

SEPTEM

A Film by

Michael Fandl

with

**Nicolas Brieger, John Fricke, Daniel Jesch, Sven Kaschte, Elisabeth Krön,
Alice Macura, Catherine Oborny, Sebastian Pass, Barbara Petritsch**

Production Company

Bernhard Zimmer Film- & Multimediaproduktion

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Austria 2006 - 100 minutes – 16:9 - Stereo – Digital Betacam

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CAST

Frank	Nicolas Brieger
Jörg	John Fricke
Michael	Daniel Jesch
Thomas	Sven Kaschte
Sandy	Elisabeth Krön
Karin	Alice Macura
Lena	Catherine Oborny
Martin	Sebastian Pass
Silvia	Barbara Petritsch

CREW

Direction / Screenplay	Michael Fandl
Book / Dialogues	Eva-Maria Rauber
Counseling	Tanja Guserl
Director of photography	Stefan Feichtinger
Editor	Harald Nestl
Composer	Markus Stammen
Sound Editor	Jochen Petri
Production Design	Roberto Reuter
	Hans Zimmer
Costume Designer	Elke Gattinger
Make-Up	Katharina Knapp
	Katja Kreutz
Producer	Bernhard Zimmer

SHORT CONTENT

Seven people with problems and two therapists. Spending time in a lonely hut in the mountains. A whole week therapy which could be strenuous but healing.

One person has an eating disorder. The other is neurotic, another has a drug addiction problem and someone has panic attacks. In the one case a person always carries a photo album of his family with him.

Group dynamics and no hectic can be an explosive mixture for the two therapists.

Strange things happen. All seven use cameras to document their progress. They show mysterious clues from an uninhabited house. Someone leaves deadly messages, somebody that they know in their weakest and most afraid state of mind. From the nine people there are only eight.....seven.....six....

PRESS NOTICE

With Septem, the first enjoyable evening Thriller from Bernhard Zimmer and his film production team. All the workers, as well as the actors and actresses worked for free. The total cost of the production was € 40 000. This is only a tenth what the film could have costed if all the costs had been included.

Filming was done in a hut in the mountains near Bad-Voslau. The area is not as lonely as presented in the film. The film took thirteen days to finish and the post production took about a year.

MAIN CONTENT

Seven people wandering through a forest high up in the mountains. They are going to stay in a log cabin for a week. They should try to find out how they can cure their problems. Silvia is the therapist in charge and her assistant is Jörg, who is there for the first time.

Arriving at the lonely hut, Silvia explains to everyone what will happen throughout the week. Everything should be spoken about. Aggression will not be tolerated. Jörg will organise your free time program. Small camcorders are part of the therapy. You should film each individual separately. You should film their progress and any interesting things that may happen. There are so many different characters here.

Frank, mid 50, his wife left him in the middle of a mid-life crisis. Sandy, who's problems are men, she has relationship problems and is very interested in Frank.

Martin always has his photo album with him. He likes to photograph everything.

Thomas is a shy guy with a drug problem. Young Karin has panic attacks. Lena who has an eating disorder (bulimia), she force feeds herself and then throws up.

Finally Michael, who is always washing his hands, has brought his personal post-its with him. The dripping water tape in the bathroom is making him go crazy.

The group goes and changes in there rooms and afterwards goes for a walk: They should present themselves, as well as describe themselves. Only this way is it possible to get to the problem. Frank says "Sport is very important for me, I have nothing else to say." Sandy tries to have a chat with Thomas. Martin doesn't say hardly anything; he only shows his photo album.

This evening we will have our first group meeting. There is obviously a bit of tension in the group by now. Jörg is not acting as professional as he should be, which is not the way Silvia would like to have him. During the week there is enough time for these things to get better. Frank and Michael have left there cameras in the forest by mistake. On there camera there is pictures of things that they did not take. There are pictures of an old dilapidated farm house. Frank reacts aggressive to Silvia's questions, but is quickly forgotten as Karin has a panic attack. Silvia tries to help her; the group is upset and dismayed.

To make things easier Jörg recommends that they go for a walk to check out the surroundings:” Try to be confident and intimate with nature, hug a tree.” You think that that is helpful Frank asks in a mocking way:” What’s next? Not being afraid of having a shit in the forest?” He is not at all amused by this idea. Frank starts to provoke Jörg while the others are stroking the trees. Frank is so nerved and pissed off about Jörgs crazy and idiotic ideas. They start to have a personal argument which turns into a fight. Silvia splits them apart and tries to calm them down. She also realises that she has had enough of this difficult group. Although this is just the start...

Silvia pleaded the participants to meet for an evening meeting. She wanted all to think for a moment about their lives. They should describe themselves without verbally talking. They should try and be creative. Silvia says that they should try and find a form in which they can transfer who they are. They all start to deeply think about this.

Whilst jogging, Frank discovers the mystery house which was on there camera. It is an empty broken-down farm house. Frank creeps inside.....

During the evening the group sits beside a bon fire. For the first time there is a feeling of harmony and near romance. This is properly the feeling because Frank is not back from jogging yet. They only start worry about him by the next morning. Silvia and Jörg get worried about Frank not returning. Jörg blames himself for the fight he had with Frank the day before. Whilst the others go in search of the miserable Frank. Sandy and Thomas get to know each other a little bit better.

Back alone at the hut, Lena cannot control herself anymore. She tries to keep calm, but she is over powered by her feeding frenzy. She opens the fridge and eats everything in sight. There is a deadly fall that awaits her from somebody who knows about her sickness.

The next morning Frank returns, he is injured and sub-conscious. On his way back to the found a camera of which you can see the dead body of Lena. On the same camera you can see Sandy and Thomas having sex. Whoever filmed with the camera is still a mystery.

Silvia authority always tried to keep her clients calm and relaxed. She stops the therapy and sends Jörg down into the valley to search for help. During the evening Thomas receives a romantic message and follows the instructions. The message could have only had come from Sandy. He sneaks outside but Sandy is not waiting for him...

Next morning Sandy realises that Thomas is missing. She breaks down as she felt that Thomas was someone very special for her. She started to really believe in loving someone. She cannot believe that he will always be gone.

She finds a camera with some strange pictures of the old run down farm house. She follows a clue to where the strange hut is....

From the nine people that started the trip there are only five left: The injured Frank, Michael, Silvia, the gentle Karin and Martin and to hope that Sandy will return. Jörg should have been back along time ago. The five left over decide to leave the next morning and return down the valley at whatever cost. Some body will not live to see the next day. The murderer is one of them.....

INTERVIEW with Septem- Director Michael Fandl

At the start the hut was.....

To little time, pressure, psychological problems and to die for.

How do you put a film panorama onto the screen? Michael Fandl, Director the film, Septem knew exactly what to do. He spoke to Magdalena Miedl.

Question: Septem is the first enjoyable evening thriller, but not the first film

Michael Fandl: I have been making short films since I was twelve. I used to be in an amateur video group (team). My first `serious` short film was Anna. We started filming in 2002 and were finished in 2004. Anna was a mythical thriller, a story that goes around in circles – its about a lady who is woken up in a mental institution and is taken into the forest and is told about crimes that have happened in the past. She gets very curious about all of this and falls deeper into her own world of curiosity. It is a little bit like David Lynch- but not as direct as Septem. Anna was a trial film, possible without dialogue and a certain sound level straight onto the screen to create a drama. This was a big help in the making of Septem. We had a lot less time with Septem. Anna was a 27 minute film which took 10 days to film. For the 95 minute film, Septem it only took 13 days.

The actors in the movie (Septem) worked for free as well as all the crew. How did you motivate them to all work for free?

Well, the first thing is that the script was good. With this we could really motivate the actors and crew. When it is an exciting and a little bit of a strange film, then you can really work under good conditions. A few people saw Anna and said that they would love to work on my next project. We tried real hard to makes the figures in the film really exciting with a lot of suspense. As an actor it its easier to play certain roles. Some roles like acting as a young lady with psychological problems can be very challenging and interesting roles.

The script you did not write yourself?

The script was written by three people. The idea started to make a small splatter film. It was about 10 people in a hut and one by one they are murdered. This is very easy and simple, but the Eva MarieRauber(script writer, Anm) and Tanja Guserl(psychological coach, Anm) got involved. The film became to thick and complicated for a splatter film. The psychological problems of each figure in the film became more in the spot light. To get to know each individuals problem! The three of us then became working on the more intensive script

How did Tanja Guserl and Eva-Maria Rauber join the team?

Through the producer Bernhard Zimmel. I have known Bernhard from “Anna”. I wanted to make a new movie and I needed someone to help me with the script, because I don’t like writing. I have got good ideas and I like writing stories – but I am not so good at writing dialogues. Bernhard knew Eva-Maria Rauber and Tanja Guserl from ATV+ and so he asked them both.

I personally like it if ideas come from different people, because everyone looks at it from a different angle – either designing the script or filming: if you try to be open and accept different points of view. That’s how the script came into existence.

How did the actors and the project come together?

We hung up a notice and wrote emails to some actors we knew. Then we had a three day casting with 26 people who had registered. We also have actors in the movie, I got to know from “Anna” and actors from the “Burgtheater” – like Barbara Petritsch (Silvia), who cast Daniel Jesch (Michael) and Nicolas Brieger (Frank) for us.

Have the characters changed, after the actors had been arranged?

No. The characters were already arranged beforehand. Barbara’s character Silvia perfectly fits her, so we knew whom to give this part to. The other characters were already arranged by the script too, so we looked for the right actors at the casting. We were already short on time, so we couldn’t change a lot.

Why is the film called “Septem”?

(laughing) It was an emergency solution, we didn’t have a title for a long time. And “Sieben” exists, “Seven” exists. In our case it was perfect because of the 7 days and the 7 clients. Septem sounds great, we decided. So we also had the chance to structure the chapters, because we numbered them in Latin. This results in the odd effect, that the title of the film turns up 20 minutes before the end.

Parts of the movie were filmed with a hand camera. Did Blair Witch Project influence your project?

Blair Witch inspired me, but I wanted to try another level. If you see a movie, you normally watch it from a certain point of view. In Blair Witch Project the audience were part of the story.

I used this technique, as I was trying to use it dramatically in a 3rd level – I decide that the audience are pure observers, or very close to the characters. These are the parts in the film where the clients film each other.

We also had the option to go back in time: Things, that had happened, we could show again, when someone watched the video of it. So we could give information to the audience, that wasn’t there before.

The seven clients have different mental problems and partly very strong symptoms . There was a psychological coach Tanja Guserl.

That was very important for us. On the opposite to the story, which is not realistic with all the killing, I wanted the characters as realistic and natural as possible – as a contrast. Trustworthy is very important for me.

I didn't know myself, how panic attacks could happen. Therefore it is important to have someone with experience to help and support. I believe that the audience subconsciously, if it is realistic or not.

Tanja Guserl explained how somebody would probably react with such disease pattern in different situations. Thus we were progressing with the script easily and quickly because some reactions resulted automatically. Some characters have to react in a certain way because of their illness.

Were the disorders chosen accidentally or did they result through the plot – like the girl with bulimia, who dies adequately?

The basic idea was to show a group of people in a hut with different mental disorders. Before we chose the characters, this disorders had been fixed, so we developed a typical representative of these deceases namely our characters..

Frank for example has a midlife crises. I also have to tell you that the clients in this hut are not so mentally disordered that they need to be locked up.

How flexible were you at the filming? Have new scenes resulted or did you strictly keep with the script?

Mainly we stick to the script. We didn't film chronologically, but depended on a plan. However, we had 9 actors who were under pressure of time – therefore it was very difficult to keep with the plan, just a small deflection had changed a lot. I had to change a scene with Eva-Maria on the spot, simply because actors could not be there. It happens to low budget projects, we have to accept that.

When was the idea born to make a film?

In February 2004... and we started filming in September. Actually it went like that: Bernhard Zimmer came to me and said," Let's make a movie!" We thought about it and then I agreed. Some time later he came to me and told me that he had rented a hut already. I asked, "What kind of hut?" He answered, " The hut for our movie." So we had a hut for the film, and I said to myself if we had a hut we should really make this film. The pressure of time played an important part, without it we would probably still be writing the script.

CREW

DIRECTOR Michael Fandl

The young Director has been filming since his childhood and he had his first experiences in the VÖFA (Club der österreichischen Film und Videoamateure) where he realised filmlet projects. Furthermore he was involved in various projects of the "Hochschule für Musik und darstellende Kunst" in the range of script (Rena Pogner's Black Sea" and equipment components (Valentin Hitz Ratrace). Since 1998 he has been working as a freelance camera assistant for the ORF, ARTE, 3SAT, RTL, ATV+ and various other commercial productions. He made his filmlet debut with "ANNA", a self produced mystery thriller, starring Sabine Haupt and Johannes Terne.

Anna is official award winner of the „Best International Short Film“ Award 2006 at the NEW YORK INTERNATIONAL INDEPENDENT FILM & VIDEOFESTIVAL and of the audience award 2005 at the Vienna Independent Shorts Festival in the suspense category. The international distributor for Anna is ITN DISTRIBUTIONS.

PRODUCER Bernhard Zimmer

Bernhard Zimmer has been working as a camera assistant since 2003 in the range of TV and documentaries. It was not only his job to raise enough money for the project but also to assort a team with a balanced mixture of professionals and young talents. His perfect organisation made it possible to produce a feature-length movie within 2 weeks.

DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY Stefan Feichtinger

Stefan Feichtinger completed his training to become a communication engineer, before he dared his first step into cutting and camera work in 1995, which he intensified in 1998. In the year 2000 he started working for news service in the range of documentaries and advertisements.

BOOK Eva-Maria Rauber

Besides lecturing her own texts she also works as an assistant director. She wrote scripts for different filmlets. Rauber graduated from university in german language and literature studies, dramatics and film as well as media service.

COUNSELING Tanja Guserl

Tanja Guserl is a trained psychologist and an integrative psycho therapist for children and teenagers. She has also written various articles for different magazines and newspapers about her counselling function for radio stations and private TV channels. Since 2001 she has been working as a psychologist in her own practice.

CAST

FRANK Nicolas Brieger

In his career as a director Brieger stage managed “Pioniere in Ingolstadt” at Schauspiel in Frankfurt, Tschechow’s “Onkel Wanja” at Bremer Schauspiel and many others. He also stage managed at the national theatre in Mannheim, Bochumer Schauspiel, at some theatres in Berlin, at the theatre in Basel and at the Thalia Theatre in Hamburg, as well as at the Akademietheater and at the Burgtheater.

As an actor he was starring in “Welcome to Vienna” by Axel Corti, “Chaos am Gotthart” (Urs Egger), “Einstweilen wird es Mittag” (Karin Brandauer) and “Der Affe Gottes” (Karl Fruchtmann). Brieger is a member of the Burgtheater ensembles.

JÖRG John Fricke

He was born in Berlin and got his acting degree at the acting school Krauss in 1993. Meanwhile he lectures drama, recitation and elocution.

Fricke was on Tour and had engagements in Austria, Germany and Luxemburg. Since 2001 he has been working on his own productions.

MICHAEL Daniel Jesch

Born in Munich he has been working at the Burgtheater in Vienna since 2000. After studying philosophy and studying at the “Hochschule für Musik und Theater” in Zürich he has already acted in various films. On TV Jesch had a role in “Marienhof” and “Die Wagenfelds”.

Before Daniel Jesch started his training at the “Hochschule für Musik und Theater” in Zürich he graduated from university as a BA in philosophy.

Jesch acted in “Das Maß der Dinge” at the Salzburger Festspiele. At the Burgtheater, the 29 year old acted as Laertes in „Hamlet“. Jesch has worked together with the directors Andrea Breth, Klaus-Maria Brandauer, Martin Kusej and many more.

“Septem” is his first feature-length movie.

THOMAS Sven Kaschte

Sven Kaschte was born in Dachau in 1977. He grew up in Munich where he still lives today. His acting stage degree he completed from 1998-2002 at the Elizabeth stage acting house in Salzburg.

After finishing his degree in Salzburg he has been working since 2002 in Wilhelmshaven on stage. Last he was seen as Simon Chachava in Bertold Brechts "The Kaukasische Kreidekreis" under the director, Ulrich Hueni.

It was also the first time for Sven acting in front of a camera in the making of Septem.

SANDY Elisabeth Krön

The 29 year old actress Elisabeth is a versatile and all round actress; She sings and dances and runs theatre courses for children now and then as well as improvisation workshops. Elisabeth Krön has a acting degree from the acting school Krauss in Vienna and "Quelli di Grock" in Mailand.

She also did stage acts in Salzburg Landes Theater (member 2002-2004) as Eugenie in "Floh im Ohr", nursery maid in "Nora", Sandra in "Everlasting love" u.v.a. for the Vienna Drama studio as Lulu in "Tätowierung" and for the comedy Porcia in Hospital along the Drau (Beatrice in "Der Lügner, Gretl in "Der Zerbrochene Krug"). Krön had TV and film roles in "Gut geplant ist halb gamordet", "Nickname" and "Der Auftrag".

KARIN Alice Macura

Alice Macura was born in Vienna in 1982. At the age of 3, she was a musical sensation; she has been playing the violin since the age of 14. She has also a qualified Jazz Dance, Step and modern Dance teacher. Macura has been studying since 2003 at the Vienna Conservatorium (musical.)

She also completed studies in singing, dance and acting. Macura took part 3 times in the European Youth Encounter.

Until now we know Macura from "Es ist etwas Faul im Dänemark", "Wild Christmas" "Lysistrate" on stage.

LENA Catherine Oborny

The already very experienced young actress Catherine Oborny was born in Vienna in 1979. She attended ballet training at the “Wiener Staatsoper” for 9 years and got her acting degree at the “Konservatorium” in Vienna in the year 2002.

In the cinema she was starring in Franz Antel’s “Der Bockerer VI-Prager Frühling (2003) Beside some roles in TV productions for example “Kommissar Rex (2000), “Trautmann – Lebenslänglich”(2002), “Familie gesucht”(2003) she was also on stage in “Die Fliege” by J.P.Satre (2001) and “Yerma” by Frederico Garcia Lorca.

MARTIN Sebastian Pass

Sebastian Pass got his acting degree at the „Konservatorium“ in Vienna, where he studied by Elfriede Ott. After 4 years he had finished his training. Pass has already acted at the theatre in the Josefsstadt, at the theatre in St.Pölten , in Linz, at the “Sommerspiele” in Melk and the project theatre in Vorarlberg.

He acted as Leonce in “Leonce and Lena”, as Woyzeck in “Woyzeck”, as Oskar in “Geschichten aus dem Wienerwald”, as Nick in “Who’s afraid of Virginia Woolf” and many more. On TV Sebastian Pass had a role in “Kommissar Rex”.

SILVIA Barbara Petritsch

Barbara Petritsch was trained at the academy for “Musik und Darstellende Kunst” in Graz. She worked for the “Bremer Theater”, the “Residenztheater” in Munich, the “Schauspielhaus” in Hamburg and many more.

On stage she acted as Medea (Maria Stuart), as Alkmene in “Amphitryon”, as Alice in “Todestanz” and as Callas in “Meisterklasse”. She also acted in various films with Axel Corti (An uns glaubt Gott nicht mehr), Karin Brandauer(Erdsegen) and in various thrillers with Peter Adam, Hartmut Griesmayr and Eberhard Itzenplitz.

For her work in theatres Petritsch was nominated from the magazine “Theatre today” in the category actress of the year several times.

Since 1999 she works at the “Burgtheater” in Vienna.

CREDITS

Director & Screenplay - Michael Fandl
Producer - Bernhard Zimmel
Book & Dialogues - Eva-Maria Rauber
Counseling - Tanja Guserl
Director of Photography - Stefan Feichtinger
Additional Camera - Alexander Boboschewski aac, Peter Aigner aac
Steadicam-Operator - Alexander Boboschewski
Production Designer - Roberto Reuter, Rosemarie Thiess, Hans Zimmel
Editor - Harald Nestl
Composer - Markus Stammen
Sound Editor - Jochen Petri
Costume Designer - Elke Gattinger
Production Manager - Bernhard Zimmel
Assistent Director - Eva-Maria Rauber
Casting - Michael Fandl, Tanja Guserl, Eva-Maria Rauber, Bernhard Zimmel
Production Supervisor - Sindy Bauer, Niki Schwab
Location Manager - Markus Kuntner
Script Assistent - Fabian Rauber
Assistent Camera - Mischa Reisinger
Technical Manager - Michael Hirschhofer
Technical Assistent - Thomas Hirschhofer
Make-Up - Katharina Knapp, Katja Kreutz
Production Sound Mixer - Michael Hirschhofer, Markus Stammen
Translation (English) - Greg Eastman
Boom Operator - Birgit Nestl, Roberto Reuter
Lighting Technician - Bernhard Rybar
Gaffer - Arthur Höfinger
Post Production - Bernhard Zimmel
Rough Cut - Antonia Adelsberger, Michael Fandl
Visual Effects - Florian Hirschmann
Color Correction - Michael Fandl, Harald Nestl, Friedrich Goldschmidt
Still Photographer - Thomas Hirschhofer
Catering - Anna Binder, Brigitte Binder, Waltraud Fandl, Evelyn Schachl, Edeltraude Zimmel
Production Driver - Astrid Zimmel, Hans Zimmel
Web Site - Julian Adlassnig, Andrea Schlintl
Photographer - Walter Schaub
Photo - Tanja Guserl, Herta Weidl, Edmund Weidl, Michael Hirschhofer,
Camilla Struklec, Tamara Mödlhammer