining the collective LaborBerlin in 2007 they started applying handmade techniques on the making of their films. Beyond conceiving and producing moving images, they appear as actors and musicians and act as lab technicians, doing great part of the post-production of their films.

Distruktur's body of work takes form as films, photographs, film performances, music, text and graphic. It crosses the borders between art and film, experimental and narrative, photography and moving image.

In the last years Distruktur took part in festivals such as Berlinale, Torino, Moscow IFF and Videobrasil, as well as in exhibitions at the New Museum in New York, Paço das Artes in São Paulo, and Vilnius Contemporary Art Centre. **Muito Romântico** is their first feature film.

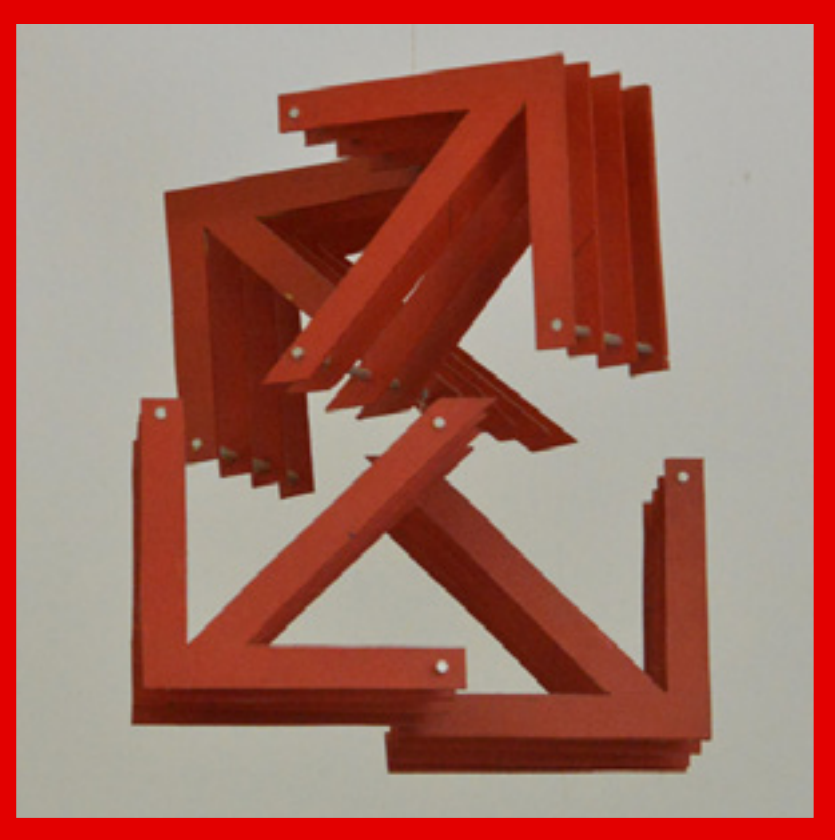
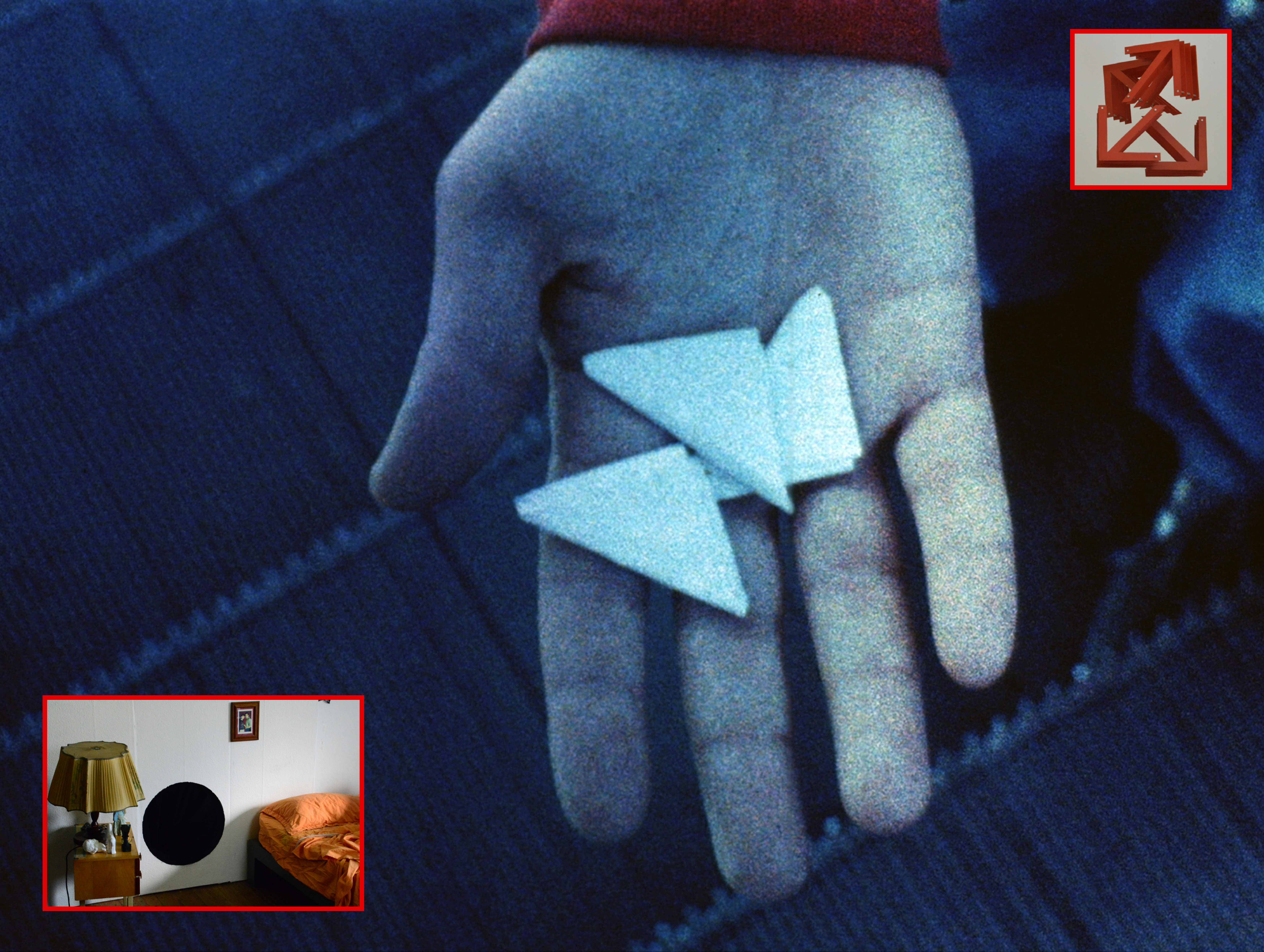
Filmography

2016 **MUITO ROMÂNTICO**, 16mm, Color, Sound, 72 min
2014 **A MÁQUINA DO TEMPO**, 16mm, 5 min
2013 **IN THE TRAVELER'S HEART**, 20 min
2012 **DON'T LOOK BACK / LABIRINTO**, 16mm, 6 min
2012 **FOTOKINO**, 16mm, 3 min
2011 **CAT EFFEKT**, 16mm, 40 min
2008 **TRIANGULUM**, 16mm, 22 min
2006 **ÉTERNAU**, 16mm, 21 min

Film performances

2013 **NAVEGAÇÃO**, 16mm, variable duration, live music
2012 **FILME DE PEDRA**, 16mm, variable duration, live sounds and music
2012 **ÉTERNAU ALTERSTEREO**, 2 x 16mm, 25min, soundcollage







Producer **Gustavo Beck** directed and produced the documentaries *O Arquipélago* (2014), *O Inverno de Željka* (2012), *Chantal Akerman, de cá* (2010), *A Casa de Sandro* (2009) and *Ismar* (2007). He also produced *António Um Dois Três* (2016), *Muito Romântico* (2016), *A Morte Diária* (2015), *Il Solengo* (2015) and *Winter/Miracle* (2012), as well a number of shorts.

In addition, he is the Head of Programming of *Olhar de Cinema - Curitiba International Film Festival*, Brazil. He is also a member of the Selection Committee for *Cinéma du Réel*, an Associate Programmer for IndieLisboa and previews Latin American films for the International Film Festival Rotterdam.

Associate Producer **Michel Balagué** lives and works in Berlin since 2003. He produces and coproduces feature films, documentaries and artistic projects. Previous films include *Sieniawka*, by Marcin Malaszczyk (63rd Berlinale - first film prize in FID) ; *My love awaits me by the sea* by Mais Darwazah (TIFF 2013), *Face B* by Leila Albayaty (65th Berlinale), *In the Last Days of the City*, by Tamer El Said (66th Berlinale), *Sign Space* by Hila Peleg (66th Berlinale) and *Muito Romântico* by Gustavo Jahn and Melissa Dullius (66th Berlinale). In addition, Balagué has founded the super 8 & 16mm collective LaborBerlin e.V. in 2006, and has collaborated with several art institutions around the world. He also worked as a DOP on numerous films for which he received several awards.

Associate Producer **Zsuzsanna Király** studied Journalism and Communication Studies in Vienna and Berlin. Diverse projects with the film networks Kino and Nisi Masa, worked in cultural public relations and with film festivals. Film production with X Filme and since 2009 with Komplizen Film in development and project coordination. Member of Revolver, Zeitschrift für Film. Alumni of the Script&Pitch/ TorinoFilmLab and member of its pre-selection reading committee.

Films as Producer: *Muito Romântico* by Melissa Dullius and Gustavo Jahn (Feature Fiction, 2016, Associate Producer), *Take What You Can Carry* by Matt Porterfield (Short Film, 2015, Producer), *Redemption* by Miguel Gomes (Short Film, 2013, Junior Producer).

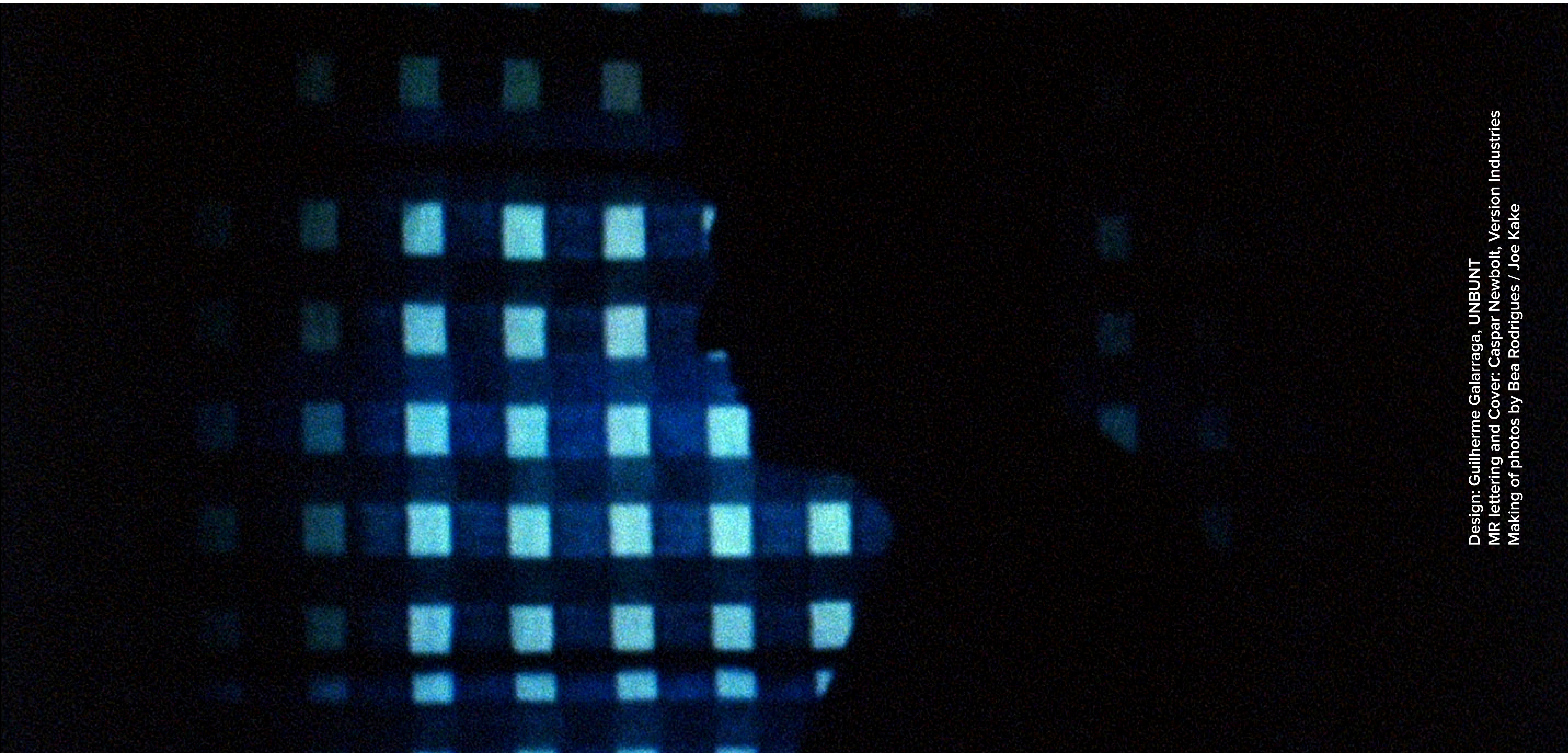
Cinematographer **Ville Piippo** from Finland is specialized in film-based cinematography. He has collaborated with a number of filmmakers and artists from around the world for short and feature length documentary and fiction films. He is currently based in Paris, France.

Muito Romântico



**IF YOU
HOLD A
STONE**

berlin Berlin
Der Regierende Bürgermeister
von Berlin
Senatskanzlei
Kulturelle Angelegenheiten
Künstlerinnenprogramm



Design: Guilherme Galarraga, UNBUNT
MR lettering and Cover: Caspar Newbolt, Version Industries
Making of photos by Bea Rodrigues / Joe Kake



Press & Industry Screening
Monday, Feb15th, 13:45
CinemaxX 6

Screening 1 - World Premiere
Thursday, Feb18th, 16:30
Akademie der Künste

Screening 2
Friday, Feb19th, 15:00
Arsenal 1