

# ALL FOR THE COUNTRYSIDE

A FILM BY  
**GESA HOLLERBACH**

WITH **KARIN BERNDT** | **MARIA HEUBUCH** | **GÜNTHER WUCHTERL** | **CHARLY SCHILLINGER**  
EDITOR **CARINA MERGENS** | CINEMATOGRAPHY **JENNIFER GÜNTHER** | SOUND RECORDIST/SOUND DESIGN/MUSIC **JOHANNES WINKLER**  
RE-RECORDING MIXER **GEORG TOMANDL** | COLOR CORRECTION **DIRK MEIER** | RAMON RIGONI | PRODUCTION MANAGER **FLORIAN-MALTE FIMPEL** | **JULIAN BERNER**  
CO-PRODUCERS **ALEXANDER DUMREICHER-IVANCEANU** | **BADY MINCK** | PRODUCERS **ERIK WINKER** | **MARTIN ROELLY**  
A **CORSO FILM** PRODUCTION IN CO-PRODUCTION WITH **AMOUR FOU VIENNA** FUNDED BY **FILM- UND MEDIENSTIFTUNG NRW**  
**DIE BEAUFTRAGTE DER BUNDESREGIERUNG FÜR KULTUR UND MEDIEN** | **LAND NIEDERÖSTERREICH** | **FISA – FILMSTANDORT AUSTRIA**  
IN COLLABORATION WITH **ORF FILM/FERNSEH ABKOMMEN**



# ALL FOR THE COUNTRYSIDE

FEATURE DOCUMENTARY

83 min. / Germany 2019 / 16:9 / 5.1 / HD

Original Language: German / English subs

written and directed by Gesa Hollerbach

produced by CORSO Film

in Co-Production with Amour Fou Vienna

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## SHORT SYNOPSIS

The last school has shut its doors, every other house is empty, there are only rapeseed fields as far as the eye can see. The last holdovers in the country are faced with the decision: stay or go?

“All for the Countryside” traces a host of societal phenomena that are caused by changing dynamics in rural areas and follows four individuals over the course of several years, each of whom give unexpected impulses to life on the countryside. The quartet consists of a mayor who’s stuck between the front lines when parents resort to illegal protest classes to prevent the closing of the local middle school; a farmer who enters the political sector and tries to exercise political pressure in the EU parliament against

the practice of land concentration in Europe; and an astronomer who together with a local restaurant owner fights for the protection of our natural skies by attempting to obtain UNESCO status for an unknown village. While each of the quartet has completely different backgrounds, they are united in their strong belief in the power of the individual and the courage to enter uncharted territory with their actions. The film dives deep into their personal microcosms and shows what can be done to prevent the eradication of the European countryside. The story is a profoundly European one, as all across Europe people living in the countryside are faced with similar challenges.



## SYNOPSIS

The concentration of tillable land, structural changes and rural exodus are all poised to fundamentally change life in the countryside in the years to come. Even now, villages are fighting for their survival and entire areas are soon to become wastelands. But are there truly no longer any prospects?

Karin Berndt is the independent mayor Seifhennersdorf, once one of the largest industrial villages in former East Germany. Since the fall of the Berlin Wall, the town has lost over half of its 10,000 inhabitants, leaving a slew of homes, factories and businesses empty in its wake. When the Saxonian Ministry of Education decides to close the middle school, the town resists: "The capriciousness with which the authorities are acting has produced a feeling of anger and disbelief", says Karin Berndt. Out of protest, parents and the mayor concoct a bold plan: they sue the Free State of Saxony and continue running the school in breach of the law with the help of retired teachers. A desperate appeal to the rest of Germany and a glimmer of hope for Karin Berndt—she has come to understand that desperate times call for desperate measures.

With the ever-increasing presence of agricultural plants, there is a palpable change in the local agricultural community. The consequences of the practice of land grabbing are very concerning, as it puts diversity of species and social structures at risk and feeds an unyielding downward spiral of rural exodus, over ageing, desertification and widespread vacancies. It's a spiral that is hard to

break—but that is exactly the task Maria Heubuch has set out to tackle. In real life, she is a farmer and runs a small family operation in South Germany, but in 2014 she was elected to the European Parliament as a representative of the Green Party. Needless to say, it fundamentally changed her life. "Land grabbing no longer a problem confined to far-off places in Africa or Asia. It is going on in our backyard. But the European public hears so little about it." A fact that Maria Heubuch wants to use her mandate to.

"Only from the countryside you can reach for the stars", says astronomer Günther Wuchterl. But today even in rural areas, it is becoming harder and harder to gaze up at the universe clearly as light pollution is increasing quickly. One place that has managed to stave off the invading light is the small town of Großmugl. Situated in a sleepy blind spot near Vienna, Großmugl boasts unparalleled darkness and thus provides views of the Milky Way and up to 5000 stars with the naked eye. To retain this unique situation, Günther Wuchterl is seeking protection of the sky in the form of World Heritage Status from UNESCO. No easy task as protecting the sky is new terrain and would be the first time in the history of UNESCO.

The film "ALL FOR THE COUNTRYSIDE" traces various societal developments and their impacts on life in the countryside to make them all the more palpable. The film follows its protagonists over the course of several years and crosses paths with people who are able to leverage their vision to affect change.

Sometimes that is only in the minds of their neighbors, but sometimes also affecting change with authorities and politicians. The film provides a close look at the interconnectedness of political decisions and delivers a humorous portrayal

of what can be done to stop the demise of the countryside. The film is a pointedly European one as people across the continent's countryside are faced with similar challenges.



## DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

When I visited my in-laws for the first time years ago, it shocked me as a city girl: my husband's parents lived on a small farm in the middle of nowhere. All around us was nothing, just fields, meadows and a single highway. Can you really live here? You needed to take the car to get whatever you needed. There was no bakery, no pub, no doctor and no people. Just a sea of green.

Life on the countryside may seem more idyllic to urbanites than to those who have experienced it since their youth. But in the meantime, it has become clear to everyone that this life has a host of problems: isolation, over ageing, emptiness. But is that really everything?

My film is not intended to make use of old clichés about the demise of life on the countryside. It is about individuals who passionately and humorously assert themselves in an environment that demands a great deal of dedication and oftentimes leads to a sense of despair. The film is intended to follow their view of the world and to make a social problem, which is occurring all across Europe, tangible to us and to portray it from a new and unusual perspective.

Countryside. Thanks to my protagonists it is no longer a description of place, but a state of mind. Something worth holding on to, no matter where you are from.

# TEAM

with

**Karin Berndt  
Maria Heubuch  
Günther Wuchterl  
Charly Schillinger**

Script and Director

**Gesa Hollerbach**

Editor

**Carina Mergens**

Cinematography

**Jennifer Günther**

Sound Recordist

**Johannes Winkler**

Director Additional Shooting

**Carina Mergens**

Additional Cinematography

**Henning Drechsler**

Additional Sound Recordist

**Ken Rischard  
Filipp Forberg  
Sergey Martynyuk**

Re-Recording Mixer

**Georg Tomandl**

Color Correction

**Dirk Meier · Ramon Rigoni**

Music

**Johannes Winkler**

Graphic Art

**Thomas Schmidl**

Production Manager CORSO

**Florian-Malte Fimpel**

Production Manager AMOUR FOU

**Julian Berner**

Co-Producers

**Alexander Dumreicher-Ivanceanu  
Bady Minck**

Producers

**Erik Winker  
Martin Roelly**

a production by **CORSO Film**

In co-production with **AMOUR FOU Vienna**

funded by **Film- und Medienstiftung NRW**

**Die Beauftragte der Bundesregierung für Kultur und Medien  
Land Niederösterreich · FISA - Filmstandort Austria**

in collaboration with **ORF Film/Fernseh-Abkommen**





## GESA HOLLERBACH

Gesa Hollerbach was born in 1977 and is living with her family in Cologne. She studied communication design at the University of Applied Sciences Dues-seldorf and finished her studies in 2006 with the documentary film ‚Etwas fuer lange Zeit‘ in the course of her diploma. The film was nominated for the First Steps Awards. 2007 to 2011 she studied as a postgraduate at the Academy of Media Arts Cologne, her graduation film ‚Die Muehen der Ebene‘ was released in theatres in 2012.

She worked as an assistant editor and production assistant at various full-length documentary productions for television and cinema and since 2006 as a freelance documentary filmmaker and editor. For the development of her current feature-length documentary „Landretter“ („All for the Countryside“) she received a Gerd-Ruge-Grant.

## FILMOGRAPHY (SELECTION)

### LANDRETTTER

Documentary, 83 min, CORSO Film & AMOUR FOU Vienna

### WEGE AUS DER GEWALT

Documentary, 30 min, 2016, Diakonie

### DIE MÜHEN DER EBENE

Documentary, 84 min, 2012, KHM & Vizion

### OHRENKUSS

Documentary, 55 min, 2010, KHM

### ETWAS FÜR LANGE ZEIT

Documentary, 29 min, 2006, FH Düsseldorf



## CORSO FILM

The beginnings of CORSO Film lie in the year 2008 when Erik Winker, Martin Roelly and Andreas Brauer founded the production company HUPE Film in Cologne/Germany. With increasing success the company produced documentaries and fiction films for the national and international market. Until today the team considers intensive plot development and close cooperation with the authors most important. The films of the company are screened regularly on festivals worldwide and have been awarded several times. Since August 2016 Martin Roelly and Erik Winker are running the company under the new name CORSO Film. In December 2017 the company launched a new office in Stuttgart in South-Germany, led by Ümit Uludag.

The credits of CORSO Film include successful films such as **WORK HARD PLAY HARD** by Carmen Losmann (FIPRESCI

Prize DOK Leipzig, Prize of the Ecumenical Jury DOK Leipzig, Grimme Award), **FIGHTER** by Susanne Binninger (German Camera Award, preselected for the German Film Awards), **SEARCHING EVA** by Pia Hellenthal (Berlinale Panorama, Special Mention Int. Competition CPH:DOX, Audience Award Athens, HOT DOCS, Sheffield) or **HAPPY** by Carolin Genreith (German Critics' Award, Best Documentary Film Festival Bozen, preselected for the German Film Awards) and international co-productions like **A WOMAN CAPTURED** by Bernadett Tuza-Ritter (Documentary Competition Sundance, Main Competition IDFA, nominated for the European Film Awards), **15 CORNERS OF THE WORLD** by Zuzanna Solakiewicz (Award of the Semaine de la Critique Locarno, International Competition DOK Leipzig) or **AIDA'S SECRETS** by Alon Schwarz (HOT DOCS Toronto, Audience Award Doc Aviv).





# AMOUR FOU

Founded in Vienna in 2001, **AMOUR FOU** realises artistically exceptional feature, documentary and short films.

Throughout the process **AMOUR FOU** stands for vision and pushing the envelope, whether in regard to aesthetics, production or distribution strategies. The focus is on European independent auteur cinema and the distinctive “hand-writing” of the directors who work with **AMOUR FOU**. The associate partners of **AMOUR FOU Vienna** and **AMOUR FOU Luxembourg** are Bady Minck and Alexander Dumreicher-Ivanceanu.

## FILMS (SELECTION)

### STYX

A film by Wolfgang Fischer  
Germany / Austria | 90 min

### ICEMAN

A film by Felix Randau  
Germany / Italy / Austria | 93 min

### MAPPAMUNDI

A film by Bady Minck  
Luxembourg / Austria | 45 min

### NIGHT OF A 1000 HOURS

A film by Virgil Widrich  
Luxembourg / Austria / Netherlands | 92 min

### DREAMS REWIRED

A documentary by Manu Luksch,  
Martin Reinhart & Thomas Tode  
Austria / Germany / UK | 2015 | 85 min

### CASANOVA VARIATIONS

A film by Michael Sturminger  
Austria / France / Germany | 2014 | 118 min

### FEVER

A film by Elfi Mikesch  
Luxembourg / Austria | 2013 | 80 min

### THE NOTEBOOK

A film by János Szász  
(based on the novel by Ágota Kristóf)  
Germany / Hungary / Austria / France | 2013 | 101 min

