

Übersetzung Filmgespräch

Welcome to our Questions & Answers!

First Question: Can you tell us something about the origination process of the film, Tino?

I wrote the text for "Emerging from the Silence", originally planned it to be a theatre play, but then came covid.. So I thought: well, let's make a film out of it. I've never made a movie before, so it was a really exciting learning-by-doing process for me.

During writing the text I met organizations that work with survivors of sexual violence, also with organizations that work with perpetrators. So different conversations with different people, with survivors of sexualized violence influenced the text.

Next question: What is important to you with the film?

I think what is especially important to me is to raise awareness how difficult it can be to talk about sexualized violence. And how complex it can be to realize that something you probably thought was "love", actually was sexualized violence. I also found it very interesting to learn during research that feeling ashamed can be a defence mechanism. So shame protects you from feeling more painful emotions that you might not be able to deal with at the moment. And it can give you the feeling that you had been able to act. Cause if I blame myself for what happened, then I can talk myself into believing that I could have done something about it. Cause the bad thing about sexualized violence is this powerlessness and that somebody else takes complete control over you.

So what were your thoughts on how to portray the sexualized violence?

What was important to me was to take good care... Well I think there are many aestheticizing depictions of violence, also violence-glorifying depictions, and I really wanted to avoid this. So I tried the film not to be voyeuristic, and, hopefully, not to be retraumatizing, too. So I tried to put the focus on the psychological layer, what happens between the people, and depict especially the psychological violence the perpetrator commits. So the manipulation and the abusive use of the word "love", and how he isolates Chrisi from their social network. So I wanted to show the long-term effects, how the violence affects Chrisi's relationships, their career. So I wanted to focus on this and not give the perpetrator too much stage. We also decided to film quite claustrophobic, to be very close in the violence scenes, also because Chrisi can't remember exactly what physically happened, so it is more about this nightmarish feeling and certain pictures that come to Chrisi's mind over and over again.

What were your thoughts about depiction of the perpetrator?

Well... It was important to me not to depict the perpetrator as a one-dimensional monster. I think that is a depiction one could easily slide into. But that would make it so easy to distance oneself from the perpetrator. Cause if he is a unrealistic monster, then it would not make me reflect about myself and ask myself in what situations I overstep somebody's limits, when do I become a perpetrator? Also I think, this is far more realistic, cause also a perpetrator is never only defined by being a perpetrator. Cause they are also humans with different attributes, also some loveable attributes, and this is exactly what makes it so difficult for Chrisi to realize what happened. And also the perpetrators would not define themselves as perpetrators, which can lead to victim blaming, meaning that the perpetrator accuses the victim, saying: "you didn't say no, you wanted it too..." So he makes up a world that finally makes sense to him. And that's how I wrote it and also how I worked with the actor on the character.

And how was it for you to work with kids on set?

Well it was a challenge, especially at the beginning I thought: this topic, and with kids... A big responsibility. What we did for example, we cooperated with möwe-Kinderschutzzentren, and the

kids had a few counseling sessions. Which was relieving for me to know that there is an external place to go, where the kids might ask differently, cause I'm still kind of an authority figure in my role as a director.

Chrisi falls in love with Anna, a friend from their school days. How do you see the connection of queerness and sexualized violence.

Well, that was an issue that caused me stomach ache, already while writing the script, cause I am well aware that this could lead to false assumptions. For example trying to trace queerness from violence or trauma or something like that, which I definitely don't want to say with the film. I still decided that Chrisi is queer, simply cause I am queer and because it felt closer to me to tell a queer love story, there is enough hetero love stories anyway. How absurd it is to try to trace sexual orientation from trauma becomes plastic when you turn the question upside down. I mean, we'd never ask: Why does she fall in love with a man, did she have bad childhood experiences with her mother? Also I think the film shows, that Chrisi is triggered by being touched and by being close to someone, regardless of the gender of that person. Insofar it wouldn't avail to nothing if Chrisi would "switch" to women, cause the trigger is still there. So I think this shows that queerness and trauma don't have anything to do with each other. Chrisi is queer, cause they are queer. That's it.

What were the biggest difficulties developing the storyline?

I think what was difficult was the question: how do I end this? So I couldn't make a happy end, being: Chrisi made it, they defeated the trauma, that would completely ignore the reality. But still it was important to me to end with a little bit of hope, to show that it is possible to learn to live with the trauma, and that the trauma does not affect everyday life anymore.

The two siblings Lili and Chrisi sometimes talk in dialect and sometimes in standard German. How did this come about?

That's a funny story...

The whole story you find in the long version of this interview.

Thanks to you, and thanks to all of you for watching this video. In case you have questions, you can write us in the commies. You can also send us an e-Mail. Or a letter pigeon. Yes, that's also possible. Or you can reach us with a corded telephone. Exactly, we are on all channels. Thank you!