



Curriculum vitae

Michael Koch was born in Lucerne (Switzerland) in 1982. From 2003 - 2008 he studied at the Academy of Media Arts in Cologne.

His short films have been shown at over 100 international film festivals and won several awards. His graduation film "Polar" received a Special Mention at the 2009 Berlin International Film Festival and won both the German Camera Award and the German Short Film Award.

Koch's debut feature film "Marija" had its world premiere in Competition at the Locarno International Film Festival in 2016. The film was internationally screened at several festivals such as in Toronto, Busan, Angers and Gothenburg, winning numerous national and international awards.

His second feature film "Drii Winter" (A Piece Of Sky) was invited to compete at the 72nd Berlin International Film Festival in 2022 and was awarded a Special Mention from the jury. The film is Switzerland's official submission for the International Feature Film competition at the 95th Academy Awards®

Koch lives and works together with his wife and three children in Basel and Berlin.



DRII WINTER (A PIECE OF SKY)

136 Min. / DCP 2K 24fps / 1:1.37 / Color / 5.1. Sound / 2022

In a remote mountain village high in the Swiss Alps, the fledgling love between Anna and Marco is put to a severe test. But Anna holds on to her love for Marco – against all odds.

“The Berlinale offers a great discovery from Switzerland!” — *Daniel Kothenschulte, Frankfurter Rundschau*

“This quiet Swiss mountain drama makes you feel how magical cinema can be. Without a lot of words, without loud drama and without acting stars.” — *Brigitte Häring, SRF*

“Drii Winter by Swiss director Michael Koch stood out far from the competition as having the most tightly packed narrative.” — *Hannah Pilarczyk, Der Spiegel*

“A Piece of Sky is both beautifully made and a thing of beauty in itself.” — *Stephanie Bunbury, Deadline*

“A stark, affecting, sometimes enigmatic, superbly executed piece.” — *Jonathan Romney, Screen Daily*

“Stunning image-making fills out the stark storytelling in Swiss director Michael Koch's potent, stoically moving second feature.” — *Guy Lodge, Variety*

A hugofilm features production, in co-production with Pandora Film Produktion, Schweizer Fernsehen SRF and ARTE

CAST

Michèle Brand, Simon Wisler, Daniela Barmettler, Sepp Aschwanden, Daniel Imholz, Elin Zraggen

CREW

Director and screenplay Michael Koch
Assistant director Chloé Le Grand
Producer Christof Neracher
Co-producers Claudia Steffen, Christoph Friedel
Cinematographer Armin Dierolf
Editor Florian Riegel
Music Tobias Koch, Jannik Giger
Production design & costume design Sara Giancane
Props Jessica Schmid, Leonia Brenner
Wardrobe Miriam Stöcklin
Makeup Sabine Flückiger, Ronald Fahm
Sound Jean-Pierre Gerth
Camera assistant Linus Rieser
Dolly grip Bernd Mayer
Key grip Mark Warnecke
Sound design Tobias Koch
Re-recording mixer Matthias Lempert
Production management Florian Widmeier
International distributor New Europe Film Sales

FESTIVALS (selection)

- Berlin International Film Festival
- Tapei Film Festival 2022
- Karlovy Vary Int. Film Festival 2022
- New Horizons IFF 2022
- Guanajuato Int. Film Festival 2022
- Motovun Film Festival 2022
- Locarno Int. Film Festival 2022
- Hong Kong IFF 2022
- Vancouver Int. Film Festival 2022
- Festival du Nouveau Cinéma Montreal 2022
- Film Fest Gent 2022
- Chicago Int. Film Festival 2022
- Haifa Int. Film Festival 2022
- Mostra Sao Paulo 2022
- Viennale 2022
- Bergen Int. Film Festival 2022
- Bogota Int. Film Festival 2022
- Thessaloniki Int Film Festival 2022
- Goa Int. Film Festival 2022

Awards (selection)

- Special Mention *Berlin International Film Festival 2022*
- Best International Feature Film, *Guanajuato International Film Festival*
- Roger Ebert Award 2022 *Chicago International Film Festival*
- Jury Award, Silver Alexander *Thessaloniki Int. Film Festival 2022*
- Best Film, Prix du Jury *Festival Augenblick, Strasbourg 2022*
- Official Swiss submission *Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences International Feature Film 2023*



MARIJA

101 Min. / DCP 2K 24fps / 1:1.85 / Color / 5.1. Sound / 2016

Marija is a cleaner in a hotel, but dreams of a freer, self-determined life. Intent on turning her dream into reality, she is prepared to subordinate her body, her social relationships and finally her own feelings to her declared goal.

“A haunting social and character study. Margarita Breitkreiz shines in it as an unscrupulous seeker of happiness.”
— *Alfred Schlienger, Neue Zürcher Zeitung*

“A quiet, impressive feature film debut that never exploits its social realism.” — *Andreas Busche, Tagesspiegel*

“Margarita Breitkreiz is a discovery. The haunting portrait of a young woman who denies herself feelings in order not to be consumed herself.” — *Knut Elstermann, Radioeins*

“This tightly packed portrait of a woman, which does without music, knows no compromises, neither in its realistic style nor in its undramatic, observant portrayal of the immigrant milieu.” — *Alexandra Wach, Filmdienst*

“Margarita Breitkreiz endows this tense character study with a credible urgency that makes it one of the year’s most powerful looks at the crisis of the working class.” — *Eric Kohn, IndieWire*

“An incisive, confidently unsentimental debut feature for writer-director Michael Koch, this steel-cut slice of life persistently avoids easy ethical dichotomies.” — *Guy Lodge, Variety*

Pandora Film Produktion in co-production with hugofilm, Little Shark Entertainment, WDR, ARTE and Schweizer Fernsehen SRF

CAST

**Margarita Breitkreiz, Georg Friedrich
Olga Dinnokova, Sahin Eryilmaz**

CREW

Director and screenplay Michael Koch
Producers Claudia Steffen, Christoph Friedel (Pandora Film Produktion)
Co-producers Christof Neracher (hugofilm)
Screenplay Michael Koch, Juliane Großheim
Cinematographer Bernhard Keller
Editor Florian Riegel
Production design Petra Barchi
Makeup Astrid Weber
Costume design Peri De Braganca
Sound design Tobias Koch, Maurizio Staerkle-Drux
Sound Jean-Pierre Gerth
Key grip Henry Notroff
Casting Susanne Ritter

FESTIVALS (selection)

— Festival del Film Locarno 2016
— Toronto Int. Film Festival 2016
— Busan Int. Film Festival 2016
— Semana Int. de Cine de Valladolid 2016
— Kyiv Int. Film Festival Molodist 2016
— Solothurner Filmtage 2017
— Filmfestival Max Ophüls Preis 2017
— Festival Premier Plans d’Angers 2017
— Göteborg Film Festival 2017
— Glasgow Film Festival 2017
— Festival Int. du Film d’Amour, Mons 2017
— Bergamo Film Meeting 2017
— Guadalajara Int. Film Festival 2017
— Int. Film Festival Prague – Febiofest 2017
— Festival of German Films New York 2017
— Minneapolis St.Paul Int. Film Festival 2017
— Riviera Int. Film Festival 2017
— European Film Festival Romania 2017
— Visions sociales, Cannes 2017
— Festival de Cine Independente de Bogotá
— Arras Film Festival 2017
— Cairo International Film Festival 2017

AWARDS

— Special mention, Ecumenical Jury
— *L’ambiente è qualità di vita award, Festival del Film Locarno 2016*
— *Basler Film- und Medienkunstpreis 2016*
— Nominated for best feature film, *Schweizer Filmpreis 2017*
— Best Actress + Best Actor *Festival Premier Plans d’Angers 2017.*
— Jury Prize + Best Actress, *Festival Int. du Film d’Amour de Mons 2017.*
— Amnesty International Febiofest Award, *Int. Film Festival Prague Febiofest 2017.*
— Zürcher Filmpreis 2017



POLAR

29 Min. / 16mm, Blow-up 35mm / 2008

Luis travels to the mountains to reconnect with his father, who lives in a remote village. There he finds out his father has a new family. Torn between anger, incomprehension and the desire for emotional closeness, Luis tries to draw his father out.

“Polar has a perfect density that is unparalleled even in short film. Michael Koch and his team have extracted a mere concentrate of the narrative from the original material. Anything that could distract from the essential, every basically unnecessary embellishment has been jettisoned and gives way to an astonishingly focused clarity. Polar is a masterpiece of reduction that only short film can achieve.”

— *Oliver Baumgarten, Schnitt, das Filmmagazin 03/09*

“The masterful camera consistently stays with the characters and captures the barren landscape in such a way that it seems to reflect the state of their souls. This results in reduction on all levels for a film of great atmospheric density that is deeply moving without being in the least sentimental.”

— *Jurybegründung Deutscher Kurzfilmpreis in Gold 2009*

A production of Kunsthochschule für Medien Köln and Kinomaton München in co-production with Dschoint Ventschr and Schweizer Fernsehen SRF

CAST

Max Brauer
André Hennicke
Maria Kwiatkowsky

CREW

Director Michael Koch
Screenplay Juliane Grossheim, Michael Koch
Cinematographer Bernhard Keller
Editor Stefan Stabenow
Production design Valerie Hess, Stefanie Schaad
Costume design Juliane Maier
Makeup Marina Aebi
Key grip Henry Notroff
Sound Benjamin Simon, Marc Wesemann, Jonas Hummel
Sound design Knut Jensen
Music Huck Finn
Producer Elena von Saucken
Production Kunsthochschule für Medien Köln and Kinomaton München in co-production with Dschoint Ventschr and Schweizer Fernsehen

FESTIVALS (selection)

— Berlin International Film Festival, 2009
— Int. Kurzfilmtage Winterthur 2008
— Int. Kurzfilmtage Oberhausen 2009
— Filmfest Dresden 2009
— Int. Kurz Film Festival Hamburg
— Cinema Corto in Bra Festival 2009
— Warsaw Int. Film Festival 2009
— São Paulo Int. Short Film Festival
— Kiev Int. Film Festival „Molodist“
— Alcine, Festival de Cine Alcalà de Henares 2009

AWARDS

— *Honorable mention*, Berlin International Film Festival, Perspektive Deutsches Kino, 2009
— *Best Swiss Short*, Int. Kurzfilmtage Winterthur, 2008
— *Goldener Reiter*, Bester Deutscher Film, Filmfest Dresden, 2009
— *Nominated for Best Film and Best Screenplay*, First Steps Awards 2009
— *Nominated for Babelsberger Medienpreis 2009*, for Best Graduate Film
— *Deutscher Kamerapreis 2009*, Kategorie Kurzfilm
— *Deutscher Kurzfilmpreis in Gold 2009*, Kategorie Bester Spielfilm 7 - 30 Min.



WIR SIND DIR TREU

9 Min. / MiniDV, Blow-up 35mm / 2005

Game after game, he gives his all for the team, inspiring the audience to sing, choreographing the crowd and motivating them to offer their best performance. A film about the highs and lows of being a fan.

“The film takes us away into the world of football without showing a single second of the game. It touches us in the sober observation of its protagonist, not only unveiling the highs and lows of being a fan, but also making us think about the complicated relationship between the individual and the masses. ‘Wir Sind Dir Treu’ stands out from the national competition for its cheeky modesty.”

— *Int. Kurzfilmtage Winterthur jury statement*

“The crowd animator at FC Basel’s home games doesn’t follow the match. Michael Koch has a fantastic eye for detail in this pumping, pulsating short piece about power, groups and art – anything but football. But the camera catches the anxiety in his face. He cannot let their attention slip for a second. Whatever happens on the pitch behind him, where the real stars are performing, he has to keep the crowd at his control. In the throbbing close-ups of the animator, Koch’s video is also a portrait of the artist at work. There’s no life for him outside this stadium, outside the audience. He is their king, but he is their slave.”

— *Silver Impakt Award 2006*

Produced by Kunsthochschule für Medien
Köln and Michael Koch

CREW

Director, screenplay, editor, Michael Koch

Kamera Andrea Gsell, Michael Koch

Ton Nica Giuliani

Production Kunsthochschule für Medien
Köln und Michael Koch

FESTIVALS (selection)

- Int. Hofer Filmtage, 2005
- Int. Kurzfilmtage Winterthur 2005
- Int. Short Film Festival Cologne 2005
- Solothurner Filmtage 2006
- Festival International du Court Métrage de Clermont-Ferrand 2006
- IndieLisboa 2006
- Int. Videofestival Bochum 2006
- Filmkunstfest Schwerin 2006
- Corto in Bra 2006
- Int. Kurzfilmtage Oberhausen 2006
- Festival de Cannes „Tous les Cinémas du Monde“ 2006
- Hamburg Int. Short Film Festival 2006
- Norwegian Short Film Festival Grimstad
- Int. Film Festival Huesca 2006
- Toronto Short Film Festival 2006
- Int. Odense Filmfestival 2006
- Sao Paulo Int. Short Film Festival
- Impakt Festival, Utrecht 2006
- Tinklai Int. Short Film Festival 2006
- Uppsala Int. Short Film Festival
- Milano Film Festival 2006
- 50th London Film Festival, 2006
- Molodist, Kiev Int. Film Festival 2006
- Munich Int Festival of Film Schools
- Cork Film Festival, 2006
- Beirut Int. Documentary Festival, 2006
- Filmfestival Max-Ophüls Preis 2007
- Festival Int. del Cortometraje de Santiago de Chile, 2007

AWARDS

- *Best Swiss Short*, Int. Kurzfilmtage Winterthur, 2005
- *Jury Award*, Int. Short Film Festival Cologne 2005
- *le prix Canal+*, Festival int. du court métrage de Clermont-Ferrand, 2006
- *Audience Award*, Documenta Madrid
- *Förderpreis Kurzfilm*, Filmkunstfest Schwerin, 2006
- *Special Mention*, Int. Filmfestival Huesca
- *Silver Impakt Award*, Impakt, 2006
- *Special Mention*, Milano Film Festival
- *Beste Dokumentarfilm*, Munich Int. Festival of Film Schools, 2006
- *ARTE-Kurzfilm-Preis*, Munich Int. Festival of Film Schools, 2006
- *Prädikat "Besonders Wertvoll"* and *Kurzfilm des Monats Juni 2007*, Filmbewertungsstelle Wiesbaden 2007