



# 29 PALMS, CA

feature film / art piece by Stefanie Schneider

in collaboration with Radha Mitchell, Udo Kier, Marc Forster, Max Sharam, Alex Wolf, Soraya Wright, Robert Mack, JD Rudometkin, Cathy Lloyd Burns, Steve Marshall, Camille Waldorf, Daisy McCrackin, Austen Tate, Sophie Huber, Scott Burns, Thom Bishops, Romina Djelosevic, additional music by Zoë Bîcat

## exhibition project (01 / 08)

**GALERIE SPESSHARDT & KLEIN, BERLIN (kochstrasse 55 - 58)**

february 12 - march 2 2008

opening reception february 11 18.00 h - 22.00 h

press conference february 10 12.00 h - 14:00 h

with Stefanie Schneider, Udo Kier, Radha Mitchell, Robert Mack, Max Sharam, Sophie Huber

for more information please call 030 / 25 29 35 04 or visit [www.twentyninepalms.ca](http://www.twentyninepalms.ca)

also note: **29 Palms, CA at CHEAP gossip studio, filmhaus (atrium)**

selected by **BERLINALE / FORUM EXPANDED**

february 7 - february 17 2008

## 29 palms, ca synopsis

29 PALMS, CA is a feature film / art piece that explores and chronicles the dreams and fantasies of a group of individuals who live in a trailer community in the Californian desert.

The world depicted in the film is inspired by the photographs of German artist Stefanie Schneider in that it combines the notions of reality and fantasy and explores the resonance of both within a desert landscape and a transient culture. The characters portrait in the film, (an actress, a singer, a DJ, a motel owner and his wife, a US army soldier, a mystic, a princess, a recluse, a movie ticket seller, two hitchhikers, a doctor, and so on), are to be played by both actors and non-actors. The story is constructed through the interpretation of real life communications (i.e. phone calls, emails, conversations) that have taken place as the individuals depicted in the story try to make sense of events that have occurred in real life. In this sense the story is, in part, a biography and social commentary, and the characters are the exaggerated alter egos of the individuals who play them.

The structure of the plot is fairly simple. An actress working as a telemarketer is inspired by a singer who is new to town and is featured on the local radio station. The radio station runs a program for lonely hearts and a charismatic DJ uses the show to reveal the hopes and dreams of the towns "hottest women". One night a panicked German female caller captivates the community with a painful story about a sexy "Smoke Jumper" (a mysterious and super real alpha male). Everybody in town is listening to the program and nobody is quite sure what to say.

Life in general continues and we witness and explore the various interactions. The actress meets the singer and they become famous. The US Army soldier dies on his way to battle. The foreign princess discovers that the jewels she has come to sell are fake. The motel owner's wife has an affair with the pool boys and so on. All the while the community is united by their loyalty to the "Lonely Hearts" radio show and through the disturbing revelations of the German woman and the details of her sordid affair. The stories she tells are explored through the imaginations of the listeners and through the memories of the teller. The smoke jumper becomes a pervasive figure who in some way effects the lives of all those who listen to the story. He seduces women, is linked to a local thievery, a rape and a possible death. The story comes to conclusion when this chaotic character quits town leaving in his wake a trail of destruction and despair. What is left is a void, a space for transformation as the wounded community rediscovers itself in its quest to make sense of what has happened.

A defining feature of the film is the use of still images and the use of voice over. Characters talk to us / themselves / you about their ambitions, memories, hopes, fears and dreams. The film is to be shot using a mix of super 8 and 16mm film stock and Polaroid images. Certain computer generated effects will also be used to enhance the films surreal mood and to animate its dark humor.



MAX HITCHES INTO TOWN

29 palms, ca  
first viewing 01 / 08  
presse text

29 Palms, CA ist ein Projekt an der Schnittstelle zwischen Film und Kunst. Die deutsche Fotokünstlerin Stefanie Schneider erforscht und dokumentiert in diesem Projekt die Träume und Fantasien einer Gruppe von Menschen, die in einer Wohnwagengemeinschaft in der Wüste Kaliforniens leben.


Das Projekt ist zu sehen auf der Berlinale / Forum Expanded im Atrium der Gossip Bar (Filmhaus Potsdamer Platz) und in der Galerie Spesshardt & Klein. Erstmals wird die Differenziertheit dieses großartigen Kunstprojekts, was zwischen Film und Bildender Kunst sowie den Schnittstellen verschiedenster Medien agiert, ausgestellt.

Ein wesentlicher Teil dieses Projektes ist die künstlerische, konzeptuelle und filmische Kollaboration zwischen SchauspielerInnen, MusikerInnen, FotokünstlerInnen, RegisseurInnen, etc. Udo Kier ist so beispielsweise nicht nur Darsteller, sondern auch Produzent, Marc Forster ist verantwortlich für die Dialogregie und die Special Effects der Post Production, Radha Mitchell schreibt das Drehbuch, Sophie Huber, Max Sharam, Daisy McCrackin, JD Rudometkin, Zoe Bicat, Camille Waldorf schreiben die Musik, entwickeln ihre Charaktere und agieren als Darsteller. Ebenso wie Robert Mack, Alex Wolf, Soraya Wright, Cathy Lloyd Burns, Austen Tate, Scott Burns, Thom Bishops und Romina Djelosevic entwickeln und stellen alle ihre Charaktere dar, Steve Marshall ist sowohl Darsteller als auch DJ der "Lonely Hearts Radio Show". Sabine Dehnel ist Künstlerin und wird den DJ-Raum der Radio Station als Model bauen, der dann für den Film als Raum nachgebaut wird.

Die Vision eines abendfüllenden Spielfilms ist dabei ebenso wichtig wie die einzelnen kleinen Etappen oder Fragmente, die zu diesem Film nötig sind: Genau wie das Leben und die Lebensumstände unserer gesellschaftlichen Realität in einem Fluss ständiger Veränderung sind, ist auch das Projekt 29 Palms, CA einer fortlaufenden Veränderung und Entwicklung unterzogen. Der Film ist eine Biographie und eine soziale Reportage, deren Charaktere als alter egos jener Individualisten auftreten, die sie selber darstellen. Die unterschiedlichen DarstellerInnen haben im Laufe des Kunstprojekt Ideen, Geschichten, Szenen, Monologe, Gedichte, Musik und Filme beigefügt, so dass die Grundlage des Konzepts, eine Kollaboration von verschiedenen Perspektiven und das Zusammenbringen unterschiedlicher Fragmente und Darstellungen, dem Film einen lebendigen Rhythmus verleiht. Jeder Charakter wird seinen eigenen Charakter auf der Website, die eigens für dieses Projekt entstanden ist ([www.twentyninepalms.ca](http://www.twentyninepalms.ca)), in Form eines fiktionalen oder semi-fiktionalen Tagebuchs entwickeln. Die Website spielt dabei die Rolle einer eigenständigen Welt, von der aus das Filmprojekt und die Radio Show entstehen. Die Charaktere nehmen durch ihre Beschreibungen Einfluss auf das, was in dem Film zu sehen sein wird. Durch die Radio Show werden Verbindungen zwischen den einzelnen DarstellerInnen aufgenommen.

Der gesamte Film entsteht aus animierten Polaroid Bildern, die Stefanie Schneider zu einem Film zusammenschneidet. Das Ablaufdatum der Filme ist der Grund für die surrealen Verzerrungen und Farbigkeiten. Die Bilder erscheinen flüchtig und gespannt, verschwommen. Stefanie Schneider malt mit ihren Polaroid-Filmen. Sie spielt eindeutig auf die Ambivalenz zwischen Vorstellung und Darstellung, zwischen Fiktion und Realität an und überlässt es der Betrachterin sich ein Bild zu machen, sich in einem surrealen oder realen Raum aufzuhalten. Denn auch das Motiv der Wüste unterstützt diese Gegensätzlichkeit von Imagination und Realität, bricht in jedem Moment die Eindeutigkeit einer festen Zuschreibung, die ihren Arbeiten definitiv nicht zu entnehmen ist. Umso deutlicher wird, dass die Charaktere in ihrer eigenen verlorenen Welt leben, das Leben selber aber die Perspektive auf ihre Welt verändern kann. Der Ort, an dem die DarstellerInnen in 29 Palms, CA leben, ist mehr eine Idee oder eine Reflektion eines Ortes, als ein Ort per Definition selbst. Das Licht und die Wüstenlandschaft zeichnen eine imaginäre Realität, der sich die Charaktere ausgesetzt sehen - Erinnerung, Fantasie und Realität gehen ineinander über.

HANS



29 palms.ca  
first viewing 01 / 08  
press text

29 Palms, CA is a project positioned between film and art. In this project the German photo artist, Stefanie Schneider, explores and documents the dreams and fantasies of a group of people living in a trailer park community in the California desert.

The project can be seen at the Berlinale / Forum Expanded in the Atrium of the Gossip Bar (Filmhaus Potsdamer Platz) and in the Gallery Spesshardt & Klein. For the first time the complexity of this grand art project, which positioned between film and fine arts, as well as the interfaces of various media, will be exhibited.

An essential part of this project is the artistic, conceptual and filmic collaboration between actors, musicians, photo artists, directors etc. So is, for example, Udo Kier not only a performer, but also a producer, Marc Forster is responsible for directing the dialogues, and special effects in the post production. Radha Mitchell is writing the script. Sophie Huber, Max Sharam, Daisy McCrackin, JD Rudometkin, Zoe Bicat, and Camille Waldorf are all writing the music, developing their characters and acting as performers. Robert Mack, Alex Wolf, Soraya Wright, Cathy Lloyd Burns, Austen Tate, Scott Burns, Thom Bishops and Romina Djelosevic as well as all other participants are developing and acting out their characters, Steve Marshall is performer as well as DJ of the "Lonely Hearts Radio Show". Sabine Dehnel is an artist and will build the DJ booth of the radio station as a model, which will then be emulated as a room for the film.

The vision of a feature-length film is just as important in this as all the single, small stages or fragments, which are necessary for this film: Just as life and the circumstances of our social reality, the project 29 Palms, CA is in a state of constant change and development. The film is a biography and a social commentary, whose characters act as the alter egos of those individuals who portray them. In the course of the art project the different performers have contributed ideas, stories, scenes, monologues, poems, music and films, so that the basic principle of the concept, namely a collaboration of different perspectives and the pooling of different fragments and depictions, bestows a lively rhythm upon the film. Each character will introduce his or her character in the form of a fictional or semi-fictional diary on the website, which was specially developed for this project ([www.twentyninepalms.ca](http://www.twentyninepalms.ca)). The website hereby plays the role of an independent world from which the film project and the radio show emerge. The characters take influence on what will be seen in the film through their descriptions. Through the radio show connections between the individual performers will be established.

The whole film is generated from Polaroid pictures, which Stefanie Schneider is editing into the film. The fact that the films are expired leads to the surreal distortions and colorings. The pictures appear fleeting and taut, blurry. Stefanie Schneider paints with her Polaroid films. She clearly alludes to the ambivalence between imagination and portrayal, between fiction and reality, and leaves it to the viewer to form his / her own picture, to remain in a surreal or real space. The motive of the desert also supports the dichotomy between imagination and reality, at any moment breaks the clearness of a definite ascription, which is definitely not found in her work. All the more clear it becomes that the characters are living in their own lost world, but that life itself can change their perspective on their world. The place in which the performers of 29 Palms, CA are living, is more an idea or a reflection of a place than a place per definition itself. The light and the desert landscape are painting an imaginary reality, which the characters find themselves exposed to. Memories, fantasies and reality merge.

# exhibition project (01 / 08)

LIFE'S A DREAM (The Personal World of Stefanie Schneider)  
by Mark Gisbourne

Projection is a form of apparition that is characteristic of our human nature, for what we imagine almost invariably transcends the reality of what we live. And, an apparition, as the word suggests, is quite literally 'an appearing', for what we appear to imagine is largely shaped by the imagination of its appearance. If this sounds tautological then so be it. But the work of Stefanie Schneider is almost invariably about chance and apparition. And, it is through the means of photography, the most apparitional of image-based media, that her pictorial narratives or photo-novels are generated. Indeed, traditional photography (as distinct from new digital technology) is literally an 'awaiting' for an appearance to take place, in line with the imagined image as executed in the camera and later developed in the dark room. The fact that Schneider uses out-of-date Polaroid film stock to take her pictures only intensifies the sense of their apparitional contents when they are realised. The stability comes only at such time when the images are re-shot and developed in the studio, and thereby fixed or arrested temporarily in space and time.

The unpredictable and at times unstable film she adopts for her works also creates a sense of chance within the outcome that can be imagined or potentially envisaged by the artist Schneider. But this chance manifestation is a loosely controlled, or, better called existential sense of chance, which becomes pre-disposed by the immediate circumstances of her life and the project she is undertaking at the time. Hence the choices she makes are largely open-ended choices, driven by a personal nature and disposition allowing for a second appearing of things whose eventual outcome remains undefined. And, it is the alliance of the chance-directed material apparition of Polaroid film, in turn explicitly allied to the experiences of her personal life circumstances, that provokes the potential to create Stefanie Schneider's open-ended narratives. Therefore they are stories based on a degenerate set of conditions that are both material and human, with an inherent pessimism and a feeling for the sense of sublime ridicule being seemingly exposed. This in turn echoes and doubles the meaning of the verb 'to expose'. To expose being embedded in the technical photographic process, just as much as it is in the narrative contents of Schneider's photo-novel exposés. The former being the unstable point of departure, and the latter being the uncertain ends or meanings that are generated through the photographs doubled exposure. The large number of speculative theories of apparition literally read as that which appears, and / or creative visions in filmmaking and photography are self-evident, and need not detain us here.



But from the earliest inception of photography artists have been concerned with manipulated and/or chance effects, be they directed towards deceiving the viewer, or the alchemical investigations pursued by someone like Sigmar Polke. None of these are the real concern of the artist-photographer Stefanie Schneider, however, but rather she is more interested with what the chance-directed appearances in her photographs portend. For Schneider's works are concerned with the opaque and porous contents of human relations and events, the material means are largely the mechanism to achieving and exposing the 'ridiculous sublime' that has come increasingly to dominate the contemporary affect(s) of our world. The uncertain conditions of today's struggles as people attempt to relate to each other - and to themselves - are made manifest throughout her work. And, that she does this against the backdrop of the so-called 'American Dream', of a purportedly advanced culture that is Modern America, makes them all the more incisive and critical as acts of photographic exposure.

From her earliest works of the late nineties one might be inclined to see her photographs as if they were a concerted attempt at an investigative or analytic serialisation, or, better still, a psychoanalytic dissection of the different and particular genres of American subculture. But this is to miss the point for the series though they have dates and subsequent publications remain in a certain sense unfinished. Schneider's work has little or nothing to do with reportage as such, but with recording human culture in a state of fragmentation and slippage. And, if a photographer like Diane Arbus dealt specifically with the anomalous and peculiar that made up American suburban life, the work of Schneider touches upon the alienation of the commonplace. That is to say how the banal stereotypes of Western Americana have been emptied out, and claims as to any inherent meaning they formerly possessed has become strangely displaced. Her photographs constantly fathom the familiar, often closely connected to traditional American film genre, and make it completely unfamiliar. Of course Freud would have called this simply the *unheimlich* or uncanny. But here again Schneider almost never plays the role of the psychologist, or, for that matter, seeks to impart any specific meanings to the photographic contents of her images. The works possess an edited behavioural narrative (she has made choices), but there is never a sense of there being a clearly defined story. Indeed, the uncertainty of my reading here presented, acts as a caveat to the very condition that Schneider's photographs provoke.

Invariably the settings of her pictorial narratives are the South West of the United States, most often the desert and its periphery in Southern California. The desert is a not easily identifiable space, with the suburban boundaries where habitation meets the desert even more so. There are certain sub-themes common to Schneider's work, not least that of journeying, on the road, a feeling of wandering and itinerancy, or simply aimlessness. Alongside this subsidiary structural characters continually appear, the gas station, the automobile, the motel, the highway, the revolver, logos and signage, the wasteland, the isolated train track and the trailer. If these form a loosely defined structure into which human characters and events are cast, then Schneider always remains the fulcrum and mechanism of their exposure. Sometimes using actresses, friends, her sister, colleagues or lovers, Schneider stands by to watch the chance events as they unfold. And, this is even the case when she is a participant in front of camera of her photo-novels. It is the ability to wait and throw things open to chance and to unpredictable circumstances, that marks the development of her work over the last eight years. It is the means by which random occurrences take on such a telling sense of pregnancy in her work.

However, in terms of analogy the closest proximity to Schneider's photographic work is that of film. For many of her titles derive directly from film, in photographic series like *OK Corral* (1999), *Vegas* (1999), *Westworld* (1999), *Memorial Day* (2001), *Primary Colours* (2001), *Suburbia* (2004), *The Last Picture Show* (2005), and in other examples. Her works also include particular images that are titled *Zabriskie Point*, a photograph of her sister in an orange wig. Indeed the tentative title for the (...) publication *Stranger Than Paradise* is taken from Jim Jarmusch's film of the same title in 1984. Yet it would be dangerous to take this comparison too far, since her series *29 Palms* (1999) presages the later title of a film that appeared only in 2002. What I am trying to say here is that film forms the nexus of American culture, and it is not so much that Schneider's photographs make specific references to these films (though in some instances they do), but that in referencing them she accesses the same American culture that is being emptied out and scrutinised by her photo-novels. In short her pictorial narratives might be said to strip films of the stereotypical Hollywood tropes that many of them possess. Indeed, the films that have most inspired her are those that similarly deconstruct the same sentimental and increasingly tawdry 'American Dream' peddled by Hollywood. These include films like David Lynch's *Blue Velvet* (1986), *Wild at Heart* (1990) *The Lost Highway* (1997), John Dahl's *The Last Seduction* (1994) or films like Ridley Scott's *Thelma and Louise* with all its girl-power Bonny and Clyde-type clichés. But they serve no more than as a backdrop, a type of generic tableau from which Schneider might take human and abstracted elements, for as commercial films they are not the product of mere chance and random occurrence. Notwithstanding this observation, it is also clear that the gender deconstructions that the characters in these films so often portray, namely the active role of women possessed of a free and autonomous sexuality (even victim turned vamp), frequently find resonances within the behavioural events taking place in Schneider's photographs and DVD sequences.



In the series 29 Palms (first begun in 1999) the two women characters Radha and Max act out a scenario that is both infantile and adolescent. Wearing brightly coloured fake wigs of yellow and orange, a parody of the blonde and the redhead, they are seemingly trailer park white trash possessing a sentimental and kitsch taste in clothes totally inappropriate to the locality. The fact that Schneider makes no judgment about this is an interesting adjunct. Indeed, the photographic projection of the images is such that the girls incline themselves to believe that they are both beautiful and desirous. However, unlike the predatory role of women in say Richard Prince's photographs, which are simply a projection of a male fantasy onto women, Radha and Max are self-contained in their vacuous if empty trailer and motel world of the swimming pool, nail polish, and childish water pistols. Within the photographic sequence Schneider includes herself, and acts as a punctum of disruption. Why is she standing in front of an Officers' Wives Club? Why is Schneider not similarly attired? Is there a proximity to an army camp, are these would-be Lolita(s) Radha and Max wives or American marine groupies, and where is the centre and focus of their identity? It is the ambiguity of personal involvement that is set up by Schneider, which deliberately makes problematic any clear sense of narrative construction. The strangely virulent colours of the bleached-out girls stand in marked contrast to Schneider's own anodyne sense of self-image. Is she identifying with the contents or directing the scenario? With this series, perhaps, more than any other, Schneider creates a feeling of a world that has some degree of symbolic order. For example the girls stand or squat by a dirt road, posing the question as to their sexual and personal status. Following the 29 Palms series, Schneider will trust herself increasingly by diminishing the sense of a staged environment. The events to come will tell you both everything and nothing, reveal and obfuscate, point towards and simultaneously away from any clearly definable meaning.

(...)

In the numerous photographic series, some twenty or so, that occur between 29 Palms and Hitchhiker, Schneider has immersed herself and scrutinised many aspects of suburban, peripheral, and scrubland America. Her characters, including herself, are never at the centre of cultural affairs. Such eccentricities as they might possess are all derived from what could be called their adjacent status to the dominant culture of America. In fact her works are often sated with references to the sentimental sub-strata that underpin so much of American daily life. It is the same whether it is flower gardens and household accoutrements of her photo-series Suburbia (2004), or the transitional and environmental conditions depicted in The Last Picture Show (2005). The artist's use of sentimental song titles, often adapted to accompany individual images within a series by Schneider, show her awareness of America's close relationship between popular film and music. For example the song 'Leaving on a Jet Plane', becomes Leaving in a Jet Plane as part of The Last Picture Show series, while the literalism of the plane in the sky is shown in one element of this diptych, but juxtaposed to a blonde-wigged figure first seen in 29 Palms. This indicates that every potential narrative element is open to continual reallocation in what amounts to a story without end. And, the interchangeable nature of the images, like a dream, is the state of both a pictorial and affective flux that is the underlying theme pervading Schneider's photo-narratives. For dream is a site of yearning or longing, either to be with or without, a human pursuit of a restless but uncertain alternative to our daily reality.

The scenarios that Schneider sets up nonetheless have to be initiated by the artist. And, this might be best understood by looking at her three recent DVD sequenced photo-novels,

(...).

In the case of Sidewinder (2005) the scenario was created by Internet where she met J.D. Rudometkin, an ex-theologian, who agreed to her idea to live with her for five weeks in the scrubland desert environment of Southern California. The dynamics and unfolding of their relationship, both sexually and emotionally, became the primary subject matter of this series of photographs. The relative isolation and their close proximity, the interactive tensions, conflicts and submissions, are thus recorded to reveal the day-to-day evolution of their relationship. That a time limit was set on this relation-based experiment was not the least important aspect of the project. The text and music accompanying the DVD were written by the American Rudometkin, who speaks poetically of "Torn Stevie. Scars from the weapon to her toes an accidental act of God her father said. On Vaness at California." The mix of hip reverie and fantasy-based language of his text, echoes the chaotic unfolding of their daily life in this period, and is evident in the almost sun-bleached Polaroid images like Whisky Dance, where the two abandon themselves to the frenetic circumstances of the moment. Thus Sidewinder, a euphemism for both a missile and a rattlesnake, hints at the libidinal and emotional dangers that were risked by Schneider and Rudometkin. Perhaps, more than any other of her photo-novels it was the most spontaneous and immediate, since Schneider's direct participation mitigated against and narrowed down the space between her life and the artwork. The explicit and open character of their relationship at this time opens up the question as the biographical role Schneider plays in all her work. She both makes and directs the work while simultaneously dwelling within the artistic processes as they unfold. Hence she is both author and character, conceiving the frame within which things will take place, and yet subject to the same unpredictable outcomes that emerge in the process.

(...)

I began this essay by speaking about the apparitional contents of Stefanie Schneider's pictorial narratives, and meant at that time the literal and chance-directed 'appearing' qualities of her photographs. Perhaps, at this moment we should also think of the metaphoric contents of the word apparition. There is certainly a spectre-like quality also, a ghostly uncertainty about many of the human experiences found in her subject matter. Is it that the subculture of the American Dream, or the way of life Schneider has chosen to record, has in turn become also the phantom of its former self? Are these empty and fragmented scenarios a mirror of what has become of contemporary America? There is certainly some affection for their contents on the part of the artist, but it is somehow tainted with pessimism and the impossibility of sustainable human relations, with the dissolute and commercial distractions of America today. Whether this is the way it is, or, at least, the way it is perceived by Schneider is hard to assess. There is a bleak lassitude about so many of her characters. But then again the artist has so inured herself into this context over a long protracted period that the boundaries between the events and happenings photographed, and the personal life of Stefanie Schneider, have become similarly opaque. Is it the diagnosis of a condition, or just a recording of a phenomenon? Only the viewer can decide this question. For the status of Schneider's certain sense of uncertainty is, perhaps, the only truth we may ever know.

## 29 palms, ca concept

### THE STORY DEVELOPMENT

29 Palms, CA is an artistic/ conceptual/ visual/ filmic collaboration between several artists from different artistic backgrounds: writers, actors, musicians, directors, visual artists, and others, and will culminate in a full-length feature film.

The project is being developed in a continuous fashion by all the parties involved. This mainly pertains to the script and storyline, as well as character development, and background. A general story outline has been given and will be kept, while the characters live in and through their stories, expressions, images taken of them etc. The characters add to the stories change their directions. The characters are influencing and feeding off each other. The project, a „long-term improvisation“, continuously growing and developing in an organic fashion.

The development is taken place online. For this reason Stefanie Schneider is creating the website: [www.twentyninepalms.ca](http://www.twentyninepalms.ca). Radha Mitchell has started writing the script. She and Stefanie Schneider are in charge of keeping things flowing and in line with the general story idea and structure.

The site also covers the production side of the project: the how, when and who. A published schedule regarding all production steps will keep each participant up to date. The film will not be shot at once, but rather step-by-step over a period of time, whenever a scene has been developed and is ready for production.

Stefanie and Radha have already invited contributors and have asked them to submit stories, scenes, monologues, thoughts, ideas, emails, poems, background stories of the characters involved, music, films, etc. to the 29 Palms, CA online forum, which is part of the website. This takes place under the category „contributions“, „scenes“, and „characters“. The concept of uploading ideas directly will keep the script alive and in motion at all times until the final edit of the film is completed.

All of the contributors write and act as the character, as which they have been casted, and which they bring to life. All entries will be read and considered, and then either used as a background story to the character, which will be displayed on the website and in various other venues (see below), or edited into the script or into the edit of the movie by Stefanie Schneider within the before mentioned online forum. This enables each contributor/ character to constantly witness the development of the script, story and film.

Each character has his or her own character page on the website and will write a fictitious or semi-fictitious diary on it in order to reveal the background story of the character. Pieces from this diary might be edited into the script as well. It can also happen that a scene has been written and shot, but meanwhile, because of biographical influences displayed in the diary, the character's life has moved on and changed. In that case the scene is cut out of the script, but might still be used standing on its own as a sub chapter or part of the background story of the character.

The website itself is an entity of its own. Because there is no set time limit for the development of all the parts involved, it will take at least three years to finish the film (writing, photography shoots / filming, editing etc.). Scenes are being written and shot, stories are being told, life is changing. Thus the website becomes the reflection of a period of time, of changes within and around us.

Parts of the project will be taken out as „chapters“ or „episodes“ and presented in galleries and public art spaces, as well as in theatres and film festivals. Books containing artwork, script pieces, story parts, poetry etc. will be published. And of course there could be even more: the limited edition OXANA the actress doll, the SORYA the princess doll, the ALEX the motel owner's wife doll, etc.

The development of the project becomes the project itself. The grand finale is the full-length feature film.

### THE TECHNICAL CONCEPT

The film will be shot mostly on Polaroid film stock, which then will be edited and partly animated. Some scenes will be jumpy, intercut with short pieces of super-8 material. To see the usually static characters in real time movement all of a sudden is quite stunning. Other scenes of edited Polaroid stock are very smooth due to animation being applied. Sometimes a still image will appear while the characters talk from the off. Most conversations for the radio show will be filmed on 16 mm in a rough documentary style. But then, all of a sudden the roll of film is empty, the image disappears, the screen flickers, then goes black. The characters keep on talking, as we hear the sound of the end of the film hitting the film case. The audience is taken back to feel like the viewers of an old super-8 family movie.

## 29 palms, ca production

Production has already started. The first scenes have been shot between January and May 2007. While being shot, the story is being developed further. Scenes have been written and continue to be written.

The website [www.twentyninepalms.ca](http://www.twentyninepalms.ca) has been launched.

All contributors/ characters are starting to contribute their writings, music, films, photography and so on. The project will be edited online.

Going public will provide an audience and anticipation with the characters. The audience will witness the changes of the 29 Palms inhabitants and spread the word, thereby creating a „buzz“. Financing will become easier.

Group shows of individual chapters will be organized periodically, as the participating artists have completed them up till that point. The chapters for these exhibits can contain photographs, writings, poetry, music, sound, film, sculptures, performances, theatre, etc., depending on what has been produced.

Every photograph taken for the project will become art, as well as every piece of film. That holds great means for participating gallery owners and producers. If every photo becomes art, the production is less risky, because money will flow back into the project through the selling of the art. A calculation key for the selling needs to be found. Here is an example: Let's say a producer puts a certain amount of money into the project. In relation to how much he put in, he would be paid back through the selling of the art. The key for this could be as follows: 40% would go to the gallery showing (the usual percentage is 50%), 10% could go to the producer, 5% of the creator of the work's income should go to the actors in the photograph and the rest should go to the artist of that piece. Collectors investing larger sums into the project can purchase the art for the artist's share.

For musicians, music should be produced and record deals made. For the writers, books should be published or theatre plays produced. All these possibilities are side effects of the long development and online process. The project will be watched as it is growing. The 29 Palms production period could take 2-5 years or more.





## characters and artists and credits

Love, lost and unrequited leaves its mark in our lives as a senseless pain that has no place in the present. The ex lover experiences the residues of love as an amputee experiences the sensation of a ghost limb. It is the tangible experience of "absence" that has inspired this piece. It is using the nuances of memory and imagination to explore relationships as we all have experienced them, to reflect about the (im)possibilities of simultaneousness (of love) - a simple harmonic motion?

Beauty and vexation, eroticism and loneliness enter into a mixture, which reveals the rift between desire and truth.

All inhabitants of 29 Palms, CA are trying to define and understand their reality.

Life itself is changing their perspectives. All characters are living in their own lost world.

The place they live in, 29 Palms, CA is more the idea and reflection of a place than the place itself. Almost imaginary with the bright desert light painting their realities and fata morganas likewise into the desert's horizon.

Reality, memory and fantasy will converge. Subject will become object and absence will become art.

Connected through the *Lonely Heart's Radio Show* they anticipate each others experiences. Even if they haven't met yet they know each other.

*Stefanie Schneider* - STEFIE THE PANICKED GERMAN FEMALE CALLER - One night a panicked German female caller captivates the community with a painful story about a sexy "Smoke Jumper" (a mysterious and super real alpha male). Everybody in town is listening to the program and nobody is quite sure what to say.



*Stefanie Schneider will be present for the opening and during the Berlinale Filmfestival.*

*Stefanie Schneider – heart & soul of the project, initiator, artist, artistic director, designer & editor website; develops and plays the character of STEFIE, THE PANICKED GERMAN FEMALE CALLER.*

Stefanie Schneider's photographs are reminiscent of scintillating situations located on the edge between daydreams and sleeping dreams. All of the scenes she has shot in the South West of the USA seem surreally enraptured, and the artist herself seems only to act inasmuch as she gives the decisive impulse. The people who are photographed are no more tangible than the motives for their activities or the storylines of the photo sequences.

Atmospheric disturbances are in Stefanie Schneider's work the result of a narrative arrangement, which forces the viewer in between visual mementos and gaps in memories. But simultaneously the artist is working no less purposefully with media, and although their own momentum is calculable, the material that is introduced is largely uncontrollable: the best-before date on the Polaroid film pack has long since expired; the photo-chemical self-developing process takes the exposure and alienates.

This dysfunction is a fundamental element in the artist's work Mind Screen, which consists of several parts. She confronts the brittleness of the real, the genuine and the comprehensible with a magical realism dipped in chimaeras to produce dreamlike sequences. And she leaves the content of a presumed storyline up to the viewer. There is no user's manual here for people to follow: in its place, everything succumbs to the draw of these unreal, shimmering scenes, the Fata Morgana of a road movie, an act of violence or a tragic self-sacrifice. Film genres are brought in and taken away in the same breath. Wim Wenders' Paris, Texas turns out to have been shot through a rose-tinted lens, Thelma and Louise proves to be a popular ditty about a heroic mass mobilisation, whilst The Good, the Bad and the Ugly mutually destroy themselves. Things shimmer and flicker before our eyes: we are unable to step out of this dream, nor are we able to verify it. Ralf Christofori

*THE SMOKE JUMPER - an orange parachute floats down from the dark blue sky - very far away. Several women in town are noticing this. A bit later we'll see him in an orange fireman outfit crossing right to left through the frame with the parachute still attached, while Stevie is on the phone talking about him on the Lonely Hearts Radio Show. He's passing by all the time. Like a dream or a vision you can't capture.*

*JD Rudometkin* - LANCE WATERMAN - the firefighter / smoke jumper / tree planter / carpenter - the mysterious and super real alpha male, who seduces the women in town and then breaks their hearts.

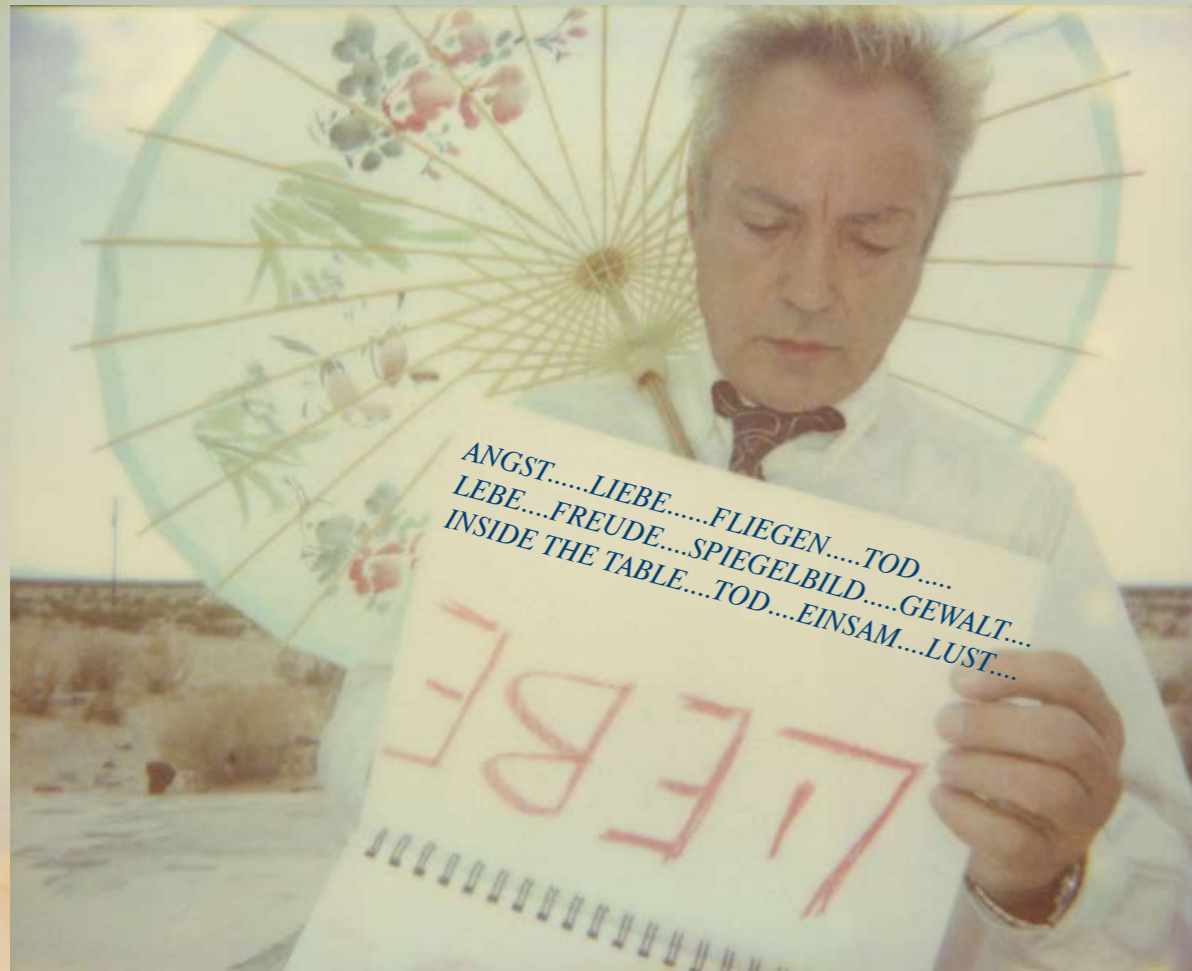


*JD Rudometkin - develops, writes and plays the character of LANCE, THE SMOKE JUMPER, co-writes STEFIE'S character and writes and performs the music of his character as well as Stevie's.*

JD Rudometkin, actor, writer and musician, JD was recently nominated for a Best Actor award (Sacramento's Elys, Theatre) for a solo performance. JD is currently working on the music and poems for sidewinder, a film / art piece / book by Stefanie Schneider.

For this first 29 Palms, CA presentation he contributes his music.

*Udo Kier* - HANS THE DIRECTOR - Hans appears from the desert one day. Mysteriously, he owns a map of where to find the OXANA'S stage. When he discovers the stage, he takes it on as his own and begins to "live" on it, converting her make-up table to a piece of art by using feathers, and writing words like "LIEBE", "GEWALT", "EINSAM" on large cue cards. When OXANA arrives to find him there, she is at first a little surprised and careful around him at first, but then the two begin to play off each other and Hans starts to "direct" Oxana in her efforts to live her emotions. But when Oxana is eventually able to turn out her innermost feelings, Hans is the one who retracts and is unable to cope with her display of affection, mirroring her usual behavior in the real world.



*Udo Kier will be present for the opening and during the Berlinale Filmfestival.*

**Udo Kier – producer; develops, writes and plays the character of HANS, THE DIRECTOR**

Udo Kier was born in Cologne, Germany, in the last months of WWII. Moments after his birth the hospital he was born in was completely destroyed by a bomb. He accredits his mother for single-handedly saving her own life and that of her newborn baby. When he was nineteen, he moved to London to pursue his career in films, a career that is now spanning over 40 years and in which Kier has reached somewhat of a cult status. Has recently wrapped filming the short film were-wolf women of the ss by Quentin Tarantino and Robert Rodriguez.

He has appeared in over 180 films, from small low-budget art-house films to big Hollywood blockbusters. He was Warhol's Dracula and Warhol's Frankenstein. He has lived on London, Rome and Paris, and now resides in Los Angeles. His trademark roles are those of lunatics, shady characters, murderers, johns and vampires. He has worked with directors like Rainer Werner Fassbinder, Paul Morrissey, Lars von Trier, Christoph Schlingensiefel, Wim Wenders, Jerry Bruckheimer among others.

For this first 29 Palms, CA presentation he contributes monologues.

*Radha Mitchell* - OXANA THE ACTRESS - Oxana works in the town's telemarketing office, selling toast-ers. She dresses quite colorfully and dreams of becoming a movie star. She lives in her own dream world and likes to reenact scenes from her life, which she cannot solve otherwise, on a stage she has built in the desert. Oxana is a very lonely person and has a hard time expressing her feelings, except on the mentioned stage, the "stage of consciousness". When MAX comes into town and befriends her, Oxana's situation changes and she is able to open up more and let go. Later, with HANS, THE DIRECTOR appearing and occupying her stage, the dynamic changes even more....



*Radha Mitchell will be present for the opening and during the Berlinale Filmfestival.*

*had before the guy with the big hands and the big thing. You know the one I just broke up with. Well, I don't know what to say. I used to have a fiancée. And it ended because we couldn't talk to each other about what we were going to do with our lives. But I think that I'm still kind of in love and I really don't want to be.*

**Radha Mitchell – writer screenplay; develops, writes and plays the character of OXANA, THE ACTRESS.**

Radha Mitchell, born in 1973 and a native of Melbourne, Australia, had her debut role as Danni in Emma-Kate Croghan's romantic comedy *love and other catastrophes* (1996), in which she co-starred with fellow Aussie actress Frances O'Connor. Radha has worked on both the stage and on the small screen in her native country. She started acting while still in high school in the Woods theater production of *desire*. Among Radha's earlier film credits are the short film *sleeping beauties* (1999), and the theatrical release *high art* (1998), in which Radha stars opposite Ally Sheedy. Both films were screened at the Sundance Film Festival, the later of which won the prestigious Waldo Salt Screenwriting Award© and appeared in the Director's Fortnight Ceremonies at the Cannes In-

ternational Film Festival in France. She has also worked under the direction of Marc Forster in his films *everything put together* (2000) and *finding neverland* (2004), for the later of which she was nominated for a Screen Actors Guild Award for "Outstanding Performance by Cast". Most recently she starred in such films as Woody Allen's *melinda and melinda* (2004), *mozart and the whale* (2005), a story about two people with Asperger's Syndrome trying to make a go of their relationship despite their condition, and *silent hill* (2006). She has thus become a sought after and successful actress. She has been featured regularly in Stefanie Schneider's art. With a passion and talent for writing, she wants to pursue more creative fulfillment in that field as well.

**Robert Mack** - THE RECLUSE - does intimate character revealing videos of the inhabitants of the mobile park / motel. His videos are complex moments of intimate interaction. He does these videos clandestinely, for example of the actress as a voyeur, the motel owner's wife bathing in the nude (or suit) by the pool while the pool boys are cleaning, or Stevie with Lance through a trailer window. He LOVES all his subjects SOOOO much, but needs to objectify them by creating his videos - that way he's safe & there is never ever any pain! Extremely shy, hardly ever talks. Wears raincoats, except when with THE MUSE. He sits in front of his TV alone at night, watching the video he made of the actress and at the same time listening to the radio talk-show, while the actress & other subjects are speaking. Whenever he meets new muses, he films them, but is too shy to ask them to be his subjects. His video subjects: he completely understands and loves them like no-one has ever loved them (he's obsessed with them), but in real life... that's another story. characters other scenes taking place in the story / film as well...Some of his little videos: Sorya, Stevie, the muse, parakeets (erotic), even Lance, could be nice documentary transitions (distorted through his TV playback) into the characters' other scenes taking place in the story / film as well...



Robert Mack will be present for the opening and during the Berlinale Filmfestival.

*These moments... they're so beautiful, so real, I can barely stand to watch them. And the best part is I don't have to talk to the person, or listen, or say anything. It's painless.*

*I like to play the videos over and over again. I find secrets hidden in the moments, secrets about the person, secrets they don't know even exist... I want to tell them, but that would mean disaster.*

*That girl in the box at the drive-in... she's great. And the box around her is like a frame and a frame puts everything into context. I can imagine her thoughts, her desires, her sadness, her loves, her loss, even my reflection in her eyes.*

*I'd like to be able to say at least one word to her. But I freeze every time she looks at me. I'm such a loser. Courage for words never was my forte. But images...*

*Yes, maybe if I film her and show her and tell her things, maybe then she will speak to me. But what will I do if she answers?!*

**Robert Mack - develops, writes and plays the character of BOB THE RECLUSE.**

Robert is a photographer, filmmaker, and haiku video artist. He's drawn to such themes as insanity, faith, and death. Robert conceived the perkins project, a powerful photography and film essay on the subject of the criminally insane. This body of work by Robert and Grace Zaccardi received a major nine-week exhibition at THE BALIMORE MUSEUM OF ART and ten of their photographs are in the museum's permanent collection. Publication of the perkins project book is nearing completion. MOMA and THE GETTY recently requested review of their work. Robert says "A subject and photographer can enter into an unspoken pact of trust and when this occurs the resulting image can transcend the two participants." As a documentary filmmaker, Robert produced and directed such films as la homefront ( the Rodney King civil rights trial and resulting riots ), Robert Schuller: portrait of a televangelist ( profiling one of the world's most successful electronic preachers ) and born again: in the usa his current feature documentary on televangelism and faith in America. Over the years Robert continues to shoot what he calls Haiku Videos: short videos, without editing, which ideally capture a moment of experience, an instant when the ordinary suddenly reveals its inner nature.

For this first 29 Palms, CA presentation he contributes one HAIKU video, several Photographic pieces, and his monologues.

**Max Sharam** - THE OPERA SINGER - Being a restless soul and always having traveled a lot, Max, an opera singer and musician, finds herself at a point in her life, at which she has to ask herself: Being an artist at heart, which she believes to be, has she seriously committed to that? Or is she inherently nomadic and indeed already living the life of a bohemian, who cannot conform? During her travels in her younger years, she met Sebastian, a beautiful Mexican man, who dreamed of becoming a filmmaker, while she was dreaming of meeting her soul mate in a German artist. They spent a more or less platonic period of time together, only to part ways at the end in order to pursue their respective dreams. Sebastian at that point suggested meeting after ten years and getting married then, but this meeting never transpired. Twenty years after their initial meeting they reconnect by chance through a friend at a Cinque de Maggio party. When they are re-united after 20 years he is at a cross-roads in his life as his girlfriend of 4 years has just fallen pregnant and wants to get married. Max encourages him to go back to his girlfriend and do the right thing and raise the child and be a good father/ family. So he does. Somewhat despondent and disappointed - but feeling glad that she did the right thing - Max takes to hitchhike East but only a few hours into the backlands she gets stranded in 29 Palms, CA...There, she befriends OXANA, THE ACTRESS, who she helps to open up emotionally. She also gets to perform at the "Lonely Hearts" radio show, the DJ of which falls in love with her...

*I was living in New York and I met a psychic. I met her at a party and she took my hand and asked me about love I told her about this man I've been dreaming about who already has a wife and she said he is mine if I want him - if I believe that it is best for him. She said people should FLOURISH and THRIVE in relationships. If they suck your life force then they shouldn't be and if he isn't thriving then I shouldn't feel bad about creating a change...she says I'd just be 'speeding it up' ....Sebastian, the guy said I am 'unconsciously apologetic' in my life...I told her, the psychic, that I get everything I want and then I lose it. She said it's because I don't think I deserve it...And I have to believe that I deserve to have what I want and not push it away...*



Max Sharam will be present for the opening and during the Berlinale Filmfestival.

**Max Sharam – develops, writes and plays the character of MAX, THE OPERA SINGER; writes the music for her character and will be the music supervisor together with Sophie Huber.**

Max Sharam's last record: *a million year girl* (top ten in Australia), was starring in *the hanging of jean lee* at the Sydney Opera house in Australia in 2006. She is working on her new record to be released in NYC. In addition, she is currently working on the film project *waking madison* for which she is doing and supervising the music.

*"Max Sharam is a force to be reckoned with..she's confident and strong, cutting and satirical; competent and sensational. And that's just in interviews.."* (WA Observer)

For this first 29 Palms, CA presentation she contributes her animations "Sleeping Beauties", "The Story of a Singer", both back stories of her character, photographs, monologues, her songs "Actor Girl" and "Flying".

*Camille Waldorf* - THE MUSE / THE TOWN'S SHAMAN - She speaks very little on-screen. Camille exists in some kind of vacuum. Not connected to anybody but living in her own world she has created. So that all knowledge of right and wrong is pure. Camille is floating through the story. While everybody else is dealing with their personal truth and ideas she carries a basic naïve truth within her which connects the personal storylines and shows the actual simplicity and therefore complexity of the world. She also thinks about the clouds, how they move, the birds, the colors of the desert, a cricket on her nose, etc. She paints in a huge old drained swimming pool or on boulders. (Compare also the Linda Manz character in Days of Heaven). Mostly she wears dresses made of light materials, which flow around her in beautiful light colors.



*Camille Waldorf* – develops, writes and plays the character of THE MUSE / THE TOWN'S SHAMAN.

She also writes the music for her character and the radio show. The song "Fight" will be the last song in the finished movie, connecting all story lines and the ideal state of love the characters in the movie trying to find.

For this first 29 Palms, CA presentation she contributes music "Fight", monologues, paintings, the video "Eurban Dying".

*After I came home from Eurban dying in my arms, a cricket bright and green just came walking through my front door, all lit up by sunshine. I picked him up and noticed he had crooked wings. I thought he was hurt but then he began to climb up my arm and up to my face. He went up the bridge of my nose and began rubbing his nose on my center brow. I realized that not only is this incredibly strange and miraculous that at least some being is showing care for how I am feeling, but also that god is always there and comes in many forms, and shows himself in many ways. This one was truly surprising. The cricket played in my hair for the day and perched on my shoulder. Then at dusk, he returned to the garden. I then turned back inside. There, I healed myself with yoga, ballet and singing in spirit.*

*Marc Forster* - THE GARBAGE MAN - the keeper of misplaced objects. He is the town's garbage collector and finds a lot of personal artifacts that people have thrown out – e.g. love letters and other items connected to the story. He collects them and starts to build a shrine out of them in his place, reattaching value to them, when others have discarded them as worthless.



*Marc Forster* – director for dialogues; in charge of special effects post production; develops, writes and plays the character of RON, THE MOTEL OWNER.

Marc Forster was born in Ulm, Germany, but grew up in Davos, Switzerland. From his early teens he was determined to become a director. In 1990, when he was 20 years old, he moved to New York to pursue his dream. For three years he attended NYU film school, making several documentary films. In 1995, he moved to Hollywood, where he shot *loungers*, an experimental low budget film, which won the Slamdance Audience Award. Marc's first motion picture was the psychological drama *everything put together*, which was nominated for the Grand Jury Prize at the Sundance Film Festival and won him an Independent Spirit Award in the category "someone to watch". It has also been added to the MoMA film collection. His breakthrough film was *monster's ball* in 2001, in which he directed Halle Berry in her Academy Award-winning performance.

His next film *finding neverland* (2004), based on the life of author J.M. Barrie, was nominated for five Golden Globe Awards, including Best Director, and seven Academy Awards, including Best Picture. Marc also received BAFTA and Directors Guild of America nominations for his direction. In 2005 he directed the thriller *stay* with Ewan McGregor and Naomi Watts. Stefanie Schneider was senior artist for this film. His most recent film to hit theatres was *stranger than fiction* (2006), a romantic comedy starring Will Ferrell. Marc has completed the film *the kite runner*, based on the bestselling novel by Khaled Hosseini, which he shot mostly in China and Afghanistan and which will be released in the beginning of 2008. Marc was just announced as director for the next James Bond film under the working title *bond 22*, for which production has just begun.

*Austen Tate* - MARGARITA THE TELEMARKETER'S SISTER - She lives together with her brother, JAKE. She is the lover of JERRY, THE BIRDMAN, who gets killed on the way to battle. After a hideous fight with her brother, she packs her backpack and leaves their parents' house, in which they live. Without a destination she strolls through the desert. Hitchhiking in places, she gets picked up by CRISTAL. Forming a strong bond immediately, Margarita and Cristal rent a room in the motel together, before moving into the deserted airstream, which was once occupied by the smoke jumper.



*Austen Tate develops, writes and plays the character of Margatita. For this first 29 Palms, CA presentation she contributes her monologues.*

*Leaving, gone with the wind to the desert of sins. Love left long ago and all I see now is the horizon of the sun blazing down on my misery. It looks like a painted picture, surreal fake clouds, playdoh trees, desert bike biscuits riding in the folly of illusions. Where am I going? When will this lost soul be captured by an angel's wings? How long must I walk this dusty, heartbroken path? Am I destined to walk this deserted road until I waste away to nothing, left to the vultures and terrorists for their taking? I will just keep walking lost until found again.*

*Daisy McCrackin* - CRISTAL - She is a free spirit, enjoying life to the fullest. On a drive through the desert, she picks up MARGARITA, who is hitchhiking after having left her parents' house following a horrible fight with her brother JAKE. Taking an immediate liking to each other and forming a strong bond, they first rent a room in the motel together. Later on they move into the deserted airstream, the same airstream the smoke jumper used to live in.



*Daisy McCrackin – writer screenplay; develops, writes and plays the character of CRISTAL. She also writes the music for her and Margarita's character and the radio show.*

*Daisy McCrackin attended The American Conservatory Theater (A.C.T) and performed in productions with them while growing up in San Francisco. Since moving to Los Angeles to study and pursue acting Daisy has done guest starring roles on shows such as Angel, The Division, Special Unit 2 and Cold Case. She has appeared in commercials and feature films including 3000 Miles to Grace-land, Peak Experience, Halloween Resurrection, The Unseen and Love and Suicide, recently shot in Cuba. She is also a singer songwriter performing in Hollywood, recording and forming a band.*

*I can't remember if I chose this life. I think I must have, but I might not have known what I was in for. My family turned out to be mostly jerks. My mom says I was named after the champagne. My dad likes to say I was named after his product. I had a dog, Lucy, born when I was two, she was just about my only friend. I got lost in the desert with her once.....really lost.....when I was about nine. She saved me. When she was twelve, I guess that's old for a dog,....she just wandered out into the dessert one day when I was in the shower, and didn't come back. One minute she was there, the next, I never saw her again, I never could find her to say good-bye. I looked everywhere, even the old mine shaft we hid in when we were lost. No one else cared. So pretty soon I left too. They don't miss me, unless they just got used to having someone around to blame. Now I run my own life, and it's ok. I get by and have fun sometimes too. I keep away from men and other lowlifes. I wouldn't mind if I end up in Las Vegas, or Los Angeles, as soon as I can get away from the dessert. Seems like I still have unfinished business out here.*

*We'll see. ...*

*For this first 29 Palms, CA presentation she contributes songs "Mermaid's Daughter", "Run, Run, Run", and her monologues.*

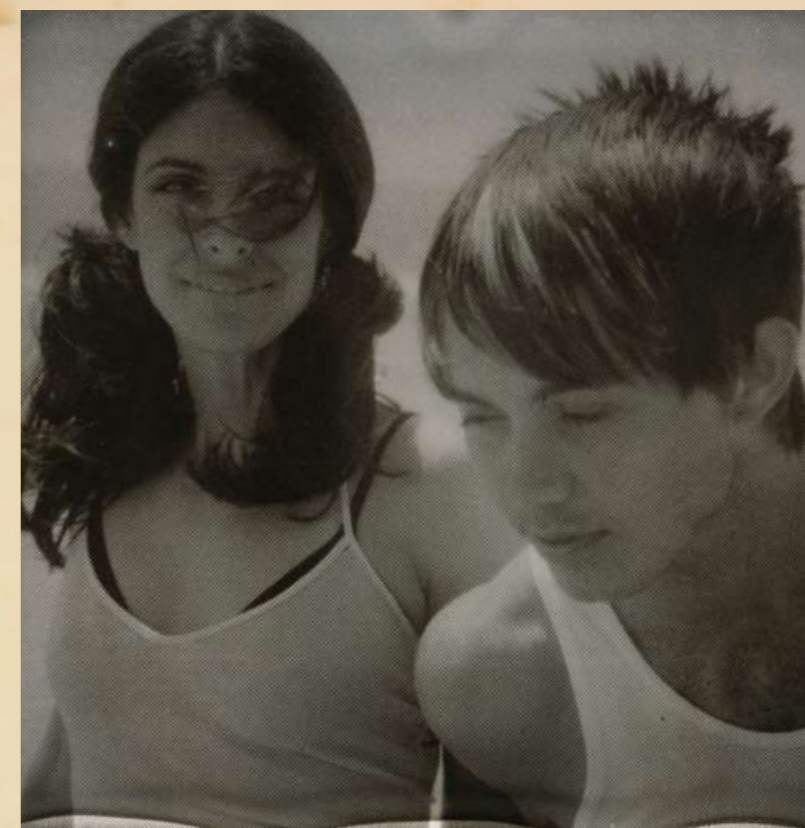
*Romina Djelosevic* - THE TICKET SELLER GIRL - Whenever the girl sells a ticket and touches the driver's hand in the process, she imagines a little internal movie about him or her - a sequence of polaroids. A storyline constantly changing. She repeatedly sees the same people and over time gets familiar with them. Almost a counterpart of BOB THE RECLUSE, the ticket seller girl knows her subjects well. But she never speaks to them and builds up her world only in her mind. The projection at the drive in theater shows all the inhabitants' dreams - sometimes distorted. Her imaginations will also be screened there, pulling the world of 29 Palms closer together, just like BOB's HAIKU movies and the lonely hearts radio show do. She falls in love with BOB THE RECLUSE. Her's and BOB's vision will intertwine, tangle and mix to become one. Slowly BOB falls in love with her, too. She, too, is a shy creature....



*Romina Djelosevic* – writer screenplay; develops, writes and plays the character of ROMINA, THE TICKET SELLER GIRL IN THE DRIVE IN BOOTH.

*Romina Djelosevic* is a Los Angeles based artist, enjoys working with other artists - collaborating on projects and performances, curating exhibitions, occasionally taking on the role as muse. She enjoys wit in art - James Turrell, Kelly Parker, and newcomer Mike Smith are favorites. She's organized exhibitions at Los Angeles galleries- *adm project* in Hollywood, *shop chuey* in Chinatown and *catalyst* Downtown LA. She met Stefanie Schneider and was inspired by her approach to the collaborative art, and shares her affinity for the desert and American west. She believes the purpose of art is not to reproduce reality but to create a reality of the same intensity.

*I like it when I don't have to say anything and I can just smile. It makes my life so much easier, and is much more effective also. Effective, like gets across the meaning or understanding better than words could. Esp fumbling over words. Not that I fumble my words. Often. I Definitely don't often. Sometimes though I do. Usually if someone makes me nervous.. but even rarely then. But mostly I prefer smiling cos too often, I don't necessarily have anything to say to people who appear to have something to say to me. People use too many words anyway. I do to. But it's usually in fewer increments, like I say a lot – but infrequently. Anyway, I noticed it a while ago. How easy it was fir me to smile and get away with saying nothing. Its so safe... I can't believe I hadn't thought of it sooner... Plus its so much nicer to do.. Its more sincere... while at the same time kind of totally Not. Does that mean it only appears sincere, and may totally Not be? Or does it mean it can be both sincere +insincere depending on the context or inspiration for the smile! Can a smile ever be insincere? A Real smile?? ( which mine almost always are) Not like the Joker smile. But a real smile... Anyway, u noticed I don't smile very much here .. people don't look me in the eye all that much. They're preoccupied.. They're with people they're stoned...I don't have to smile. I do anyway though.. Sometimes. I smile for people even if they don't see me. If they're looking away.. or if they're leaving and their backs already are turned to me. Maybe they can feel me.. maybe.. whatever. I'm sure it doesn't go to waste. The smile, that is. Doesn't go to waste.. Plus people have told me I should smile more. People who Should know.. like dentists.. and oscar winning heartthrobs. Anyway.. I don't smile as much here.. In the Box.. the box is a good vantage point to see - but not be seen.. Unless I shout. But I don't shout. I smile.. People are preoccupied.. they don't notice me ... they don't pay me much attention.. and don't need attention From me. .. They pay attention to others, the screen, themselves. Not me .. that one guy, though.. that quiet older guy.. he doesn't smile at me. but He notices me. He has tender awkward ness ... I can tell he wants to smile.. or say something.. But he doesn't. I smile at Him.*



*Alex Wolf* - ALEX THE MOTEL OWNER'S WIFE - She is longing for a different, more exiting life / a real love / feeling alive again, but she is dreaming her life away, not daring to act.

*Alex Wolf* – develops, writes and plays the character of ALEX, THE MOTEL OWNER'S WIFE.

*Cathy Lloyd Burns* - THE TELEMARKETER'S EX WIFE - lives next door to him with her daughter OLIVE. She is compelled to shop. She buys everything in bulk at the warehouse stores even when she doesn't need it and doesn't have room for it. She is lonely and drives around in her car with cases and cartons of items she doesn't even know what they are.



*Since I been pregnant I feel things and smell them. Like I can tell what is bad and what's good. And you are a bad smell Jake. I got a headache just being near you. And I'm not making this up. I'm going to take me an advil and ask you to leave...*

NOTES - *I just love the whole idea of shopping. Shopping in bulk as an activity to ward off depression, to prepare for impending disaster. Filling the house with bottled water and paper towels and toilet paper. And I love the contrast of the big sky and all that amazing landscape of the desert juxtaposed with the interior of giant huge gross cement warehouse stores where birds fly around trapped indoors. Last week I went to Home Depot and there were a bunch of pigeons who seemed to have made their home there and it was such a weird image....*

**Cathy Lloyd Burns – develops, writes and plays the character of THE TELEMARKETER'S EX-WIFE.**

Catherine Lloyd Burns has appeared in films the baxter, everything put together (with Radha Mitchell, Megan Mullally and Stefanie Schneider), keeping the faith and on television in malcolm in the middle, lateline (with Al Franken) and many more. She also wrote the book it hit me mike a ton of bricks, the movie everything put together (with Adam Forgash and Marc Forster) and her work has appeared in the new york times, the village voice, self and the gloss.

For this first 29 Palms, CA presentation she contributes her monologues.

*Thom Bishops* - AZAR, THE PRINCESS' BROTHER - Anzar, the fallen prince. Anzar goes on a quest, not only to find his older sister Soraya, but to find himself. Unable to live a life shrouded in family secrets, Anzar sets out on a mission to discover more about himself through his travels. Insulated for most of his life from the outside world, this is his chance to come to understand who he is outside of his fallen royal family...



Thom Bishops is an actor, last seen with Robin Williams in the final cut, and is next on screen in the Weinstein company's fanboys, as well as on NBC's law and order svu.

**Thom Bishops – develops, writes and plays the character of AZAR, THE PRINCE.**

*I'm 26 years old. I am curious beyond convention. I want to know how I got here, where I came from and where I'm going. I want to make a contribution to this universe in the most significant possible way, except I haven't figured exactly how to do that yet.. Soraya... She left when I was 10 years old....She would often dance around in my mothers gowns and jewels....She had a sadness to her though.... in another time and place I was considered, Prince Anzar....*

For this first 29 Palms, CA presentation he contributes his monologues.



*Soraya Wright* - A princess from an unknown country, whose royalty has been overthrown. She is broke and has come to the motel to sell her tiara - the last valuable item she owns and the last piece connecting her to the past.



SORYA THE PRINCESS is developed, written and played by Soraya Wright.

*So, the numbers game.*

*32 - my age*

*8 - the number of the bus line I met him on*

*4 - the age I was when rebels threw my family out of power.*

*5 - how old I was the last time I saw my mother.*

*16 - the last time I saw my brother*

*34 - the original number of stones in my mother's crown*

*31 - the number of stones left in the aforementioned crown*

*45 - the number of days he let me love him*

*2 - the number of days he believed he was in love with me*

*7 - the number of days since I saw him last*

*150,000 - the amount of money I am going to receive for the sale of this crown*

*what all of this adds up to:*

*0 - the number of days I have left for me as Princess Sorya on this planet.*

*Steve Marshall* - THE LONELY HEART'S CHARISMATIC DJ - The radio station runs a program for lonely hearts and the charismatic DJ uses the show to reveal the hopes and dreams of the towns "hottest women". At times people search for channels in the radio and tune into his station. His voice becomes omnipresent and slowly connects the inhabitants of 29 Palms, CA with each other. Even before they have ever met in person they are anticipating each other's stories. In the beginning all characters lead a distant lonely life. He is the one who airs the call from STEVIE, who talks about the smoke jumper the first time in her frantic call to the station. The DJ falls in love with MAX, the musician who gets stranded in town on her way back to New York...The radio show will be filmed mostly on Super-8 and 16mm film. Documentary feeling.

*Steve Marshall - develops, writes and plays the character of THE LONELY HEART'S CHARISMATIC DJ.*

"My career as a stand up has cost me a marriage and at least three failed extremely intimate relationships. No one knows more about a lonely heart than me. I begin every first date by asking: "How are you going to ruin my life?"..." Steve Marshall is an accomplished stand up comedian. When not swamped with headlining comedy clubs doing 450 club dates a year, he is finding outlets for his ever flowing creativity and thoughts by writing and directing...or simply going mad with ideas in the streets or his apartment in New York City... He has been seen performing stand up on NBC with other guests Jars of Clay, Uncle Kracker and Miss America on *dare to dream* 2002. His play *flowers and chocolate*, which he wrote, directed and acted in, questions: What is a true romantic gesture? It was produced in NYC at the prestigious Ensemble Studio Theater. He also wrote and directed the short film *get the script to woody allen*, which deals with the theme of how people think one obsessive gesture will change their entire life. The movie won the Long Island Film Festival Best Short Video and was an Academy Award Considered. Steve is currently directing *driving me crazy* starring Mickey Rooney, Celest Holm, Renee Taylor and Joseph Bologna, and Dick Cavett. He has also just finished writing a TV pilot called *slow your roll*, which has a good chance of appearing on HBO or Showtime.

For this first 29 Palms, CA presentation he contributes his monologues.



*Hi you're listening to "The Lonely Hearts Radio Show", but I know you're really listening to your heart. You pretend it's me you're having a dialogue with but it isn't. Fess up. It's the continuous beating of your heart. You wish it would stop, that you couldn't hear it, because then you could talk yourself into believing you don't have a heart and you can't be hurt anymore. You hear your heart thumping and it makes you mad. Mad because if there were other noises surrounding you, perhaps the noise of another human being interested in you, you wouldn't hear your heart. The pounding noise just underlines with each thud your loneliness. It's A LOT to ask me to FILL in for your unhappiness. Fuck you. I'm lonely too. I know you because I am you. I'm hurt too. So together we despise each other and need each other. Don't turn off your radio, I need you too. We'll be right back after this sickening commercial, I don't want to play it, you don't want to hear it, but we're lonely so we need the NOISE.*

*(after the commercial break)*

*Hi everyone we're back. It's the "Lonely Hearts Radio Show", I repeat it to rub it in that you are alone. The sooner you, me admit it the better. I can't say why? It's my hypothesis for mental health. Other love sick radio shows preach advice on how to get her or him back but the truth is they aren't coming back so we better get that through our thick skulls fast. Get it into our heads because our heart will never forget. It can't forget because it doesn't have a brain, it isn't a bad memory it's more like a gash, a physical tearing that never gets repaired. Too dark? YOU LOVE IT and that's your problem you love. Caller!*

*Sophie Huber* - CINDY THE LONG TERM MOTEL GUEST - She arrives at the motel in a beaten-up, bright colored cabriolet with a white poodle on a silver leash. Every day, an hour before sunset, she leaves her room in high heels, her hair in a gigantic beehive, dressed fancy - so not in tune with her desert white trash environment - and takes off in her car. Nobody knows where and why she is going. She comes back every night at the same time. She is always by herself, her door always closed. She receives packages by mail. She plays out her life and her dreams alone in her room with only her poodle watching - like a movie star without an audience...Then a birthday cake is delivered...



*Sophie Huber will be present for the opening and during the Berlinale Filmfestival.*

*Sophie Huber – develops, writes and plays the character of THE LONG TERM MOTEL GUEST; writes the music for her character, as well as ambience music for the soundtrack, and creates the sound design.*

Before turning to composing film music, Sophie Huber studied acting at The Lee Strasberg Institute in Los Angeles. Later in Berlin, she was involved in a number of multimedia/theater performances and toured with *saints and singing*, an operetta directed by Robert Wilson. In 2001 she and four women working in theater, music and film, formed the film collective Hangover Ltd\*. With the support of Volksbuehne am Rosa-Luxemburg-Platz, the collective has produced four films and one play up to now. The short film *remake* won the first prize at the International Short Film Festival Oberhausen in 2005. Besides co-writing, co-directing and acting in, she wrote the music for all the Hangover Ltd.\* Productions. Currently, Sophie lives and works as a film composer and performer in Los Angeles.

*NOTES - my character is playing with a small, scattered band in the desert at night, with a couple of mariachis or kind of a lost circus band, dreamlike...*

For this first 29 Palms, CA presentation she contributes her music.

*Scott Burns* - THE DOCTOR - He is trying to make himself invincible by getting every disease and then inoculating himself against it. He later tries and fails to cure STEVIE'S broken heart.



Scott Burns – develops, writes and plays the character of THE DOCTOR

Scott Burns produced an inconvenient truth, is currently writing the Bourne Ultimatum and is directing his first feature film *The Half Life of Timothy Beetz* co-starring Radha Mitchell.

*It is interesting to consider that dead human bodies in America take longer to decompose than dead human bodies in Europe...This is believed to be due to the preservatives in the food we eat and might be factored into any kind of disintegration tax placed on food manufacturers who are relying on human containers to break down the unusable portion of their products over time...*

*The doctor believes her heart is weak and advises a regime of long walks in the early morning before the sun is high. He is sweaty and is suffering from violent cramps as a result of the trichinosis and can barely hold the pen as he writes her a prescription for orthopedic walking shoes...When she walks along the highway she is hooted at by passing men, whose faces are stretched strange by the speed of their passing cars... These split-second 70 mph relationships are exhausting but less crippling than longer interactions she has had with other men...She turns from the roadway and walks toward a discarded sofa near a creosote bush...She takes some matches from her pocket and lights the sofa on fire...This seems to help. The doctor convulses on the floor...It only lasts a minute...When it's over he sighs...That wasn't so bad.*

# 29 palms, ca shorts

side winder (13.20 min.)  
a short film by stefanie schneider  
music by jd rudometkin

jean babtiste jd rudometkin  
stevie stefanie schneider



private history turned into an intimate mythology of elemental fantasies where reality is perceived through a veil of psychedelic memories and unconscious projections. such is a collection of passions and dreams, an uncanny diary of ephemeral narratives and mental intensities in Stefanie Schneider's painterly photographs where subjectivity of an ontological doubt uses a poetics of pastiche as a vehicle for an intertextual journey towards the truth and the authenticity of primary emotions. here time is immersed in a nostalgic suspense of oneiric dimension, a sort of ambiguous coma of silence and comfort, and open space embraces a psychotic landscape of solitude and accidental pleasure. fetishized surface of extreme feelings gives a stage for an unsolicited promise of unconditional love and unlimited freedom, a promise framed by sensual tension between fulfillment and expectation.  
Adam Budak, Kunsthaus Graz, Oct 2005

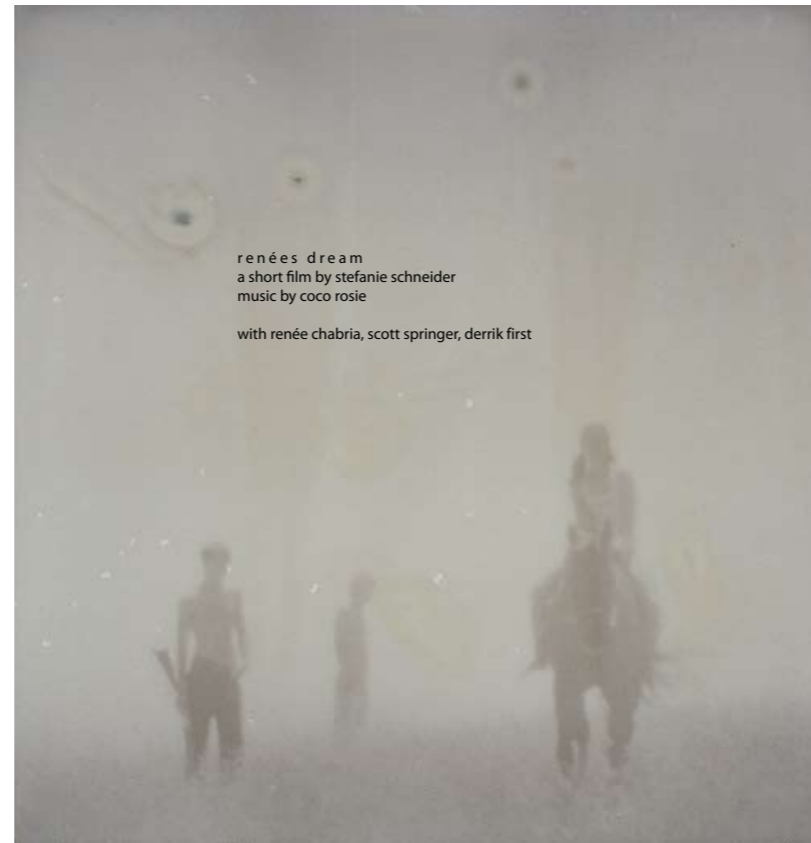
side winder  
a short film by stefanie schneider  
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private history turned into an intimate mythology of elemental fantasies where reality is perceived through a veil of psychedelic memories and unconscious projections. such is a collection of passions and dreams, an uncanny diary of ephemeral narratives and mental intensities in Stefanie Schneider's painterly photographs where subjectivity of an ontological doubt uses a poetics of pastiche as a vehicle for an intertextual journey towards the truth and the authenticity of primary emotions. here time is immersed in a nostalgic suspense of oneiric dimension, a sort of ambiguous coma of silence and comfort, and open space embraces a psychotic landscape of solitude and accidental pleasure. fetishized surface of extreme feelings gives a stage for an unsolicited promise of unconditional love and unlimited freedom, a promise framed by sensual tension between fulfillment and expectation.

Adam Budak, Kunsthaus Graz, Oct 2005 side winder

renées dream (4.29 min.)  
a short film by stefanie schneider  
music by coco rosie

with renée chabria, scott springer,  
derrick first



renées dream  
a short film by stefanie schneider  
music by coco rosie  
with renée chabria, scott springer, derrick first

...In Renés Dream, issues of role reversal take place as the cowgirl on her horse undermines the male stereotype of Richard Prince's 'Marlboro Country'. This photo-work along with several others by Schneider, continue to undermine the focus of the male gaze, for her women are increasingly autonomous and subversive. They challenge the male role of sexual predator, often taking the lead and undermining masculine role play, trading on male fears that their desires can be so easily attained. That she does this by working through archetypal male conventions of American culture, is not the least of the accomplishments in her work. What we are confronted with frequently is of an idyll turned sour, the filmic clichés that Hollywood and American television dramas have promoted for fifty years. The citing of this in the Romantic West, where so many of the male clichés were generated, only adds to the diminishing sense of substance once attributed to these iconic American fabrications. And, that she is able to do this through photographic images rather than film, undercuts the dominance espoused by time-based film. Film feigns to be seamless though we know it is not. Film operates with a story board and setting in which scenes are elaborately arranged and pre-planned. Schneider has thus been able to generate a genre of fragmentary events, the assemblage of a story without a storyboard. But these post-narratological stories require another component, and that component is the viewer who must bring his own interpretation as to what is taking place. If this can be considered the upside of her work, the downside is that she never positions herself by giving a personal opinion as to the events that are taking place in her photographs. But, perhaps, this is nothing more than her use of the operation of chance dictates....

Marc Gisbourne, "Stranger Than Paradise"

hitchhikers (12.41 min.)  
a short film by stefanie schneider  
music by jd rudometkin, zoë bícat,  
max sharam, natalie merchant

with daisy mccrackin, austen tate



hitchhikers  
a short film by stefanie schneider  
music by jd rudometkin, zoë bícat, max sharam, natalie merchant  
with daisy mccrackin, austen tate

*Hitchhiker* (2005), (...) where the sexual contents are made overtly explicit, (...). It is the itinerant coming together of two characters Daisy and Austen, who meet on the road and subsequently share a trailer together. Presented in a sequential DVD and still format, we become party to a would-be relationship of sorts. No information is given as to the background or social origins, or even any reasons as to why these two women should be attracted to each other. Is it acted out? Are they real life experiences? They are women who are sexually free in expressing themselves. But while the initial engagement with the subject is orchestrated by Schneider, and the edited outcome determined by the artist, beyond that we have little information with which to construct a story. The events are commonplace, edgy and uncertain, but the viewer is left to decide as to what they might mean as a narrative. The disaggregated emotions of the work are made evident, the game or role playing, the transitory fantasies palpable, and yet at the same time everything is insubstantial and might fall apart at any moment. The characters relate but they do not present a relationship in any meaningful sense. Or, if they do, it is one driven by the coincidental juxtaposition of random emotions. Should there be an intended syntax it is one that has been stripped of the power to grammatically structure what is being experienced. And, this seems to be the central point of the work, the emptying out not only of a particular American way of life, but the suggestion that the grounds upon which it was once predicated are no longer possible. The photo-novel *Hitchhiker* is porous and the culture of the seventies which it might be said to homage is no longer sustainable. Not without coincidence, perhaps, the decade that was the last ubiquitous age of Polaroid film.

Marc Gisbourne, "Stranger Than Paradise"

Stefanie Schneider  
www.instantdreams.net, www.twentyninepalms.ca

Born: 1968, Cuxhaven, Germany  
1996 MFA, Folkwang Schule, Essen, Germany  
1994-95 Erasmus Scholarship at the Academie Julien, Paris, France  
Lives and works in Los Angeles and Berlin

EXHIBITIONS ( SELECTED )  
/ AUSSTELLUNGEN ( AUSWAHL )

2009  
True Lies, Kunsthaus Essen, Essen, Germany (G), curated by Uwe Schramm (3/6 - 4/19/09)  
29 Palms, CA, Moravian Gallery, Brno, Czech Republic (S) (3/19 - 6/14/09)  
Arthouse 02, Los Angeles, USA, (G)

2008  
Einblicke, Galerie Supper, Karlsruhe, Germany (G)  
Sidewinder / 29 Palms, CA, c.art-Galerie, Dornbirn, Austria (S)  
Love, Städt. Galerie im Palazzo Ducale, Pavullo, Italy (G) (catalog)  
29 Palms, CA, International Filmfestival Amsterdam, Amsterdam, Netherlands  
Sidewinder, Galerie Robert Drees, Hannover, Germany (S)  
Sidewinder, Galerie Thierry Librati, Paris, France (S)  
Les Rencontres d'Arles - Photo Festival South of France, curated by Christian Lacroix (G),  
nominated for the Discovery Award  
Sidewinder, Städtische Galerie am Mozartplatz, Salzburg, Austria (S)  
("Frenzy", Image Presentation Salzburger Festspiele 2008)  
29 Palms, CA, Galerie Spesshardt-Klein, Berlin (S)

2007  
29 Palms, CA, Polanoid, Vienna, Austria (S) (catalog)  
Stefanie Schneider, Galerie Thierry Librati, Paris, France (S)  
Wastelands, Kunstverein Recklinghausen, Recklinghausen, Germany (S)  
Breaking The Waves, Arthouse, Los Angeles, USA, curated by Tim Wride (LACMA), (G)  
Infinite Polar Bear Party, Galerie Amber Abbas former kunstbuero, Vienna, Austria, curated by  
Julie Ryan (G)  
Sidewinder, Scalo l Guye, Los Angeles, USA (S)

2006  
Stay, nd-projects, Zurich, Switzerland (S)  
Artists for Tichy - Tichy for Artists, curated by Adi Hösle and Roman Buxbaum,  
Museum für Moderne Kunst, Passau, Germany (G) (catalog)  
Sidewinder, Artwalk Amsterdam, Amsterdam, Netherlands, curated by Frans Oomen (G)  
Out of the Camera: Analoge Fotografie im digitalen Zeitalter, curated by  
Lars Mextorf, Kunstverein Bielefeld, Bielefeld, Germany (G) (catalog)  
Artists for Tichy - Tichy for Artists, curated by Adi Hösle and Roman Buxbaum,  
The East Bohemian Gallery in Pardubice, Czech Republic (G)  
Hitchhiker, Lumas, Stuttgart, Germany (S)  
Artists for Tichy - Tichy for Artists, curated by Adi Hösle and Roman Buxbaum,  
Moravská Galerie, Brno, Czech Republic, Salon Lessing, Zürich, Switzerland (G) (catalog)  
Stay, Lumas, Berlin, Germany (S)  
c.art-Galerie, Bregenz, Austria (S)  
Stranger Than Paradise, Galerie Robert Drees, Hannover, Germany (S) (catalog)  
Wasteland, Städtische Galerie, Waldkraiburg, Germany (S)  
Wasteland, ZEPHYR - Raum für Fotografie, Mannheim, Germany (S) (catalog)  
Land in Translation, curated by Peter Frank, Riverside Museum, Riverside, CA, USA (G)

BOOK PUBLICATIONS

29 PALMS, CA, Pocket Polaroid Series #004, published by SCHWARZERFREITAG, Berlin  
WASTELANDS published by edition braus, Heidelberg  
STRANGER THAN PARADISE published by hatje cantz verlag, Ostfildern  
29 PALMS, CA published by Galerie Kämpf, Basel

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2006  
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COLLECTIONS ( SELECTED )  
/ SAMMLUNGEN ( AUSWAHL )

DZ Bank, Frankfurt, Germany  
Dreyfuss, Basel, Switzerland  
Schmidt Bank, Regensburg, Germany  
Holtzbrinck Verlag, Stuttgart, Germany  
Sammlung Sander, Berlin, Germany  
Tichy – Ocean Foundation, Zurich, Switzerland  
Germanisches Nationalmuseum, Nürnberg, Germany

PRIVATE COLLECTIONS ( SELECTED )  
/ PRIVATSAMMLUNGEN ( AUSWAHL )

Anthony Kiedes, Los Angeles, USA  
Marc Forster, Los Angeles, USA  
Meghan Mullally, Los Angeles, USA  
Gerard Goodrow, Cologne, Germany  
Rebecka Stewarts, Seattle, USA  
Anita Beckers, Frankfurt, Germany  
Udo Kier, Los Angeles, USA  
Beatrix Millies, Munich, Germany  
Prinz Michael von Liechtenstein, Liechtenstein, Germany  
Ursula Stahel, Zürich, Switzerland  
Mr. and Mrs. Peter O. Price, New York, USA

F I L M

2007 29 PALMS, CA I Director - in production  
a movie on polaroids in collaboration with Radha Mitchell, Max Sharam, Udo Kier, Robert Mack, JD Rudometkin, Marc Forster, René Chabria, Nadia Conners, Daisy McCrackin, Austen Tate, Camille Waldorf, Scott Z Burns, Sophie Huber

2005 STAY I Senior Visual Artist  
Directed by Marc Forster (Monster’s Ball, Finding Neverland) starring Ewan McGregor and Naomi Watts (photographs used for memory sequences, credits, and all art by Naomi Watts and Ryan Gosling provided by Stefanie Schneider)

2000 VOID I Assistant to Director, Still Photographer, Editor, Associate Producer  
feature film directed and written by Dominique A. Faix (supported by Filmstiftung NRW)

1996 TIME TRAVELER I Editor  
Documentary by Dominique A. Faix (45min., 16mm, color) for the NDR, WDR, SFB TV Networks supported by the Filmboard of the State of Hessen, Germany, Nominated for the Adolf Grimme Award 1996, Nominated for German Cinematographer Award in the Category “Editing” 1996, German Cinematographer Award 1996

1996 THE MACHINE I Assistant to Director, Still Photographer, Editor  
Sci-fi Short (15 min., 16mm, color) by Dominique A. Faix, Produced with the financial support of the German Ministry of the Interior