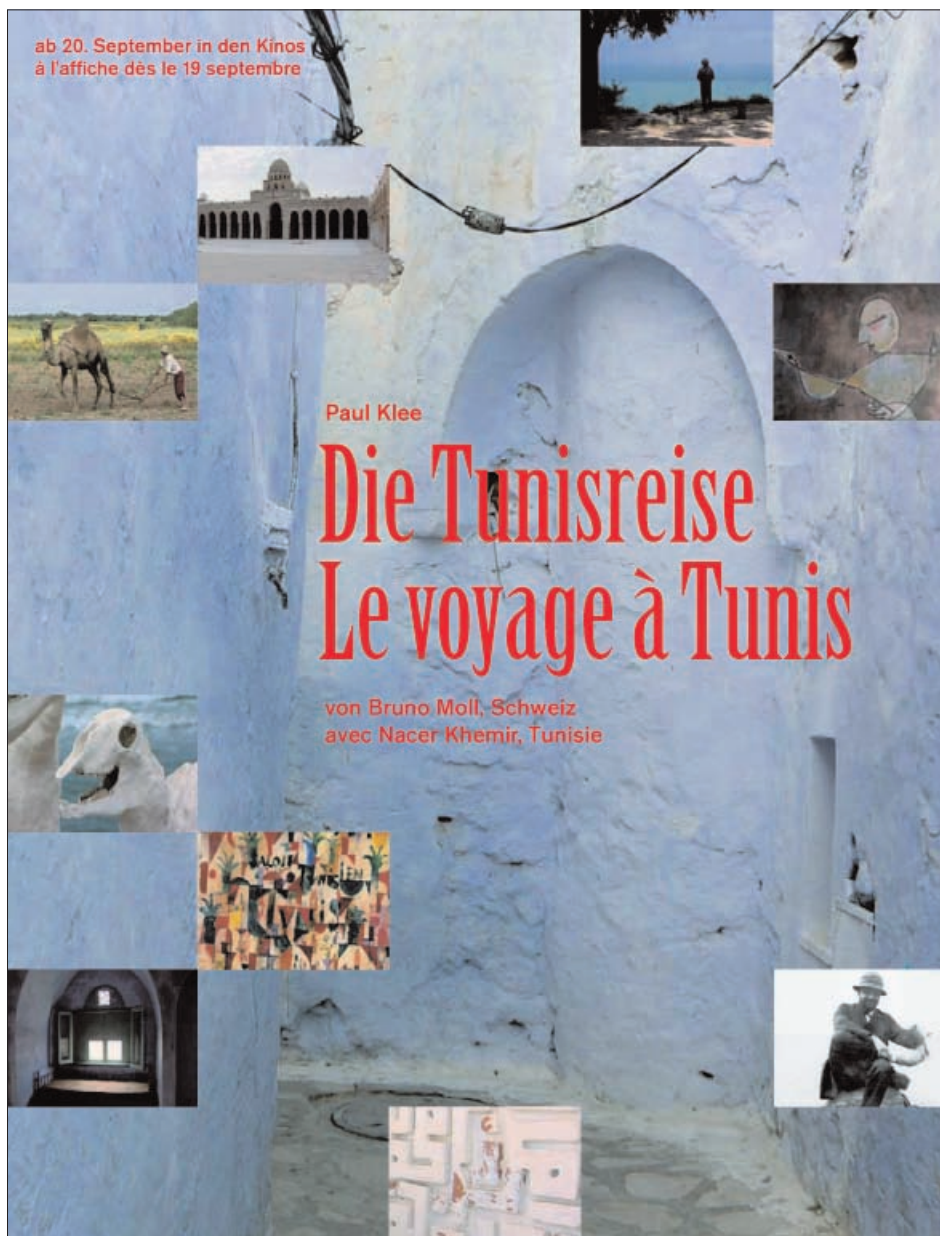




Press kit



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Synopsis

The film follows the seminal "Journey to Tunis" undertaken by the painter and draftsman Paul Klee along with two of his artist friends in April 1914, an event that produced some of the highlights of European painting. Nearly one hundred years later the Tunisian-born filmmaker Nacer Khemir, who was deeply influenced by Klee's oeuvre, retraces their itinerary: Tunis, Sidi Bou Sais, Hammamet, and Kairouan are the stations of this unique journey.

Bruno Moll's film *«Die Tunisreise»* [«The Journey to Tunis»] follows Nacer Khemir on his excursion into his own past and the history and culture of his country. Both Klee's and Khemir's medium is the image; both artists' works are guided by the question of the potential of images.

This film, which unequivocally adopts Khemir's perspective, retraces the importance of Klee's journey by linking it not only to his own work and thinking, but also to contemporary Islamic culture as a whole and the ban on images in particular, and eventually focuses on the relations between the East and the West.

«Die Tunisreise» bridges two artistic ways of life in two different eras by underlining what unites them, though never concealing what separates them.

Director's notes

As a teenager, Nacer Khemir had been so fascinated by a painting by Paul Klee that he decided to become a painter himself. Years later, when Khemir's reputation as one of Tunisia's most important filmmakers was well established, he progressively realised the profound meaning of this early encounter: "Paul Klee recognised that essential things are invisible. He found that in order to get to the roots, you should learn to see beyond the appearance of things. As opposed to other painters Klee did not paint 'exotic' subjects when he came to Tunisia but tried to capture the special light and colours. feel very close to Klee."

Born in 1948, Nacer Khemir lives and works in Tunis and Paris. His films («Bab'Aziz», «The Lost Collar of the Dove») testify to his particular ability to allow viewers to experience the invisible by means of images.

In April 1914, shortly before the outbreak of World War I, painters Paul Klee, August Macke, and Louis Moilliet undertook a two-week trip to Tunisia. This stay, later known as the "Journey to Tunis", turned out to be an event of major importance in the 20th-century history of art. On 16 April 1914 Paul Klee, staying in the southern Tunisian town of Kairouan, wrote in his diary: "I now abandon work. It penetrates so deeply and so gently in me, I feel it and it gives me confidence in myself without effort. Colour possesses me. I don't have to pursue it. It will possess me always. I know it. That is the meaning of this happy hour: Colour and I are one. I am a painter."

Director's notes

These euphoric lines, which mark a turning point in Paul Klee's oeuvre, are probably the most quoted sentences in the countless biographies and books on the artist, as the Tunisian experience did indeed have a lasting influence on the artist's subsequent work.

February 2006. I'm worried. The relations between East and West at the beginning of the 21st century have reached a new low. Two cultures with the same roots fight, partly with military means, over different value systems. The war over values is raging amongst us – just as it is amongst Muslims. Here, in the West, the primacy of reason; there, the primacy of religion. We are no longer so sure which values we cherish and which ones we should be defending. That's why we're confused and vulnerable. The same goes for Muslims. The great Muslim culture is obscured by the ugly face of Islamic fundamentalism, western culture is shrouded by cold materialism. The problem is topical and can hardly be resolved without considerable efforts of both sides.

Ideally art helps to unite peoples. But in the worst case it leads to iconoclasm. This was well illustrated by the polemic provoked by the caricatures of Muhammad in Spring 2006 and its frightening escalation. Unless we understand each other's culture, peaceful coexistence is impossible. This might be a commonplace but it remains hard to accomplish. With my film «The Journey to Tunis» I intend to contribute to this reciprocal understanding.

Background information

“Colour possesses me. I don’t have to pursue it.”

Paul Klee, 16 April 1914

In April 1914 artists and friends Paul Klee, August Macke, and Louis Moilliet travelled to Tunisia on an invitation by Ernst Jäggi, an expatriate doctor from Bern. Their two-week journey was to become a defining moment in the 20th-century history of art, and still stands out as one of the myths of modernity.

It is a myth surrounded by the aura of the strange and exotic, and bathing in the light and colour of North Africa – a myth to which Paul Klee himself largely contributed with this oft-quoted entry in his diary: “I now abandon work. It penetrates so deeply and so gently in me, I feel it and it gives me confidence in myself without effort. Colour possesses me. I don’t have to pursue it. It will possess me always. I know it. That is the meaning of this happy hour: Colour and I are one. I am a painter.”

The wide range of colours and the intensity of natural light that characterise the African landscape inspired Klee to produce a series of delicate watercolours of exceptional clarity and intensity.

A skilled draftsman, Klee had long been critical of his painterly work, but he considered the Tunisian watercolours to be something of a “breakthrough” in terms of colour. From today’s perspective, this assessment needs to be somewhat relativised since we know that even before his trip to Tunisia, Klee – under the impression of Robert Delaunay’s colour theory of Orphism – had created a series of watercolours, which in terms of technique, form, and colour hardly distinguish themselves from the works created in North Africa.

Background information

While visiting Tunis, Sidi Bou Said, Hammamet, and Kairouan, Klee painted some thirty watercolours, but he continued to work with this theme after his return to Germany, which explains why the list of works dealing with Tunisia exceeds that number by far. It is proven, for instance, that he continued to work on «Carpet of Memory» (1914, 193) until 1921.

The Tunis watercolours are characterised by a loose division of the image into geometric though never schematic colour fields. The scale ranges from primary to secondary colours, whose light intensity mainly owes to the effects of complementary contrasts (red-green, blue-orange-yellow-violet) that Klee uses in various combinations.

The watercolours from 1914/1915 illustrate the growing degree of construction and abstraction in Klee's oeuvre as the Tunisian journey drew on. At the outset of the trip Klee is known to have noted rather self-critically: "Went to work at once and painted in watercolour in the Arab quarter. Began the synthesis of urban architecture and pictorial architecture. Not yet pure, but quite attractive, somewhat too much of the mood, the enthusiasm of travelling in it – the Self, in a word. Things will no doubt get more objective later, once the intoxication has worn off a bit."

In comparison to those early impressions, works like «In front of the Gates of Kairouan» (1914, 216) or Country Houses on the Beach undergo a clarification of the "pictorial architecture". Though not completely abstracted, they are bearing the marks of the work that preceded the motif: on the margins of the

Background information

sheets one still distinguishes the marks left by the rubber bands used to strap the paper to the paint box. This impression of immediacy is underlined by the sparse signs used as silhouettes indicating figurative and architectural motifs.

As for Klee's diary entries, their mixture of anecdotal narrative, atmospheric illustration, and poetic ponderings creates a lively account of the artists' trip while retaining the particularity of artistic self-representation.

Michael Baumgartner

Director Collection, Exhibition and Research / Zentrum Paul Klee, Berne

Bio- / Filmography Bruno Moll / writer and director

Born 1948 in Olten, primary school, training as an engine designer

1972 to 1974 Training as a photographer

From 1975 Freelance photographer, photo journalist, and camera assistant

From 1978 Freelance author and director

Filmography

Independent films for cinema and TV

- 2007 **Die Tunisreise**
Documentary film for cinema (75 min.) and TV (52 min.) / TV SF1 "Sternstunde Kunst"
with Fama Film AG Zurich / Distribution: trigon-film
- 2007 **Zu Fuß nach Santiago de Compostela**
95 min., 52 min., 2 x 25 min. for PS Film GmbH Zurich
Festivals: "Critic's Week", International Film Festival Locarno
Distribution: Frenetic
- 2005 **Erinnern**
Film essay on the phenomenon of memory / 85 min.
with T&C Film Zurich / Distribution: Look Now!
- 2005 **Venedig soll sehr schön sein – Six Swiss Artists in Venice**
Documentary film / 52 min.
with T&C Film Zurich / TV SF1 "Sternstunde Kunst"
- 2004 **Wer keinen Pass hat ist ein Hund – Bertolt Brecht and Switzerland**
Documentary film / 57 min.
commissioned by PS Film GmbH Zurich / TV SF1 "Klanghotel" + "Sternstunde Kunst"
- 2003 **Die Trommeln von Harar – Religious Music in Ethiopia**
Documentary film with Pierre Favre / 52 min.
with T&C Film for SF1 "Klanghotel" + "Sternstunde Kunst" and for SWR
- 2001 **Trommeln + Trance – The Candomblé in Salvador do Bahia**
Documentary film with Pierre Favre / 52 min.
with T&C Film for SF1 "Klanghotel" + "Sternstunde Kunst" and for SWR
- 2000 **Klangkörper – The Swiss Pavilion at the Expo 2000**
with T&C Film for SF1 "Klanghotel" and Arte / 52 min. and 43 min.
Distribution: Columbus Film Zurich

Filmography Bruno Moll

- 1999 **Das Fest der Hirten – The Neapolitan Nativity Play**
Documentary film / 28 min.
with T&C Film for SF1 “Sternstunde Religion”
- 1998 **Brain Concert**
Documentary essay / 35mm / 90 min.
Festivals: “Critics’ Week”, International Film Festival Locarno (premiere); Munich; Vancouver a.o.
with T&C Film / Distribution: Look Now!
- 1995 **Mekong (based on The Lost Story by O. F. Walter)**
Feature film / 35mm / 97 min.
Festivals: International Film Festival Locarno (premiere); Film Days Hof (Germany); Max Ophüls Competition, Saarbrücken (Germany) a.o.
with T&C AG, Film Production, Zurich / Distribution: Look Now!
- 1993 **Die bösen Buben**
Documentary film / 35mm / 95 min.
Distribution: Look Now!
- 1992 **Gente di Mare**
Documentary film / 35mm / 76 min.
Festivals: Marseille; Munich; Diagonale Salzburg a.o.
with T&C AG Film Production, Zurich / Distribution: Columbus Film
- 1988 **Der Schuh des Patriarchen**
Docufiction / 16mm / 111 min.
with Xanadu AG Film Production, Zurich / Distribution: Look Now!
- 1985 **Hammer**
Feature film / 35mm / 92 min.
Festivals: Filmfest Munich; Filmmeeting Bergamo a.o.
with Xanadu AG Film Production, Zurich / Distribution: Filmcooperative Zurich
- 1982 **Das ganze Leben**
Docufiction / 16mm / 112 min.
Festivals: International Forum of Young Film Berlin 1983; Filmfestspiel Leipzig; Festival International du Nouveau Cinema Montréal; Festival PIA Tokyo; Festival di Salsomaggiore Terme (Italy); Filmfestival Nyon (Switzerland) a.o.
Distribution: Filmcooperative Zurich
- 1980 **Samba Lento**
Documentary film / 16mm / 83 min.
Festivals: International Forum of Young Film Berlin a.o.
- 1978 **Gottliebs Heimat – Sketches of an Exodus**
Documentary film / 16mm / 52 min.

Filmography Bruno Moll

TV films

- 2002 **Ghana – St. Gallen retour**
Documentary film for SF1 "Dok" / 52 min.
- 2002 **Requiem für ein Oval – The Zurich Six Days Race**
Documentary film for SF1 "Spuren der Zeit" / 30 min.
- 2001 **Der Tunnel (NEAT, tunnel through the Gotthard)**
Documentary for SF1 "Dok" / 52 min.
- 2000 **Der Sozialkapitalist**
Documentary film on Gottlieb Duttweiler for SF1 "Spuren der Zeit" / 32 min.
- 2000 **Erich von Dänikens Traum – The Making of the Mystery Park Interlaken**
Documentary film for SF1 "Dok" / 52 min.
- 1999 **Migräne – Inferno in the Head**
Documentary film for SF1 "Dok" / 52 min.
- 1998 **Golf & Golf – Two Men on the Ball**
Documentary film for SF1 "Dok" / 52 min.
- 1996 **Müesliland**
Documentary film for SF1 "Dok" / 52 min.
- 1995 **Chaspiloten – Dreaming of One's Own Company**
Documentary film for SF1 "Dok" / 52 min.
- 1995 **Heroin vom Staat**
Several contributions for SF1 "Quer"
- 1989 **Feuer frei!**
Documentary film / 16mm / 45 min. for SF DRS "Dok"
- 1987 **Hungerzeit**
Documentary film / 16mm / 45 min. for SF DRS "Dok"
- 1984 **Zwischen Himmel und Hölle**
Documentary film / 16mm / 45 min. for SF DRS "Dok"

Commissioned films

- 2006 **Illusionswelten – The Bourbaki Panorama Lucerne**
- 2003 **Fit for life – New Learning Methods**
Commissioned by the Institut Beatenberg / 42 min.
- 2003 **Auenland**
Commissioned by the Naturama Aargau / 23 min.
- 2002 Several short films for the Naturama Aargau
- 1995 **Franz Anatol Wyss – Berlin Traces**
Commissioned by the Kunstverein Olten / 20 min.

Filmography Bruno Moll

- 1989 **J'aimerais savoir – 100 Years Freiburg University**
1989 **Was wäre wenn...?**
Commissioned by the State Agency for Air Travel / with Topic Film AG
1989 **André Jaunet – Flutist**
Commissioned for Topic Film AG
1987 **Viele Augen sehen mehr**
Commissioned by the State Agency for Air Travel / with Topic Film AG
1984 **Der sanfte Weg – Film on the Two Legislative Votes on Energy**

Other works

- 2003 Project management audiovisual productions, Naturama Aargau
1988 Production management Bankomatt by Villi Hermann with Bruno Ganz, Omero Antonutti, Francesca Neri, a.o.

Prizes

- 2004 Prize of the City of Olten
1999 City of Bern Film Prize for **Brain Concert**
1993 Prize of the SBG Jubilee Foundation
1999 Zurich Film Prize for **Der Schuh des Patriarchen**
1989 EDI Distinctions, Best Commissioned Film of the Year for **J'aimerais savoir**
1987 EDI Distinctions, Best Commissioned Film of the Year for **Viele Augen sehen mehr**
1986 Film Prize of the Canton Solothurn
1984 Prize of the Landis and Gyr Foundation
1982 Interfilm Prize of the Forum of Young Film Berlin for **Das ganze Leben**
1979 Yearly Contribution Canton Solothurn
1976 Swiss Federal Stipend for Applied Arts – Photography

Biography Nacer Khemir

Nacer Khemir was born on 1 April 1948 in Korba, Tunisia, as the only son among five daughters. The love for his country's civilisation, the Andalusian past of his Cordoba-born grandmother and the poetry she passed onto him led Khemir to become a story teller at first.

He published a number of books, among which «L'ogresse», «Le sommeil emmuré» and «Les contes des conteurs».

In 1984, after a series of short films, Nacer Khemir made his first feature film, «Les baliseurs du désert». Seven years later he earned rave reviews for «Le collier perdu de la colombe» (The Dove's Lost Necklace), a homage to the heyday of Andalusian-Arabic civilisation, narrated in the story-telling tradition of 1001 Nights. With his third feature film, «Bab'Aziz» (2005), an ode to the desert and the longing for love, the Tunisian film director again delighted audiences everywhere.

Like a traditional story teller, Khemir travels around the world, returning every so often to Paris (where his stuff lives) and Tunisia.

Peter Berghaus' quotation „Die Aneignung des Anderen ist immer auch Interpretation“ (*the appropriation by the other always holds an interpretation as well*) expresses what Nacer Khemir considers to be the essence of the debate with Paul Klee. A picture is always an interpretation. So what does the image say about its creator? Does he recognize himself in it? Is the appropriation by the beholder fueled by friendly affection and curiosity or rather more base and egoistical intentions? Is there a unity between object and subject?

Nacer Khemir found this unity in Klee's Tunisia cycle. It led to an intensive dialogue with Klee's work and subsequently with the whole of Swiss culture.

Stab / Credits

Script	Bruno Moll Nacer Khemir
Director of photography	Matthias Kälin
Sound	Martin Witz
Editing	Anja Bombelli
Translation	Yla Margrit von Dach
Speaker	Christoph Betulius Venus Madrid
Oriental dancer	Brigitte Schildknecht
Sound editing & mixing	Audiokraftwerk Werner Grasmugg
Light design	Andromeda Film AG Paul Avondet
Title design	Sophia Murer
Production management	Regula Begert
Accountant	Stefan Schmid
Producer	Rolf Schmid, FAMA Film AG, Zürich
Co-producer	Mathias Forberg, Prisma Film- und Fernsehproduktion GmbH, Vienna

Credits

Paintings by Paul Klee

Zentrum Paul Klee, Berne
Paul Klee Stiftung Berne
Columbus Museum of Art, Ohio, USA
Kiyomizu Sannenzaka Museum of Art, Kyoto
Museum Sammlung Rosengart, Lucerne
Öffentliche Kunstsammlung Basel, Kupferstichkabinett
Moderna Museet, Stockholm
Von der Heydt - Museum, Wuppertal
Stiftung Sammlung Dieter Scharf zur Erinnerung an Otto Gerstenberg, Berlin
Satani Gallery, Tokyo
Ulmer Museum, Ulm
Musée national d'art moderne, Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris
Private collection

Texts

Paul Klee, Tagebücher 1898-1918, Textkritische Neuedition,
Hrsg. von der Paul-Klee-Stiftung, Kunstmuseum Bern,
bearbeitet von Wolfgang Kersten, Stuttgart/Teufen 1988

Film excerpts

„Les Baliseurs du désert“ 1982
„Le collier perdu de la colombe“ 1989
„Bab'Aziz“ 2005

Credits

Music

Johann Sebastian Bach
French Suites No. 2, English Suites No. 2, Partita No. 1
Interpretation Wolfgang Rübsam
With kind permission by Naxos Deutschland GmbH

Flutist

Tahar Hamdi

Editing Schweizer Fernsehen

Urs Augstburger
Marion Bornschier
Marco Meier

Editing ORF

Franz Grabner

A production by FAMA FILM AG Zürich in Co-Produktion with:

Prisma Film- und Fernsehproduktion GmbH Vienna
Schweizer Fernsehen
ORF
Albertina Vienna

Credits

With the kind support of:

Bundesamt für Kultur, EDI, Section Film
Berner Filmförderung
sokultur, Lotteriefonds Kanton Solothurn
Teleproduktionsfonds
Succès passage antenne



ALBERTINA



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Technical data

Genre	artist portrait
Year of production	2007
Countr of production	Switzerland
Country of co-production	Austria
Locations	Tunisia (Tunis, Sidi Bou Said, Hammamet, Kairouan)
Shooting format	DV Cam
Projection format	DVD (Cinema version) DigitalBETA 16:9 (TV version)
Language	french subtitles german / french (cinema version) voice over german (TV version)
Duration	75min (cinema version) 53min (TV version)
Sound	Stereo

Profile and filmography FAMA FILM AG / Production

FAMA FILM AG was founded 1987 in Bern, Switzerland as an independant film production and distribution company. Place of business is Zurich (since 2000, before Bern).

Producer Rolf Schmid and his team are in charge of producing, financing and organizing the film projects.

Filmography

<i>year</i>	<i>title</i>	<i>genre</i>	<i>director</i>
2007	Die Tunisreise	Documentary	Bruno Moll
2007	Giraffes Don't Go To Heaven	Short animation	Philip Delaquis / John Timms
2006	Feierabend	Short feature	Alex E. Kleinberger
2005	Der Skifahrer	Short feature	Martin Guggisberg
2004	Fremde im Paradies	TV movie	Manuel Siebenmann
2004	chyenne	Short feature	Alexander Meier
2004	La Femme de Gilles	Feature	Frédéric Fonteyne
2004	Lücken im Gesetz	TV movie	Christof Schertenleib
2004	Cattolica	Feature	Rudolph Jula
2003	Böse Zellen	Feature	Barbara Albert
2003	Globi	Animation	Robi Engler
2002	Züri West – am Blues vorus	Documentary (cinema)	Annina Furrer / Regula Begert
2002	Bunker	Documentary	Martina Reuter / Gavin Hodge
2002	Le Club des Chômeurs	Feature	Andy Bausch
2002	Giuventetgna dulutsch utschi	TV documentary	Christian Schocher
2002	Ibiza	Short feature	Bettina Oberli
2002	Brombeerchen	Feature	Oliver Rihs
2002	Nachts im Park	Feature	Uwe Janson
2001	Mannheim - New York	Documentary	Elke Baur
2000	Die wahren Liebhaber	TV-Documentary	Peter Aschwanden
2000	TATORT - Chaos	TV movie	Christof Schertenleib

Filmography FAMA FILM AG

<i>year</i>	<i>title</i>	<i>genre</i>	<i>director</i>
2000	Der letzte Sommer	TV movie	Sascha Weibel
1999	Nordrand	Feature	Barbara Albert
1999	Une liaison pornographique	Feature	Frédéric Fonteyne
1999	Grosse Gefühle	Feature	Christof Schertenleib
1999	Not Vital – half man, half animal	Documentary	Hercli Bundi
1999	Adrian Frutiger – Schriftengestalter	TV documentary	Anne Cuneo
1998	TATORT - Alp-Traum	TV movie	Clemens G. Klopfenstein
1998	Megacities	Documentary	Michael Glawogger
1998	The Magic Forest	Animation	Volker Collmann
1998	Elles	Feature	Luis Galvao Teles
1997	The Man In Grey	Feature	Pericles Hoursoglou
1996	La Freccia Azzurra (Der Blaue Pfeil)	Animation	Enzo d'Alò
1996	Lisa	Feature	Jan Keymeulen
1996	Guevote	Documentary	Roland Sanchez
1995	Stille Nacht	Feature	Dani Levy
1995	Reizendes Gift	Documentary	Priska & Martin Forter
1995	El Techo del Mundo	Feature	Felipe Vega
1995	Liebe Lügen	Feature	Christof Schertenleib
1994	Der Stand der Bauern	Documentary	Christian Iseli
1993	Deckname: Rosa	Documentary	Heidi Specogna
1993	Geteilte Nacht	Feature	Pius Morger
1992	Anna annA	Children feature	Greti Kläy / Jürgen Brauer
1992	I Was On Mars	Feature	Dani Levy
1991	Tania la Guerrillera	Documentary	Heidi Specogna
1991	Grauholz	Documentary	Christian Iseli
1991	Billi	Short feature	Priska Forter
1990	Die zukünftigen Glückseligkeiten	Feature	Fred van der Kooij

Filmography FAMA FILM AG

<i>year</i>	<i>title</i>	<i>genre</i>	<i>director</i>
1989	Johnny Sturmgewehr	Feature	Ueli Mamin
1988	RobbyKallePaul	Feature	Dani Levy
1988	Le terroriste suisse	Documentary	Christian Iseli
1987	Alpenglühn	Documentary	S. Horrisberger / N. Wiedmer

Films in production

Wimper	Short animation	Marcel Hobi
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Projects in development

Der Fürsorger	Feature	Lutz Konermann
Vermessene Wildnis	Documentary	Lisa Faessler
Perpetuum mobile	Short feature	Sebastian Kenney
Lullaby	Feature	Hannes Stark
Anna & Goliath	Feature	Hannes Stark / Sarah Pietrasanta
Suche Eltern für meine Kinder	TV movie	Marco Hausammann / Roland Schäffi
Aladdin – Escape To Paradise	Documentary	Simon Bischoff
Rahel	Feature	Doris Stalder

December 2007