



# outside noise

## CONCEPT AND DIRECTION

Ted Fendt

## PRODUCTION

Flaneur Films, Zsuzsanna Király

Jeonju International Film Festival, Jeonju Cinema Project

KGP Filmproduktion, Barbara Pichler, Gabriele Kranzelbinder

## INTERNATIONAL SALES

Shellac

Contact: Egle Cepaite, [sales@shellacfilms.com](mailto:sales@shellacfilms.com)

2021 / Germany, South Korea, Austria / 61'

Super 16 / 1.66:1 / Color / Mono / German



## SHORT SYNOPSIS

Daniela is unsure about what to do next and her nights have turned sleepless. Mia is finishing a master's degree she spontaneously started. *Outside Noise* is a film about friendship that follows their meetings in Berlin and Vienna over several months. Along with Natascha, another friend thinking of moving to Vienna, they wander around and talk. An insomniac's hangout film.



## OUTSIDE NOISE

### WITH AND BY

Daniela Zahlner, Mia Sellmann, Natascha Manthe,  
Genevieve Havemeyer-King, Hani Alaraj, Manu  
Bäuerle, Katharina Maria Grabner, Ted Fendt,  
Stefanie Zingl

### CONCEPT AND DIRECTION

Ted Fendt

### SCRIPT

Daniela Zahlner, Mia Sellmann, Ted Fendt

### CAMERA

Sage Einarsen + Britni West, Jenny Lou Ziegel

### LOCATION SOUND

Johannes Schmelzer-Ziringer, Melissa Dullius,  
Sean Dunn

### SOUND MIX

Daniel D'Errico

### PRODUCTION MANAGEMENT

Isabella Fellingner

### LABORATORY SERVICES

Color by DeJonghe

### PRODUCED BY

Flaneur Films / Zsuzsanna Király  
Jeonju Cinema Project  
KGP Filmproduktion / Barbara Pichler,  
Gabriele Kranzelbinder

Exteriors and Sets: New York, Berlin, Vienna

Shooting Format: Super 16mm

Screening Formats: 35mm, DCP

Copyright: Flaneur Films, Jeonju Cinema Project, 2021



There is Daniela. She lives in Vienna.  
She is returning to Europe from New York.  
To delay her return to Austria, she visits Mia in Berlin.

Mia is writing a master's thesis on death and dying in theater.  
Neither she nor Daniela can sleep.

They hang out in Schöneberg, Natascha comes by, they walk  
around and talk.





Daniela returns to Vienna and her neighborhood, Favoriten.

*“Back in Vienna. I couldn’t sleep again, or fall asleep, or sleep long enough, and not at all as soon as it was light out again. Summer is over, the nights are getting longer, the moon is low, and I feel like a witch when I walk down the street. I wanted to leave the city again.”*







Mia comes to visit. Natascha comes as well. They walk around Favoriten, go to a party, and their conversations continue to wind: from sleeplessness, to dying, to Austrian poetry, to the Empress Sisi, and the Charleston.

Soon, Mia and Natascha leave and Daniela is again faced with her everyday life, with Vienna, and with what to do next.

*“The middle phase is very much marked by uncertainty. That people no longer know where they belong or where they are. You have to classify things again. Incorporation would be... the funeral meal or eating together... and connecting to life again.”*

*“I like that. I think I’m still in a liminal phase.”*









## DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

It is not possible to say how a project will evolve and working on it tends to be more about gradually exhausting certain vaguely formulated ideas and aspirations or interests one has in the back of one's mind.

Mia and Daniela were both fairly new friends when I asked them to work on this film with me. They're both artists, performers, and filmmakers with different backgrounds. Mia I met through film friends in New York, and Daniela I met at a film event in Greece. We started with a handful of basic premises: Mia's apartment in Berlin and her master's thesis, Daniela's insomnia. This was in 2016.

After filming and editing *Classical Period* in 2017, I felt drawn to certain aesthetic elements—more contrast, having the characters move around more, a certain looseness—that had not initially been present.

There was a basic outline involving Berlin. Daniela came to visit in New York and we shot a scene spontaneously. Soon after, I wrote a script involving Vienna. In the months leading up to production, we re-worked everything together, through e-mail and phone calls, and in person.

That the film has evolved into the shape it is currently in owes much to their input, the magnitude of which I did not foresee when we started. Daniela helped find all of the locations in Vienna, in the 10th district, Favoriten. Everyone else who appears in the film—Natascha, Katharina, and Steffi—contributed their own ideas and dialogue, taking the film in other directions.

What might happen when these planned elements are framed within a form that is open to the unexpected? If in a shot of two characters speaking within a static frame, the light suddenly shifts dramatically, but the filmmaker had no control over that change in light? And if the events staged before the camera are given a degree of autonomy, whereby the narrative is de-emphasized and the presences of the people and places become foregrounded, or even the images themselves?

The film is a succession of key moments and of images and sounds, sometimes tableaux, sometimes details. The film deals with many things but above all it is about these people and places, their presences intensified by their recording on film and subsequent projection.





“Five in the morning is an incredible hour. It was already light out, in the late spring, but it was a different kind of light than when you stayed up all night—when dawn came like punishment. Then the dawn was telling you that you had fucked up—that it was all over. I could never go to sleep after the sky had started to get light. It was too late. If the horizon just STARTED to lighten I would think ‘Oh no’ and be resigned to the fact that I had not only stayed up late, but ALL NIGHT. There would be no next day, no new day, no hope or beginning—just a nightmare. Restless fatigued rambling—productivity impossible. Life had to wait.

“Five a.m. after sleeping though, and sleeping enough, was so different—it created life instead of destroying it. It created more hours, sacred quiet high energy relaxed hours, time that had never before existed.” (Randy Russell, Universe City)

“The impossibility of rending the invading, inevitable, and anonymous rustling of existence manifests itself particularly in certain times when sleep evades our appeal. One watches on when there is nothing to watch and despite the absence of any reason for remaining watchful. The bare fact of presence is oppressive; one is held by being, held to be.” (Emmanuel Lévinas, Existence and Existents)

“What I’ve decided is that what I’m doing in my work right now has nothing to do with the specific intentions. [...] When you imply that there’s some sort of specific intention, that someone’s going to learn something from a work, or that it’s goal-oriented in that way, or that it’s going to teach something... I don’t even know if that’s true or valid anymore. I think that art’s about a certain kind of activity that burns itself out and then there’s something else, and it burns itself out as you finish each piece.” (Richard Serra interviewed by Liza Bear)



Dear Daniela,

how was Italy? Are you still there or back in Vienna?

I had 4 full days in Vienna: too much that I wanted to do and too little time. But I was back at Malipop twice and recognized by Frau Wolf! So, everything's okay... I didn't drink any punch, but think Vienna will always have punch.

Back in Berlin, I'm working more on writing a script. Since last August, I've been thinking about the possibility of shooting a film in Berlin-Schöneberg on Potsdamer Straße. In German, of course! A year ago, a good friend lived there and now I'm living in her old apartment. And writing the script.

This friend, Mia, will act in the film. And I've been wondering for a long time if you would like to act in the film. You've seen my other film and know that I always and preferably shoot with friends. And I thought of you especially because the last time we saw each other, you said something very memorable—I forget if it was in German or English: “I've had the worst insomnia recently.”

It's the same with Mia. When I was in Berlin a year ago, she also said something very unassuming...

I'm asking you now because I have not yet written much but would like to somehow pull your experience into the writing. Or at least be relatively sure that you're in.

It will be a short film probably shot in 2019. I'm writing now (always very slowly) since I'm in Berlin until the end of November and again in February (I'm coming back for the Berlinale to show my new film!). For you, it would probably mean a few days of rehearsal either in 2018 or early 2019 and then maybe 5 to 10 shooting days (I'll pay your trip of course).

And then, what's the film actually about? I'm still at the beginning of writing, but you take a trip to Berlin and stay with Mia for a few days, you are friends who haven't seen each other for a long time. And you are both maybe stressed and sleeping little. A lot of scenes on the street at night as well as in the kitchen and living room in the apartment where I'm living now... Ah, and different accents from Germany and Austria.

Ach! A long e-mail that I can't spellcheck, I always feel so strange when I write this kind of e-mail.

Anyway, it is ok with me if you don't like this idea. Don't worry!

Warm greetings,  
Ted

—E-mail to Daniela from October 2, 2017

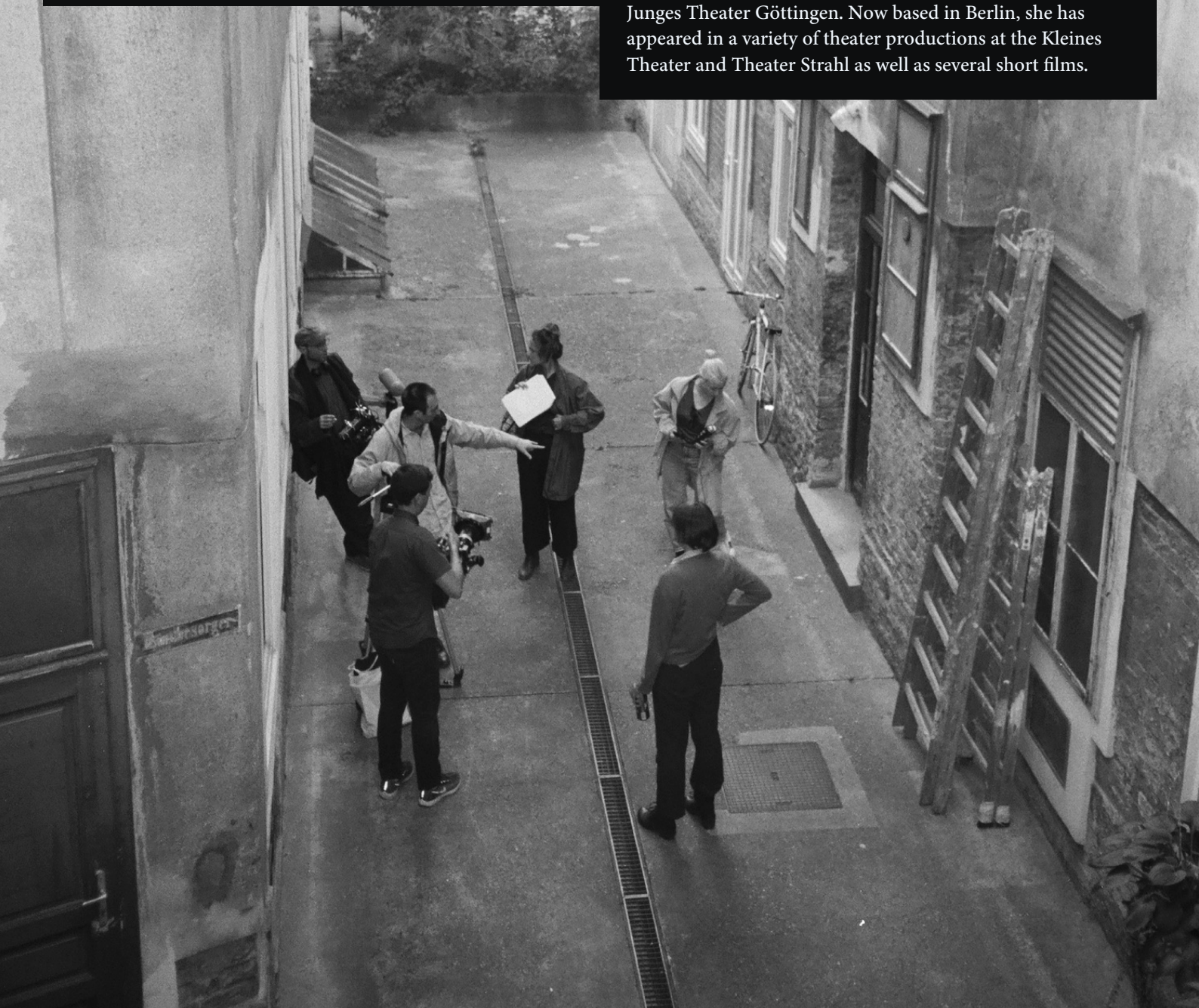


TED FENDT is a filmmaker, translator, and projectionist based in Berlin. With a small group of friends and collaborators, he makes short and long films on 16mm, including *Short Stay* and *Classical Period*. They have been shown internationally in cinemas and festivals large and small. He moved to Germany in 2018 to make *Outside Noise*. He is currently working on some other films.

DANIELA ZAHLNER was born on a Tuesday with the sun in Capricorn. Sleepless nights from early childhood, chronic iron deficiency. A window-view of the easternmost mountain of the Alps soothed small town life. Appeared as Holy Mary in a primary school musical and got caught stealing nail polish, Spice Girls CDs, and chocolate bars at the local store. Later in life, turned towards binging on cinema, fine arts, analogue filmmaking, contemporary dance, and performance. Developed an affinity for escapism. Moved to Scotland and back twice. Studies and works. At the moment mostly preoccupied with pathologies and the capacity of our bodies within current political, social, and economic structures. Hobbies include walking and lying. Gravitates around Vienna.

MIA SELLMANN first appeared as an actress at the age of nine as Woman at the Beach in the play *The Trip to Panama*. She grew up in a small university town in the middle of Germany and studied theater and literature in the Ruhr Valley, and later something like dealing with death and dying in Berlin. Apart from performing and collaborating on art projects, she has worked as a ghostwriter, assistant director and organizer for theater and film. Mia is part of a feminist writing group and engaged in community-supported agriculture.

NATASCHA MANTHE is an actress of the stage and screen. From 2009 to 2013, she studied at the Schauspielschule der Keller in Cologne, which was followed by a stint at the Junges Theater Göttingen. Now based in Berlin, she has appeared in a variety of theater productions at the Kleines Theater and Theater Strahl as well as several short films.





FLANEUR FILMS was founded by Zsuzsanna Király with a focus on building long-term, cinephile collaborations with directors and production partners. Based in Berlin with connections around the world, Flaneur Films looks to make experimental fiction/documentary films with socio-political awareness as well as cultural and regional specificity; films that allow their directors to employ their own distinctive approach and to draw on their own aesthetic flair, and that are as much about working with people as they are about them.

Flaneur Films has produced Matt Porterfield's *Take What You Can Carry* (2015), Melissa Dullius and Gustavo Jahn's *Muito Romântico* (2016), and Dane Komljen's *Phantasiesätze* (2017). Recent productions include Komljen's *Afterwater*, Ted Fendt's *Outside Noise*, Yael Bartana's *Two Minutes to Midnight*, and Eric Baudelaire's *A Flower in the Mouth*.

[www.flaneur-films.com](http://www.flaneur-films.com)

JEONJU CINEMA PROJECT is a feature film production and financing program. Jeonju Cinema Project is not only the core program of Jeonju International Film Festival, it is also an extension of the festival's spirit and an alternative filmmaking experiment. Since 2014, Jeonju Cinema Project has supported independent filmmakers domestically and internationally. Jeonju IFF invests about 100 million KRW in the production of Jeonju Cinema Project films and is also in charge of the production and distribution of those films. Through Jeonju Cinema Project, Jeonju IFF aims to do more than be a platform for experimental films, art films, and filmmakers, striving to provide a full range of support from film production to distribution. Previous Jeonju Cinema Project films have received important awards at several international film festivals and have been released in Korean theaters, garnering both commercial and critical acclaim.

<http://eng.jiff.or.kr/>

KGP FILMPRODUKTION is an independent film production company located in Vienna. It is run by its founder Gabriele Kranzelbinder and Barbara Pichler as producers and joint CEOs.

KGP focuses on the production of films for the international festival and arthouse market. Our name is synonymous with author-driven film, we are interested in filmmakers' unique visions beyond the limitations of genre or format. We want to produce films that are emotionally, aesthetically and intellectually engaging and believe in the potential of cinema to tell stories about all aspects of human existence.

We strongly believe in close partnerships with our directors, writers, and all other collaborators. KGP has successfully worked with Austrian and international filmmakers and has a special interest in international co-production. Our films have been exhibited at all major festivals and have won numerous awards.

[www.kgp.co.at](http://www.kgp.co.at)



