



cinéfondation
LA RÉSIDENCE

PEACOCK

A FILM BY BERNHARD WENGER

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Bernhard Wenger

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Festival de Cannes

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Since 2000, the Festival Residence has provided each year accommodation and support to twelve selected young directors in order to help them prepare their first or second feature film. A jury presided by a film director sits twice a year, selecting these young filmmakers on the basis of their short films, or

even first feature film, and the merits of their feature film project. During their 4-and-a-half-month stay in Paris, they work on the writing of their feature film project, have meetings with professionals and try, with the support of the Cannes Film Festival, to bring their project to co-production status.

Technical Information

Working Title	Peacock	Production	Nikolaus Geyrhalter Filmproduktion
Director	Bernhard Wenger		Hildebrandgasse 26
Nationality	Austria		A-1180 Vienna
Screenplay	Bernhard Wenger		www.geyrhalterfilm.com
Genre	Tragicomedy, Satire	Producer	Michael Kitzberger
Shooting location	Austria	Email	kitzberger@geyrhalterfilm.com
Length	100 min	Tel	+43 699 105 44 914

Director's Information

Bernhard is a writer-director based in Austria, where he studied directing at the Vienna Film Academy.

His last short film **Excuse me, I'm Looking for the Ping-Pong Room and my Girlfriend** was awarded Best Short Film at the Austrian Film Awards 2019. The film was selected at 120 film festivals, won 40 awards and was broadcasted by Arte. His previous works also were selected at festivals such as Torino, Nashville, Sapporo, Uppsala, Vienna Shorts, etc. and won numerous awards.

2019 Bernhard first presented **Peacock** in the Talent Village of Festival Les Arcs and participated in the „Nuits en Or“ tour of the French *Académie des César*. Currently Bernhard is developing his first feature film at the Cinéfondation Residence of the 73rd Festival de Cannes 2020.

Main previous work:

Excuse me, I'm Looking for the Ping-Pong Room and my Girlfriend (2018, 24min)

Winner Film Festival Max-Ophüls-Award, FEST Espinho, Tel Aviv Student Film Festival, etc. Official Selections at Moscow, Sarajevo, Palm Springs, Premier Plans, Hollyshorts, Guanajuato, Hamburg, Odense, etc.



SYNOPSIS

Matthias is the head of a successful Rent-a-friend-agency: If you need company, want to improve your public presence, or even to manipulate someone – just rent actors – but in real life.

While being good at pretending to be someone else every day, being himself is the real challenge. Out of character, Matthias is lost. When his wife leaves him and a man confronts him with the direct consequences of his job, his comfortable world begins to break apart. Threatened and in desperate search for himself, he loses control over his

own life and the life of his clients. Absurd chaos follows.

STATEMENT OF INTENT

Over the past years, due to growing isolation, Rent-a-friend-agencies have become very popular in Japan. However, digitalization and – as we have recently learned – a global pandemic can increase loneliness in other parts of the world too. In *Peacock*, I place these agencies in our social-media-driven European society. As their main purposes here would likely be pride, power and self-presentation, they provide a fascinating setting for the film with immense space for

bizarreness. Like in my short film *Excuse Me, I'm Looking for the Ping-Pong Room and My Girlfriend*, I aim to create a balancing act between Arthouse and humour.

Matthias is based on an agency employee I met in Japan during research. *Peacock* is the story of a man who, as a result of his odd job, doesn't know how to be "real" anymore.

SYNOPSIS

Matthias est à la tête d'une agence de location d'amis à succès: si vous avez besoin de compagnie, si vous voulez améliorer votre présence en public, ou même manipuler quelqu'un – louez simplement des acteurs – mais dans la vie réelle.

Tout en étant doué pour faire semblant d'être quelqu'un d'autre tous les jours, être lui-même constitue pour Matthias un vrai défi. En dehors de son personnage, il est en quelque sorte perdu. Lorsque sa femme le quitte et qu'un homme le confronte aux conséquences directes de son travail, son monde

confortable commence à s'écrouler. Menacé et à la recherche désespérée de lui-même, il perd le contrôle de sa propre vie et de celle de ses clients. Un chaos absurde s'ensuit.

NOTE D'INTENTION

Au cours de ces dernières années, en raison de l'isolement croissant, les agences de location d'amis sont devenues très populaires au Japon. Cependant, la numérisation et – comme nous l'avons récemment appris – une pandémie mondiale peuvent accroître la solitude également dans d'autres parties du monde. Dans *Peacock*, je situe ces agences dans notre société européenne axée sur

les médias sociaux. Dans la mesure où leur objectif essentiel serait bien probablement l'orgueil, le pouvoir et la représentation de soi-même, elles fournissent un cadre fascinant pour le film, avec un espace immense pour l'étrangeté. Comme dans mon court-métrage *Excuse Me, I'm Looking for the Ping-Pong Room and My Girlfriend*, je cherche à créer un équilibre entre l'art et l'humour.

Le personnage de Matthias est basé sur un employé d'agence que j'ai rencontré au Japon pendant mes recherches. *Peacock* est l'histoire d'un homme qui, du fait de son étrange métier, ne sait plus être « réel ».

