

UTE AURAND

Born in 1957 in Frankfurt/Main, grew up in Berlin.

1979-1985, studied filmmaking at the Deutsche Film und Fernsehakademie Berlin (dffb).

Since 1985 producing her own films.

1990-95, presented the series "Filmarbeiterinnen-Abend" at the Arsenal cinema, Berlin, featuring films made by women, mostly experimental.

1991: Research project and book „Frauen machen Geschichte – 25 Jahre Studentinnen an der dffb“ (Women make History-25 Years of Women Students at the dffb), together with Maria Lang.

1995-96, organised "Sie zum Beispiel" (Her, for Example) at the Arsenal and Babylon cinemas, in which 12 women filmmakers /artists selected and presented a personal selection of films by other women filmmakers.

1997, founded "FilmSamstag" (Film Saturday) together with Renate Sami and Theo Thiesmeier, later joined by Bärbel Freund, Karl Heil, Milena Gierke and Johannes Beringer, to present a monthly film programme in Kino Filmkunsthaus Babylon Mitte until 2007. (www.filmsamstag.de)

Teaching (selection): 1989/90 Deutsche Film und Fernsehakademie Berlin (dffb): "Jonas Mekas seminar"; 1990 Academy of Arts Hamburg: "experimental film class"; 1992/98 Academy of Arts Bremen: "Haiku film seminar"; 1997-99,2002/03 lecturer of Experimental Film at the Hochschule für Gestaltung in Zürich; 2005/06/07 dffb: "Filmdiary".

Since 1981 curated filmprograms e.g. "Lichtgedichte/Light Poems", "Hyacinths" and "Poetinnen mit der Kamera/Women Poets with the Camera" and monographic programs of films by Marie Menken, Margaret Tait and Utako Koguchi.

Films

Schweigend ins Gespräch vertieft

Deeply absorbed in silent Conversation 1981 8min 16mm Experimental Filmprize Oberhausen

A woman in various situations, mirroring herself and being mirrored – doubling herself – meeting herself – stepping out of the house.

Umweg

Detour 1982 13min b/w in collaboration with Ulrike Pfeiffer

A railway trip. The carriage window becomes a screen, the landscape a mood, the mood a landscape.

Ute Aurand and Ulrike Pfeiffer organized the film tour, "New films by women from Berlin" and filmed while travelling to eight German cities.

OKIANA 1982/83 35min 16mm in collaboration with Ulrike Pfeiffer

An imaginary journey on a ship. We turned Erich Mendelsohn's 1920's building, the

Film Academy, into a ship. Claire and Solange from a Jean Genet piece, a polish woman with her Madonna, screaming sailors are a few of the passengers on this artificial journey.

Herz im Ohr

Heart In The Ear 1983 5min Video (Infermental Videoedition)

in collaboration with Ulrike Pfeiffer

Stars and a round pregnant belly circle around with each other.

Paul Celan liest

Paul Celan Reads 1985 5min 16mm b/w

Paul Celan reads Paul Celan. The words which we hear are seen on the screen - the optical sound negative became the visible image.

Die Sonne sank, ich folge ihr

The Sun Set, I Follow 1985 37min 16mm

A stylized costume play filmed on the Externsteine, the Reichstag in Berlin and in a rose garden at night.

Feucht – trocken – warm – kalt – Island

Damp – Dry – Warm – Cold – Iceland 1987 30min Video

in collaboration with Margarita Albrecht Special Prize Niedersächsische Filmtage, Germany

A landscape film without language, without people – out of sound and image. “The video convinces us with images of monumental power of seemingly untouched nature. Through the order of the images, a contemplative calm is communicated which refers to the developmental history of matter.”

OH! die 4 Jahreszeiten

OH! The 4 Seasons 1988 20min 16mm

in collaboration with Ulrike Pfeiffer

Aurand and Pfeiffer filmed each other at four famous sites in Europe: walking in a summer dress through the snow in front of the Reichstag in Berlin, spinning a young boy again and again through the air in Red Square in Moscow, climbing on a hot day into the waterfall at the Place de la Concorde in Paris, and, as two angles in London, walking through the night of the City. The film begins with a text by Jonas Mekas about improvisation and is edited in the camera.

„The two women’s movements and performances determine the viewpoint, and the camera, so to speak, is carried by their dynamics. (...) This is not just play but has also political implications: these two women-filmmakers do not invent new spaces for themselves, they use the four squares, impregnated with patriarchal significance, for their own purposes, changing the function by their presence.(...) With fragmented, jump-cut and multilayered images, they present these public places in a different way than as showcases for the theater of politics. (...) The filmmakers place their own mis-en-scene in opposition, their measure is their own body and its movements, and through this, they conquer these public spaces and place themselves at the center.“ Marion Kranen, in: „Blaue Wunder, Neue Filme und Videos von Frauen 1984-94“

Die Prinzessin auf der Erbse

The Princess And The Pea 1991 4min 35mm in collaboration with Ulrike Pfeiffer

We hear Alexander Moissi reading the fairy tale by Hans Christian Anderson (recorded in 1927), while seeing a close up of the face of a young woman standing outdoors against a distant hilly summer landscape.

Stachelbeeren

Gooseberries 1992 4min 35mm silent

A gooseberry bush in the very early Spring.

Detel und Jón

Detel and Jón 1988/93 33min 16mm

Over a period of five years I filmed Detel Aurand and Jón Sigurgeirsson in Berlin and Iceland where they lived. "Detel+Jón is a film that makes happiness visible" M. Lang

Bärbel und Charly

Bärbel and Charly 1995 35min 16mm

This is a portrait of Bärbel Freund and Charly Heil like a song in its changing verses, the locations were chosen according to mood and season: in spring, in snow, in Venice, in the flat, alone and together.

Maria und die Welt

Maria And The World 1995 15min 16mm

A film about my friend Maria Lang. The light falls on a few details, chance selections, pieces of a whole, out of which a place is composed, the place where Maria lives with her mother.

A landscape, a village, a kitchen, her room.

Kleine Blumen, kleine Blätter

Little Flowers, Little Leaves 1995 48min 16mm

an anthology with films by: Jón Sigurgeirsson, Angelika Levi, Franz von Lucke, Detel Aurand, Renate Sami, Ulrike Pfeiffer, Baerbel Freund, Karl Heil, Yael Bedarshi, Susan Turcot, Ute Aurand.

I asked 11 friends, filmmakers and non-filmmakers, to make a film about the Seasons.

Neubrandenburg 1995 3min 16mm

One day in September in Neubrandenburg, filmed for the Neubrandenburg Filmfestival.

Terzen

Thirds 1998 50min 16mm

From 1992-98 I filmed continually: while travelling, in the flat, during winter, friends, my nieces, Tanja and Xenia in Ukraine, blooming chestnut trees, Paris, New York, the Orkney Islands. These short pieces correspond to various moods and sounds.

“Intimate and so connected to everyday life, like it never has been so near, confidential, without (over-)familiarity, concrete, tender and humble, full of life and sleepwalking beauty.” Gabi Jatho, Curator of “Ute Aurand - dies und das”, Kino Arsenal, October 2001

“In the day after seeing *Terzen*, there was a surprising sense of the film that developed for me. The rhythms were still present and helped to unify a multitude of impressions. This led me to reconsider the general tone of the film because, as I reached beyond its quick pace and rhythmic lightness and beyond the everyday content, I realized that its joyfulness grows out of a serenity or courage in facing mortality. This is the surprising sense of the film its inner music. (...) Early in the film I recall a chair held in the strong afternoon sunlight. Even though you show it from many angles, it has a potent stillness. It strikes me as a good example of how you embody an active sense of seeing in your filming, and you reflect back to us the paradox that it is in movement that we create stillness. The eye, constantly moving yet still.”

Robert Beavers, „Conversation about Terzen“, 2004

Fadenspiele

Toying With String 1999 8min 16mm silent

in collaboration with Detel Aurand

Toying with string is painting transformed into film. Colour, threads, stones, various natural elements give birth to images constantly changing form. In film this metamorphosis is made visible – we see one thing arising from another and giving birth to something new.

“Toying with string is by two sisters, one is a painter, the other a filmmaker. A new quality develops from the knowledge each one brings. The film is lively and leaves a free and happy feeling”

Filmmuseum Berlin – Aufbau August bis September 2000

Filmmuseum Berlin 2000 20min 16mm silent

Filmed every day during the final four weeks of the Berlin Film Museum’s construction.

Im Garten

In The Garden 2002 29min 16mm silent in collaboration with Baerbel Freund

Portrait of the garden, that the gardener and natural philosopher Karl Foerster designed in 1910 in Potsdam-Bornim. Filmed in monthly intervals to show how the garden changed in the course of a year, from October 2000 to November 2001. "The flower proves to be a greater pioneer of the new relations between world and soul than we divine. Unimaginable effects proceed from gardens and flowers" wrote Karl Foerster and some of the spiritual power of this garden has rubbed off on us.

Für Frau Foerster

To Mrs. Foerster 2002 3min 16mm in collaboration with Bärbel Freund

A short film about Marianne Foerster who today looks after her father's garden, continuing his work of horticultural design.

Tulipan 2002 1,5min 16mm silent in collaboration with Bärbel Freund

Inspired by a scientific film from 1898, Bärbel Freund filmed in stop-motion an unscientific film of flowers blooming and fading.

Fadenspiele 2

Toying with string 2 2003 8min 16mm in collaboration with the painter Detel Aurand

Colourful ribbons stretch between trees in a birch grove; white balls dance in a yellow rape-field; paper, wood and plastic forms move over surface and in space. Kurfilmstage Oberhausen 2004

Halbmond für Margaret

Half-Moon for Margaret 2004 18min 16mm

„An intentionally silent film, 'Half-Moon for Margaret' includes striking imagery...friends observing a lunar eclipse, family gatherings and celebrations, delicate images of flowers and vast landscapes. Aurand's expressive camera technique and editing style – which preserves some sequences that were edited in the camera – lends to joyous spontaneity of the work.“

Susan Oxtoby, Wavelengths Programmer, Toronto International Film Festival 05

India 2005 57min 16mm

„India“ developed out of three journeys. A film about the foreign and at the same time familiar.

A film about colour, light and beauty. It is small things that awaken my attention, sometimes only a short glimpse, a hand movement, the colour of a sari, a small temple hidden in a courtyard.

The film begins with the day of my arrival.

„A love for the world is found in Aurand's intimate 16mm colour films. (...) Lyrical and sketch-like, Aurand's exuberant impressions of street scenes, performances of traditional dances, and portraits of people she meets mirror the vitality of the life she encounters. Her staccato-length shots flash bursts of energy, adding a rhythmic dimension to the handheld cinematography. The film begins in silence; after a few minutes, the first sounds we hear are birds. The soundtrack builds upon a wide range of aural textures: traditional and popular music, voices of children and shopkeepers, and ambient cityscape sounds such as pedestrians and vehicular traffic. (...)“

Susan Oxtoby, Wavelengths programmer, Toronto Int. Film Festival 2005

Der Schmetterling im Winter

The Butterfly in Winter 2006 30min 16mm in collaboration with Maria Lang

The filmmaker Maria Lang reads out of her diary, which she has been writing since 1991, after her move to the countryside to take care of her mother. 14 years later, Ute Aurand began filming Maria's daily nursing of her mother, now 96 years old. Every morning Maria opens the windows, places her mother in the wheel-chair, washes and dresses her, combs and braids her long white hair. It is repeated day after day, but every day is different.

„Ute Aurand follows Maria Lang in her daily movements while she cares for her mother.

The silent presence of the filmmaker is visible in the camera movements and in the editing rhythm.

Admiration and discretion are sensed. And the silence of the film creates for us as spectators an occasion for attentive observation and balanced awareness. We enter into the intimacy of mother and daughter through the eyes of a friend.“ Robert Beavers

"I have always found the distinction made between documentary and experimental cinema quite specious. (...) Jonas Mekas gave one of his films the title As I Was Moving Ahead Occasionally I Saw Brief Glimpses of Beauty. This title condenses a long and proud tradition of experimental filmmakers who record the world in "glimpses," casting light on the everyday for just an instant before moving on to the next fleeting attraction. These ephemeral instants accumulate into highly intimate and lyrical works, such as those by Mekas and his fellow Americans Warren Sonbert or Marie Menken.

The esteemed European filmmakers Hannes Schüpbach, Ute Aurand and Maria Lang treat life's rituals and rhythms in poetic ways, with new films gingerly perched between diary and biography, all screening in Wavelengths. (...) Aurand and Lang film with Warholian strobe cuts, giving their work a restless, dynamic energy that jitters and jumps but somehow maintains a great sense of grace. In The Butterfly in Winter (in Cross Worlds), Aurand films her friend and co-director Lang taking care of her frail, elderly mother, day in, day out. Journal entries at the film's opening reveal the psychic burden that this role reversal – daughter nursing mother – takes on Lang: "4 September 1998. Mama sits with red-rimmed eyes, and I cry about this life that has no way to help itself." (...) "Brief Glimpses Of Beauty, Wavelengths Programme Unveils New Experimental Masterwork by Jon Davies

Toronto International Film Festival 2007 ("Wavelengths" Programm); 31st Portland International Film Festival 2008

Hier ist es zur Zeit sehr schön

Here it is very nice at the Moment 2006 55 min 16mm in collaboration with Maria Lang

A triptych. The first part, "Maria and the World", filmed by Ute Aurand in 1995, is composed from a multitude of brief glimpses into Maria's world, after her move to the countryside to take care of her mother. Maria Lang's own film, "Family Crypt - A Love Letter to my Mother" (1981) is at the center. Maria speaks about herself, her mother, father, and brother. She speaks of what we more often remain silent about - the walls, the barriers, but also the love. 22 years later, Ute Aurand began filming Maria's daily nursing of her mother, now 96 years old. "The Butterfly in Winter" was completed in 2006 and became the final part of the triptych.

„(...) Colour, grain and light of 16mm film material are used here for a quickly moving yet calm painting.

The special approach led to a unique and very personal document.“ Cataloge Filmfestival Rotterdam International Film Festival Rotterdam 2007; Hong Kong Int. Film Festival 2007

Terzen Teil 1

Thirds Part 1 1998/2006 20min 16mm

From 1992-98 I filmed continually: while travelling, in the flat, during winter, friends, my nieces, Tanja and Xenia in Ukraine, blooming chestnut trees, Paris, New York, the Orkney Islands. Short pieces corresponding to various moods and sounds.

Am Meer

At the Sea 1995/2007 3min 16mm

On the sound track we hear the Japanese filmmaker, Utako Koguchi, playing the piano and singing, while the image edited in camera, records a walk on the island of Hiddensee.

In die Erde gebaut

Building Under Ground 2008 42min 16mm

From the groundbreaking ceremony in May 2004 through to the opening in February 2007, the film follows the construction of the new expansion of the Museum Rietberg Zürich. "In die Erde gebaut" is a film about work, using the example of building.

Forum Expanded, Berlinale, 2008

A Walk 2008 4,5min 16mm silent

A walk in the mountains of the Engadin and Bergell in snow and early spring.

Im Park

In the Park 2008 6min 16mm silent

Images from the park and collection of the Rietberg Museum, Zuerich.

ZUOZ 2008 1,5min 16mm silent

Filmed on a sunny winterday in Zuoz and Lavin.

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