

A LOW LIFE MYTHOLOGY

Cast&Crew

with

Nina Fog as Mana Avaris

Johannes Henrdik Langer as Asten Büchner

Kirsten Burger as Justine Heidelberg

Imri Kahn as Xenakiss Paul

Katja Sallay as Xandra Mandra

Lucas Confurius as Jelly Alejandro

Patrizia Cavaliere as Shirley Rosenthal

Anton Garber as Mon von Bismarck

and also **Horst Günther Marx, Wolfgang Müller,**

Julia Kratz, Hito Steyerl, Isabell Spengler and others.

Directed by **Lior Shamriz**

Based on a Novel by **Pierre Menard**

Adapted to Screen by **Lior Shamriz**

Produced by ***Spektakulativ Pictures***

Production Manager: **Elsa de Seynes**

Associate Producer: **Imri Kahn**

Cinematography: **Marco Armbrorst**

Music Composer and Sound Designer: **Assaf Gidron**

Production Design: **Ole Kloss**

Costumes: **Chloe Griffin**

Edited by **Lena Jordanin**

Assistant Director: **Imri Kahn**

Set Management: **Alina Rojas**

Color & Compositing: **Sander Houtkruijer**

Assistant Camera: **Stefan Walkowiak, Sander Houtkruijer**

Assistants of Set Designer: **Shira Lewis, Saskia Remmert**

Supportd by

Medienboard Berlin-Brandenburg and ***Bambi Foundation***

Shot on location in Berlin in high-definition cinemascope, on Red Camera.

80 minutes (working copy). Color. Spoken languages: English, German and Gibberish.

God is merely domestic. Death is merely domestic. They are a lie told to disguise the nature of art.

The poet is stepping out of the airplane.

Magic is merely domestic. Dignity is merely domestic.

The poet is stepping out of the airplane.

My house is merely domestic. I live in my house; my skin lives in my house. We are domestic. My house is merely domestic. we are a lie to disguise the nature of art.

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I loved him. I loved him. I loved you.

I loved him. I loved him. I loved you.

It is true. It is true. It returns.

(From „Imaginary Elegies“ / a poem by Jack Spicer, 1957)



Director's notes

My entrance to A LOW LIFE MYTHOLOGY was a picture I had in mind - of people sitting in front of computer screens. More precisely: An “Over the shoulder” shot of people sitting in front of computer screens. This shot comprises a formalistic irony – the “over the shoulder” shot - a symbol of compassion, confronted with the “alienating” screen. Whether the person is watching something, skyping with someone or editing his new film - his body in the room remains the same. I wanted to explore this physicality.

Referring to the tension between the functionality of films as “windows to reality” and as “texts”, I made an effort in this film to let these two poles co-exist: A relatively naturalistic depiction of the characters, whose own films are very textual.

The story to be told was a love story between two videographers who mix life and art. So as a result their own works are capsules of momentary perspectives they had on their life, similarly to the way “my” camera captures their bodies. Indeed: Stuck in the Mise-en-Abyme – The mirror room of the filmmaker, equipped with a “record” button.

With this layered complexity I was able to continue an on-going exploration of how to dismantle narrativeness, degrading an imaginary dramatic “vector” into “points”. Points that are near each other but infinitely apart (perhaps like dots on a line according to Zenon's paradox), events happening in the background. A nice reference is Pointillism (versus gradients) in painting. The points will merge if you take a step backwards. It's a good reference also because it reminds us the crisis of painting in the 19th century – when the challenge by the arrival of the camera saw some painters retreating to a reactionary form of naturalism and some trying to use the opportunity and move on. A similar though different tension is present today in the realm of motion pictures and this film is partly a humble attempt to make a comment on that.

Synopsis

A LOW LIFE MYTHOLOGY tells a love story taking place in the Berlin, of two young video-artists who pursue a place in the world, but fail to “live in the moment” as their sense of reality is mediated by their films.

An intellectual burlesque, our heroes shoot and present each other their works – a “real” body of works by fictional characters. Multiple visual languages pave a path to manifold interpretations of reality.

Mana, 28, originally from the fictional *Kakabuka*, lives in *Berlin* on a student-visa she was granted to attend a technical film school she hates. She is a productive video artist, but most of the time she is stoned and gets herself kicked out of apartments faster than the seasons change. She's incisively making her short videos, but never seems to care about showing them or taking care of a career. She is trapped in the tunnel connecting her art and her life.

She meets *Asten* (22) at a boring house party, they fuck and fall in love and she's immediately letting him into her life and into her work. A native Berliner of 22, who is in touch more with what he doesn't want than with the things he really wants.

Their story takes place in the “in between”, never in the “*now*”.





Born and raised in Vienna (Austria), by classical musicians of danish and japanese origin. Trained at The Central School of Speech and Drama, London. First movie role in *CODE 46* (dir. *Michael Winterbottom*, '03). Regular role in *BLUE MURDER* 2nd series (ITV). Featuring roles in projects with art filmmaker *Daria Martin* (showings at Tate Triennial, Hayward Gallery, ArtBasel Miami, Performa 07, etc). Collaborations with video artists SDNA, Vanessa Ewan, Scarlet Theatre, and in work involving butoh and contemporary dance. Female lead in *SHELL SHOCK* (*Pixie Films*, '08). Alumnus of the 2010 Talent Actors Stage, *Berlinale Talent Campus* #8.

JOHANNES HENDRIK LANGER as Asten Büchner



Born in Kiel (Germany) in 1985. After graduating from drama school in Hamburg, and making some guest appearances on different stages in Hamburg, he finally began his first commitment at *Theater an der Parkaue – Junges Staatstheater Berlin*. There, amongst others, he took part in *RADAU!* (Ikarus award winner 2011) and is performing the solo-play *SOFTGUN*. In 2011, took part in a *Thomas Ostermeier* workshop at the *Schaubühne Theater Berlin*.

Director

LIOR SHAMRIZ



Born 1978 in Ashkelon (Israel), resides in Berlin. A prolific filmmaker, churning out experimental shorts and two features, he channels the trickster spirit of the 60's auteurs in his cinema of humorous/political deconstruction, using cinema as the perfect space to discuss ideas - about being, truth, class, sexuality and the Other.

At 18 moved to Tel-Aviv and started making films, music and taking part in collective art projects. Studied film at the *Jerusalem Film School* and media at the *UdK, Berlin*. His featurette *JAPAN JAPAN* (2006/7), produced independently with a micro-budget, showed at ca. 50 intl film fests, inc. *Locarno, Sarajevo, MoMA's ND/NF, BAFICI*. His debut full-length *SATURN RETURNS* (2009) premiered opening *Torino Film Festival's Onde*, was nominated to the *Max Ophüls Preis* in Germany and co-won the *New Berlin Award* of the *Achtung Berlin film festival*. *RETURN RETURN* (2010), a non-narrative video based on clips from *SATURN RETURNS*, premiered at the *60th Berlin Film Festival's Forum Expanded*.

A LOW LIFE MYTHOLOGY is his first film to be shot with a (limited) budget.

The novel and the novelist

Pierre Menard (1881-1945) was the pen-name of the Ivorian writer and poet Akanbi Diarrassouba. In addition to his poetry and fiction (mostly drama and dialogues), he also wrote many essays and aphorisms on art, history, letters, music, and current events. He remained most of his life in Abidjan (Côte d'Ivoire), apart from a short period of three months that he spent in Paris, during the winter of 1923-4.

NOUS, MAINTENANT, ET LA LUNE N'EXISTE PAS, the novel on which the film is loosely based, was written in Abidjan in 1942. His only completed novel, it portrays the love between two bohemian painters living in Paris in the 1920s.

Films by Mana Avaris:

Seemless Melancholy is Sound

The Undocumented Encounter of Cyrus and Nabonidus at the Oasis in Tayma

The Kingdom of the Ass

Ohne Körper Gibt's Keine Seele (Without Body There's No Soul)

Films by Asten Büchner:

Die Ernste (The Serious One)

I'm Only a Memory of a Person You Know Nothing About

A New Red Carpet Room

One Shot Adieu: *A Film by Xenakiss Paul*

I Love My Life: *A Performance by Shirley Rosenthal*

SPEKTAKULATIV PICTURES

*Spektakulativ Pictures is a motion pictures company
created by Lior Shamriz for making his films.*

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