

LOST WATER 1 - 2 - 3 - 4

Director: Peter Roloff
Genre: film d'essay
Duration: 100 min.
Format: 16 mm

Synopsis

Some few metres removed from the geographic centre of the former GDR springs an inconspicuous little stream, Verlorenwasser (Lost Water). In the past it vanished back into the earth a few steps from its point of origin, only to reappear a few kilometres away.

Verlorenwasser Creek is the point of departure for a collage of historical documents, noises and musical fragments, interviews, observations, radio reports and idyllic, filmed forays through an (apparently) empty landscape. Fläming Heath Heights are less than a hundred kilometres south of Berlin, on the very edge of Brandenburg, yet in the heart of Prussia.

First day of filming of 'Verlorenwasser 1': the first free elections on March 18, 1990.

In the third, and fictional, part of the film, 'Krasna Amerika' (Beautiful America), we follow the 1899 odyssey of the Russian fabric merchant Igor Gruseveyitch and are witness to his filmed impressions of Russia, America and Germany. His film is made in the intention of persuading his wife to emigrate to the USA. She is reluctant, Igor takes measures, and solves his problem – in Verlorenwasser.

In the fourth part, the film-maker explores the present situation at deserted military, riot police and state security premises. Roloff loses himself repeatedly in the traces of the past and their cold aura. Verlorenwasser becomes a metaphor for the disappearance and reappearance of history and stories in the flow of time.

Production

year 1990-2010

duration 27 + 31 + 22 + 20 min. = 100 mins.

format 16 mm | 1:1,34 | color/b&w

writer | director | photography Peter Roloff

2nd camera | sound Klaus Dörries, Carolin Lingke, Martin Muser, Andreas Ruft, Anke Schäfer

editing Barbara Kirchner (part 1), Frank Behnke (part 2), Peter Roloff (part 3), Manfred Hielscher (part 4)

music Peter Roloff, Jens Jamin, Adolph Hofner, Polka Service

recording studio Studio-Nord Bremen

sound mixes Lothar Mankewitz, Martin Steyer, Peter Roloff

narrators Edi Samland, Erika Eller, Peter Lewan

opticals Thomas Wilk, Moser + Rosié

film labs Defa Studio für Dokumentarfilme, Defa Adlershof, Arri Berlin, CinePostproduktion - Geyer Berlin

production assistants Andrea Kuserau, Jana Drescher

producers Florian Körner von Gustorf, Susanne Lob

funding Goethe-Institut, Kulturelle Filmförderung Berlin, Medienboard Berlin Brandenburg, Filmbüro Bremen

production Peter Roloff, maxim film

Distribution

Download film at docufilms.com (German version only)

DVD release in Germany: December 8, 2011

Theatrical release in Germany: March 18, 2010

Theatrical and DVD distribution in Germany

Basis Film Verleih Berlin
Neue Promenade 7
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www.basisdvd.de

Festivals/Awards/TV

Festivals

"Message to Man" St. Petersburg (parts 1+3)

Figueira da Foz Portugal (parts 1+2)

Documentary Festival Leipzig (part3)
etc.

Awards (part 1)

Best Documentary - Palm Springs, USA; Best Short Film - Belo Horizonte, Brazil; Honorable Mention - Ann Arbor, USA. 3.
Prize Audience Award for Documentaries - Selb, Germany

TV

"Planete" DF 1 (part 1)
RTL 4, Benelux (part 1)
SBS Australia (part 3)

More info

Flash Movie Team 1992 (3.2 MB) »

More info about [Part 3 - Krasna Amerika](#).

More info about [Part 4](#)

Director's Statement:

Verlorenwasser is an imaginary place in a real landscape. In search of an empty Germany, I found the stream on a map and was fascinated by its name. My first trip to the source of Verlorenwasser was the living out of a daydream. Before me it lay, that allegedly long-forgotten, Prussian, and so very placid Germany. That was a good twenty years ago. The place, or better still, the idea of that place, never lost its grip on me.

(...) The pictures on the walls of memory may lose shape but they do not fade. The landscape around Verlorenwasser charms with its meagreness. The eye rests on accustomed things: a field, a forest, a pylon, a fence. Greedily I search for unusual devices, peculiarities in natural forms or changes of weather. Traces of the unusual. I carve pictures out of nature with my camera. I dissect sounds. The indifference of the landscape should yield to my demand that it provide narrative. It turns into an obsession. I force the landscape to speak. Its signs should learn language. Holes in all things.

Each and every one of us digs deeper, follows imagination. Napoleon's fleeing soldiers search the forests for a hidden war chest. Inhabitants search for the buried statue of Borussia on the Hagelberg after the Second World War. Behind the idyllic facade of Verlorenwasser I see the war inscription. '1945' – the figure inscribes itself in the signs. Or do I form the number in the signs? Whoever determines the rules escapes the question. I transform Verlorenwasser into a stage. Voilà – the curtains open, Igor Gruseveyitch appears before my eyes. I have him travel the world and finally die in Verlorenwasser. But Igor resists me. He stages his death. And thereby flees determination to live a new life in another place. I, however, remain in Verlorenwasser.

(Peter Roloff)
