

Talk between Heinz Emigholz and Klaus Wyborny on December 6th, 2009

Transcription of video interview that was released on the DVD "The Formative Years (II)":

Heinz Emigholz: The Bolex that these films were shot on was yours. It was a real workhorse in those days.

Klaus Wyborny: I bought it at a pawn shop in Hamburg on Hansaplatz for 2000 D-marks with the three included lenses.

E: But I had a zoom lens.

W: I bought that later. When I noticed that one had very limited possibilities for filming with those three included lenses, the 10, the 26 and the 75. And I would have liked to have a lens somewhere in between.

E: Of course the *Schenec-Tady* films wouldn't have been possible at all without the zoom lens, because I drew these focal length values onto it and composed that way.

W: I shot *Die Geburt der Nation* in Morocco with the camera. After I returned I got to know you more distinctly. You had asked if you could borrow it at some point. Then you showed me the script. Then I thought, this certainly won't do the camera any good.

E: Not only that. It broke. We had to have it repaired. The shutter was completely wasted after maybe 20,000 single frames.

W: If one looks at this score here. Oh, the things one does for art. But the camera isn't holy.

E: Did you know then that this was art? The relationship between film and art was indeed somewhat tense back then.

W: You're totally right. I was also unable to understand myself as an artist then. I had the feeling we were in a research institute. Maybe I felt this because I had previously studied physics. For me it was self-evident that if one does something, then one should move along the cutting edge of the remotely possible. I discovered this in film in America in 1968/69. There was a whole generation of filmmakers there that stretched the preexisting possibilities so far. They really walked on uncharted territory and achieved research results, in a way. That was one thing I found totally interesting. Connecting the lyrical, the personal expression, with research work. I immediately discovered a similar thinking in you. That was something which didn't exist before.

E: Actually, I didn't want to have anything whatsoever to do with film. The motivation to make something like, say, a narrative film or representation was nonexistent. I had begun to make films with Rüdiger Neumann in 1968. In standard 8, then on 16mm. I

don't know anymore where the camera came from. It was a big pool of borrowed equipment. I still had such a naïve understanding of film. You were in America in 1968?

W: I had studied physics. And then a lecturer in statistical mechanics intervened to get me a job as an assistant in the physics department at Yeshiva University. We made investigations into quantum field theory and neutron stars there. The big advance in black holes emerged then. But simultaneously I made films and observed people like Jack Smith, and I got to know Ken Jacobs and Jonas Mekas.

E: After that they also appeared in the *Hamburger Filmcoop*. In the first years I participated more as a consumer at the *Filmschau*. But actually for me the first real break into filmmaking wasn't until 1971/72, when I realized that Hegel and philosophy at the university were slowly driving me crazy. Especially under those circumstances at the university. I don't know how it went for you. I thought it was totally vulgar.

W: Oh, you mean with the Marxism, the whole...

E: I wouldn't say that at all, but it was amazing to see who was going on about turning all things Hegel upside down. The simple truth is that this kind of thinking became unattractive over time. I was very interested in literature. All the films have literary dedications. In *Schenec-Tady* 'for Birnam Wood' is the dedication. That was from *Macbeth*, this vision that the forest is coming towards you. It's not possible at all, but technically it actually is possible. Or the second film was 'for Alchimie du verbe' by Rimbaud.

E: And then there was Arthur Gordon Pym. I believe you had Melville. You also named your company after that.

W: Typee Film. I thought Conrad was really amazing.

E: I sometimes ask myself if the connection to literature for us wasn't much purer or stricter than our connection to film.

W: I can't say for myself. I had a quite solid film education in a student's film society..

E: Oh, that was available then?

W: We showed films in Audimax. Back then there was such a hunger for these film-art films that thousands of people quickly came, all of whom paid one D-mark. Then we immediately earned a thousand marks at each screening. We put the money into our own film productions with Costard and Struck and others. We also had an editing table. You worked on it too.

E: It was downstairs in the *Philosophenturm*. I was there once.

W: Underneath the *Philosophenturm* there was this little workshop. We systematically brought all film art from all over the world there. Ozu films from Japan and stuff like that. Hence I had a quite thorough education in film history. I knew practically the entire history of film when I started to make films.

E: That was still a time when a considerable amount of very good films played on television.

W: No, they weren't yet playing on television, but they were in the cinema. That was later, around 1970. 60s television was an absolute desert in terms of film. There were only made-for-TV movies, but the film art scene was still relatively active. It was a given that Bergmann films came to the cinema. Godard films were also in the cinema.

E: For me, the stimulation, the possibility that things can be done differently, came from the Americans.

W: P. Adam Sitney, who came to Hamburg in 1966 or 67, was quite crucial. That's very clear.

E: And for me Larry Gottheim was crucial. I don't know anymore when he came. *Schenec-Tady* came out in London at the film festival. His film was there too.

W: *Die Geburt der Nation* screened there too.

E: And after that, I believe Larry Gottheim came to Hamburg to the *Filmschau*.

W: I think he came earlier than that. That was in '72, after I shot the Morocco film with this camera.

E: You shot it in '72?

W: It was finished in 1973. Then there was a *Filmschau* in Hamburg where the premiere was. Klaus Feddermann purchased American films for that. He had gotten some allocation, 20,000 marks. For that he purchased practically all the good films from then which are now still distributed by *Arsenal*. It was a truly spectacular *Filmschau*. One which showed practically all the new American work.

E: Yes, I saw it too.

W: Larry was there too. I remember.

E: But I didn't get to know him there.

W: I think it was through contact with him that we were able to go to London.

E: I have no memory of that anymore.

W: That was the decisive moment, this London festival at the end of 1973. Our stuff sort of journeyed out into the world then. Before that it was more of a provincial event.

E: Simon Fields was also there, and Tony Rayns, and others from *Time Out*. They later went to the ICA and did programming there. And of course the London Film Coop was there.

W: That was a 14-day festival where practically everything screened. The last film by Makropoulos screened as the opening film for *Die Geburt der Nation*.

E: It was critical for me to take advantage of the first opportunity to go to America.

W: I can imagine.

E: In order to relativize this insanity that one had to deal with. Without leaving, things would have ended badly.

W: Let's return to *Schenec-Tady*. This unbelievable sophistication, it baffled me even then. That before you began shooting, you composed such a crazy score with these geometric diagrams.

E: Those are all merely notation systems.

W: I know. I think I have a picture of you from then. A light bulb which you so pointillistically checkered. You had a way of embracing pickiness then, didn't you?

E: You have a really good picture of mine, there's a palm tree or something on it. Do you still own it?

W: Yes, I still have it.

E: I've thought before about buying it back.

W: I recently wanted to burn it.

E: Why did you want to burn it?

W: Because I had to give up my studio. Of course it's just a joke. I didn't want to burn it.

E: Then I'll buy it from you, for 200 Euros. I believe that's how much you paid for it then.

W: What, really? No, it's still so dear to me, that picture. You definitely had a way of thinking in small details.

E: I'll tell you something regarding the pickiness. That was actually an occupational illness. As a retoucher you have to achieve invisible work. If there's any little speck visible, then it's a mistake. This carried over a little. I've always tried to get that out of my system. Firstly to get rid of the occupation itself, and then to do something else. It's true that a kind of meticulousness was left over. Except that here, this notational system is absolutely necessary. You have to come back to a point in a system of coordinates in order to even make a composition with single frames. That was the crux of the matter. One has to do this when one ceases to understand filmic movement as linear strips.

W: I found that altogether baffling, that this suddenly came from you, after I had seen *Caspar David Friedrich*, the long tracking shots, that Rüdiger did there as a remake. I

immediately saw it as a remake. Then Rüdiger said that it was his film. I hadn't learned until then that there was this ghostly Emigholz personality behind it all. Back then I didn't know you yet at all.

E: But I didn't want to have anything more whatsoever to do with film. That was 1970, wasn't it?

W: When I got to know Rüdiger, he said to me, 'I've made a film'. It was for all practical purposes a remake of an 8mm film that you made. Full of Indians that were stuck into the sand in Denmark.

E: I still have all those films.

W: That was something like the celebration of continuous space, if you want to put it so pathetically. And then suddenly this, the thoroughly chopped up world.

E: But there was this intermediate period when the film image completely collapsed into itself for me.

W: How come?

E: You begin by naively gondoliering around, add to it pop music and blablabla, walking around kind of funny, maybe even putting on makeup, and anything else you can imagine. It appears to be a matter of course. But already a year later I thought it was ridiculous. Of course it's because one could end up with a formed film rather quickly back then. Particularly through these new forms of film which were disseminated by the film coops. One tells oneself, I'm not meant to be damned to stagnate in a regressive state.

W: You had seen these kinds of films? When you showed me *Schenec-Tady*, I had to think of Michael Snow's *La Région Centrale*, which also showed in the program. Your film was an answer to this, so to speak, or maybe a further development. I already said it a short while ago, that this further development always played a role. I also thought that it was a further development of Snow, that you brought it into this single-frame fragmentation.

E: Also *Back and Forth*. But I always had the feeling that I was making something totally different. Snow always worked with live action movement.

W: For him it was about actual space and photography as an artificial level. He was always playing in between those things.

E: I thought that it's something quite different when one splinters it and creates an entirely artificial movement. It can sometimes look similar in its result, also through the crazy speed, but that would be more like swished images. For me it was something else, logically. It was interesting to begin history once again logically. Funny, in that time one fancied that this is even possible. Of course it also had to do with this dawning of a new situation, that one thinks it's possible to start again from the beginning. That actually one must decide to cancel one's university studies. That was indeed clear enough, continuing studies isn't possible there. I have to arrive at something which really interests me.

W: Oh, you really understood it as a societal impossibility? I stopped studying then, too, when I came back here from America. But with me it was no longer possible psychically.

E: But isn't that perhaps the same?

W: I didn't have anything to whine about during my studies. I had fantastic professors. Physics wasn't corrupted by '68. They certainly didn't have the gumption for it. It was therefore an intact course of study. But I didn't have the psychic strength—also because of these drugs in America—to concern myself with physics any longer. Film was simply more interesting in many ways.

E: Two weeks ago we saw *Bartleby*, that's already later, 1977. But the earlier films owed something to a certain scene, with pop music.

W: Absolutely. Zeitgeist.

E: Being active as a Communard or something, living together with other people.

W: I felt quite comfortable in that sort of communal nest. Cultivating this lifestyle was always one of my core motivations back then. I found all of that much more interesting than theoretical physics. The nervous breakdown, that came actually at the beginning of the 70s.

E: One got labeled. This one is the structural and the other one is the narrative. The one is absolutely unpoetic, because it has to do with digits. I remember while we were once in America simultaneously, I got super angry with you. You did an interview with Jonas Mekas and said that you did not deal with numbers and with digits. What's this bullshit he's saying, I thought. It wasn't at all about numbers and digits, but rather about an energetic product.

W: I know what you're saying. That was about permutations. In art there was a kind of big movement. Hanne Darboven and so on, who raised permutation to the highest art in human history.

E: Oh yeah, that whole story.

W: After celebrating the number and digit, they believed that expression was no longer necessary.

E: Of course I immediately heard that in reference to myself.

W: That's normal egocentricity. I know that, too. One always thinks one is at the center of the universe, and every secondary phrase that gets uttered is actually just a masked, deep-seated insult.

E: Obliteration.

W: Obliteration, exactly.

E: To continue that story is quite interesting. So art could act through conceptual abstraction. But I thought this funny concept was entirely off the mark, to tidily write down so many numbers every day. The interesting thing about film was, in fact, that it still has to do with photographic depiction and with a surface of reality. That it wasn't merely a statement or a gesture. I believe that went as far as this group of literati and artists in Hamburg where we did shows then, in Hilka Nordhausen's *Buch Handlung Welt*. Hilka came from Franz Erhard Walther and always did these gestural drawings. I always said "knock-knock, anyone home?" That was a really odd conflict.

W: Maybe the pickiness comes from there, too, the pickiness you've preserved until today. The cleanly well-developed, the urge toward 35mm, in this HD format, the super cameras. So the dust particle should practically be eliminated.

E: No, it should be shown rather than being eliminated.

W: Okay sure, the dust particle should be shown.

E: I think it depends on what kind of comprehension one has of poetics. On which level does something take place when something new is constructed. You're right about that up to a certain point. A realistic depiction interested me more than before. In contrast, these films are essentially abstract, abstract time.

W: How did you come up with the title *Schenec-Tady*? The title was indeed surprising. You didn't shoot in Schenectady, New York, but rather in the Taunus Mountains. And how did you come up with the Taunus Mountains as a location? That's an eccentric choice when one lives in Hamburg.

E: I didn't know what Schenectady is. I didn't know that it's a city in New York state. I collected postcards back then. In Hamburg I found a box on the street in front of our house. It contained old American postcards.

W: The colorized ones?

E: Curt Teich Company from the 30s, Chicago.

W: Oh yeah, the ones with the sunsets.

E: Altogether abstract, completely retouched, color. That impressed me because of my profession.

W: Oh, I understand!

E: One had the title "A Scene Near Schenectady, New York". Schenec-Tady, I thought, sounds kind of fragmented, like you make your films. And then I thought I'll take the title for my film. Quite a clumsy thought. It's actually an onomatopoeic title. Larry told me later on what it means. It's Indian for 'beautiful view'.

W: It's 360 degrees, here is this panorama. I see that you practically used 360 degrees as an angle.

E: That was 240 points. In any case it was an apportionment on the tripod.

W: And this panorama was practically chopped up into single frames one-by-one?

E: At first the panorama provides you with a circuit. And then at each point, your focal length provides you with another 24 points. Then you have 24 times 240 possible points. Within these possibilities I wrote down a track upon which two different movements run reciprocally, or parallel to one another. But they utilize a limited spectrum of frame positions. With the whole thing, it's impossible to manage any ordered composition.

W: What amazed me was that your fundamental unit of material back then was not one frame, but four or three frames.

E: It's not so. Those were all single frames. But sometimes I made two frames on one point in order to create another speed. For example in the film *Schenec-Tady III*, there are always single frames, but blocks of six and then six black frames, into which the inverted negative was copied. In itself this played a fluid movement.

W: Looking at those things is really a gorgeous experience. I must have seen the whole thing 40 or 50 times, the whole series. In different situations, in Hamburg, or then in London or in New York. I remember a screening in Buffalo or in Columbus. One always enters a kind of meditative state where happiness hormones get released. Above all when the whole series came out, which lasted for one hour. Can you explain how the series unfolded? First there was *Schenec-Tady I*, the raw version, in effect, that was shot in the Taunus Mountains. But this wasn't enough for you?

E: *Schenec-Tady I*, that was 43 minutes. By the way this version was shown in London, maybe even at the *Filmschau*. I took the middle part out of this, the part with the black frames, and made *Schenec-Tady III* out of it. A self-contained film with this negative idea.

W: With a constant change between the positive and negative.

E: *Schenec-Tady* starts slowly, and then it builds and gets increasingly insane. And then this decreases again through my copying it from the end forward. But I wanted to do the whole thing again in color, that was *Schenec-Tady II*.

W: What was *Schenec-Tady II*?

E: *Schenec-Tady II* was shot in a dune landscape in Denmark. It starts quite wildly and then gets slow in the middle. And also basically shows the changes in a day's light, it continues into the night. Afterwards, one can only see twilight over the dunes.

W: And *Arrowplane* emerged during the same time period?

E: *Arrowplane* was made in 1974. It was the idea, I have to disassemble a problem, namely, what is a 180 degree pan? This was an idea against linearity. So, I would like to multiply every point of a pan with every other point. If this is the pan here, then it becomes segmented. Then there is this pan, but then there's a second connotation of

single frames so that the pan, displaced, begins once more. You thereby have several pan points...

W: Two pans, so to speak, basically not through movement, but through time. A rapid parallel montage of two pans.

E: They disconnect from one another and then come closer again. That was an attempt to draw this. But here's what happens, in a sci-fi kind of way: You have a linear time, it was indeed shot in linear time. When one frame represents a pan, then the next one represents the second pan. You in fact have two pans that disconnect from one another. But simultaneously it is imbedded that this is a linear time, albeit one which represents two different movements. Something interesting materializes. Normally one says that movement represents time.

W: Yes, that's right.

E: This gets broken here, because here movement suddenly represents two or three times. For me this was science fiction or, like you say, science.

W: I've seen the films 40 or 50 times, and that was most definitely another feeling for time than the one felt while watching other films. There were different approaches, like with Paul Sharitis, where some kind of new continuum emerged. But Paul always worked more with abstract images, with this pulsating flicker. And with you the actual photography input was very strong. This detached from representative time and created a unique framing of time. It was always a beautiful feeling, seeing that.

E: I was a nervous guy who couldn't articulate himself. I don't know if you remember. The films simply tranquilized me. Looking at them had a fantastic effect. I saw them a hundred times. That was indeed a private production.

W: Another thing which came to my mind. I always have the impression that we're the only filmmakers who enjoy watching their own films. I don't let any chance pass me by, if a film of mine is being shown somewhere, to go inside and see it, if possible. I get feelings of absolute happiness, even in the most pitiful screenings, when only four or five people sit in the audience. Many colleagues from the narrative film scene, people I'd like to meet, and I go because I expect them to watch their films, because it's a great gift, a film projection. But they always race out as if they're disgusted by their own film.

E: But that makes total sense. They run into completely different rules. If their film doesn't work during one viewing, they've lost. Because the capital is not realized, the people aren't going to pay, or who the hell knows what. Recently I once again saw the Goff film after a couple of years. And this time I saw how someone looks out the window suddenly, and I had never seen him before that. I see something new each and every time. That's also why I always go back. Because it's not so, that you've filmed your story, as refined as possible, so that it will work, with suspense and blablabla. If you've made such a film, then why should you watch it twice? If it works, then it just works. And if it doesn't, all you can do is look at your mistakes, why it doesn't work.

W: I always designed my films so that they would offer a richness of insight, and do so at the outer limits of that which was even possible for me at this particular point in time. This outer limit hasn't shifted at all in many fields. In other words, I'm still at the limits of what is even possible for me. And when I see it, I sense a little bit what might still be possible.

E: That's the good thing about the films that one likes. Because one likes them because they give you the drive to take one step further and cross over this boundary. These films can't be retold. You can't say, I'm planning to make a film with two pans. It comes to fruition only in the moment of watching, and then it's gone again after that. That's a language that only works in the projection.

W: This is on the roof on Eppendorfer Landstrasse. Is *Arrowplane* also on the DVD?

E: Yes, all seven films. The locations were always extremely important to me. It was three locations with *Arrowplane*. Horneburg and Hamburg, where we lived.

W: What was in Horneburg?

E: Silke Grossmann lived there.

W: I know, but what did you shoot there?

E: A hill in a meadow, but it had this form which is staggered. And then we traveled again to Denmark. There was this completely smooth horizon. Only the beach underneath had changes. And then the city ruins everything with its vertical forms. And then in *Tide*, the bridge, and in order to get the traffic in there.

W: I saw *Tide* as a very beautiful complement to *Schenec-Tady*, because this elevator bridge had such a bulky mass. *Schenec-Tady* with its frayed-out forms was relatively agreeable to the eye. Despite the crazy choppiness, long passages with significant fluidity emerge. Where one has the feeling that one is gliding over and away from this forest. Not so much that this forest starts moving closer to you, like Birnam Wood in *Macbeth*, but rather, I felt like I was flying often in this film. While in *Tide*, this pan, the one with the elevator bridge, this bulky mass, had a tendency towards jump cuts. The thing had more of an impulse towards immensity.

E: That was a very interesting place in the port of Hamburg across from the Rethebrücke. A still run-down part of the port. Nothing like this exists anymore. Where these collapsing harbor walls from World War II still stood.

W: The area has changed dramatically, through the container ship traffic.

E: These huge blocks stood there, grain silos. The Rethebrücke was there, which was an elevator bridge. There was ship traffic that ran parallel and traffic that came toward the camera. And then there were kinds of weird bends in time because of the pan, 180 degrees, which kept going back and forth. In *Arrowplane* it's always going in one direction.

W: Also ebb and flow.

E: One pan went like this, then it dropped off. The one stayed like this, and then it went whoosh-whoosh. Which means these industrial situations were perpetually smashing against each other. And these ships were sailing through. It always depended on how fast I was. Sometimes they were slower, and sometimes faster. And then the water kept going out and in. That was something else than this *Schenec-Tady*, which was a forest scenery. A forest's edge, approximately equidistant from the camera on all sides. Friends of mine in Frankfurt found it.

W: Oh, friends found it for you.

E: Reinhold Batberger and Ria Endres found it.

W: Oh Ria. We met her again later on.

E: They lived there in Frankfurt and were very politically active. They drove me there every morning and every evening they picked me up.

W: Three weeks, or how long did it take?

E: That was in winter.

W: Oh, in winter? Monet also always worked in winter.

E: There is a small passage with snowflakes, but it's hardly visible. This relation to location was the transition into another kind of filmmaking. One sees this in *Hotel*, how it transitioned to another kind of photography. I worked together with Silke Grossmann at that time. At length we considered how space can be depicted, and what about this actually interests us. These films up until *Hotel* are indeed, as far as the camera is concerned, pretty traditional. Meaning neatly aligned, parallel to the horizon.

W: That's right. The pan is of course an absurdity if it appears to be crooked. It only has sex appeal if the horizon is valid. Fundamentally, it's a rebellion against the horizon, this choppiness.

E: But one can make really nice pans outside of the horizontal and vertical. It makes me think of what we did together in *D'Annunzio's Cave*, these continual dashes through the space. It has little to do with the normal pan. They're more like tracks or movements.

W: It has more to do with walking, with body movements.

E: You said literature was not really the center. But I have to say for me that some filmmakers, Joseph von Sternberg for sure, also in artificiality...

W: He surfaces time and again in your drawings. I marveled at that, that such a manic pursuit of von Sternberg comes out of your drawings.

E: Well, I thought the films were fabulous. You also mentioned Jack Smith. Of course he was great in his demeanor, but the demeanor was actually more interesting than the results. One made very different things than these people did.

W: Which demeanor?

E: We live in a rented world, and so on. This romantic anti-capitalistic rebellion. It was interesting that these nervous breakdowns we had, if one can even call them that—mine happened at the end of university—they had to do with going out into the landscape and start with something new. One knew that there's another world beyond the German dilemma. And that had to do with the USA back then, where one had the feeling that intelligence was congregating in the field. Which wasn't the case in Germany. Later on, computerization made it quite different. One had the feeling in the 80s and 90s that the intelligence was migrating into computerization while film lay idle.

W: That was an interesting movement, this distribution of intelligence into the different directions in art, which is really dependent on time. One has the feeling that certain media are hot. And as a young person, one takes them on. Film was a hot medium until the mid-70s. Then it somehow dwindled. One can draw parallels to the rise of feminism, because women sort of appropriated it as their own domain. It strayed from this radical research on uncharted territory. It became uncharted territory more sociologically.

E: The uncharted territory was in the content, this is doubtless the case.

W: The uncharted territory became dependent on content, and the image itself was no longer a big question. It became a ritual at most.

E: In this way one became a freak if one insisted on it. At some point it was said, it's entirely obvious that this is a technical medium.

W: It's been researched, we don't need to fool around so much anymore.

E: But when I started with the film *Normalsatz* after doing *Demon*, I was pretty much derailed from this avant-garde experimental film track, too. Because the hardcore people couldn't connect to any movement towards a psychological area.

W: Everything gets compartmentalized. But this centrifugal force is what happens with these art movements. Each person grows in their own direction, and everyone goes their separate way.

E: There were several exhibitions in those years. Birgit Hein did *Film as Film*. She also curated the *documenta* in 1976. She didn't include you, for example, as your work was considered too narrative. She had a hardcore concept of structuralist film in which I didn't feel comfortable at all. Nevertheless one became co-opted by it. At the same time it was her attempt to make contact with the art world, where it's apparently easier nowadays to implement such severe concepts. But back then it failed completely. The films were in fact at *documenta 6* in an external department and in a big exhibition at the Hayward Gallery, but it received absolutely no publicity. She told me recently that there wasn't a single article about the films at *documenta*. Because it was still absolutely taboo in the art world.

W: Sharits did some things with some success.

E: He was also at that *documenta* then.

W: He did some stuff in New York. Then there was *Artforum*.

E: In a gallery?

W: Yes, in a gallery. There was the article in *Artforum* by Rosalind Krauss. He was the only one who transformed films into installations with any success.

E: In *Artforum* there were also articles about *Tom, Tom, the Piper's Son* and about Ernie Gehr. *Artforum* followed it.

W: That's right. There was also a lot about Michael Snow, too.

E: Annette Michelson put a lot of work into it. But it was never as successful as the new painters, who could really sell something. On the production level, art was ridiculous. What does one get out of showing films in a museum? Not money for a new film.

W: Farocki has now taken the leap into the museum. After these television channels got increasingly stalled, Harun had quite a nightmarish experience with his Romania film. He showed it here in Berlin and only had one or three people in the cinema's audience. Then he thought, I'd rather put my work in the museums. Though there aren't so many more viewers at a given moment, it still sums up more significantly than when one produces selected cinema shows.

E: The problem with the museum is that everyone wanders past it. It's art-in-passing there.

W: Yes, of course.

E: This is a problem now. How can one focus it once again? That one says, here you have something. It has a certain length, people. We can't help it. Two days ago I sat here with Stefan Grisseemann, and he said, didn't you do it like that to provoke the audience? I found that really interesting in regard to these films. No, that idea wasn't there. It had to have a self-contained logic and be free to unfold. If a viewer sees this, that's dandy, but why should I provoke a viewer? The viewer didn't interest me at all in this sense. What interested me was this system's unfolding and that one may participate in it. You are yourself the viewer.

W: Maybe one can say that at first there was this research project, that one further exhausts the possibility of the medium. And secondly, there was a project based on the viewer. One worked on the ideal viewer. One made films for people who correspond to the image of an ideal viewer, at least that's how I understand it. An image of ideal conditions which I continuously tinker with, so they always feel perfectly entertained when they watch the film. Und this ideal viewer, I continue to develop in that direction myself.

E: You mean a kind of humanity that really communicates with each other and is interested in a kind of research, in a result. And not one that says, I prefer not to see it.

W: People who participate in the process, who want to learn something, who think and ponder while they watch it.

E: Is that a sign of the times, that back then one considered such a thing possible at all? Or do you believe this way of thinking is actually indispensable to artistic production?

W: In any case there was a total contrast to official culture there. One moved very strictly within a counter-cultural area which had its own rules. The official newspaper arts section, like the *FAZ* or like opera, theater, what they were doing, was all stolen, uncreative, cheap stuff. Nothing real was in motion. Even in theater, everything by Jack Smith or by Richard Foreman was plagiarized. It really spilled over into the *Deutsches Theater*, piece by piece. One could really testify to this. After four years delay, this all surfaced as new and innovative and was sold off as political mish-mash. This official culture had something really inferior to it. I always felt like I was part of a counter-culture. Of course it came from this romance of '68, where creativity had its own dynamic.

E: But on the other side there was also this target audience blabber from the polit-filmers. There were extreme divisions, for example in the *Hamburger Filmcoop*. It happened that I was written off as a "bourgeois flaneur" who doesn't really have a knack for contemplating the masses.

W: "Bourgeois flaneur" was above their vocabulary. It was more like "bitchy or esoteric nutcase".

E: One could reread a review by Klaus Kreimeier. There it was...

W: Flaneur?

E: Dumb, bourgeois flaneur.

W: He had read Benjamin and then just bounced it right back.

E: I believe that he didn't read it enough. He did apologize later on.

W: Oh, really? From '68 there was this division in 1970 in the hardcore political branch. With target groups, socialistic learning center, Mao indoctrination on all possible levels. Then there was the commune movement the whole time after that. But that divided. I had written the text *Dr. Mabuse, the Nutcase* for one of our magazines. There's this sentence in it: "With an axe, he split the movement's doohicky into a red half and a green half." This was before the Green Party.

E: My goodness, that was visionary.

W: Terrible, but this division was quite massive. I sensed it in my own body when I lived in the Film Coop. First, Alfred Hilsberg wanted to bring out the Coop films in

35mm in cinemas all over the world, and he took out a loan. When this didn't work out, the Coop, who distributed our films, had 100,000 D-marks debt. Then he quit and opened another distributor with the polit segment of the films. So the "aesthetes" sat on the mountain of debt. That was the end of our distribution. Afterwards, one had to distribute by oneself.

E: Then he tried out music as a new field of operation.

W: Yes, he was very enterprising.

E: And very successful. Back to the ideology of the communist splinter cells. As soon as they realized that their access to the masses wasn't quite so easy to establish, they resorted to the imaginary. Many of them became the worst TV editors.

W: Yes, yes. Oh god!

E: Always with their criteria in mind. I noticed this in the 80s, when it wasn't possible to implement anything anymore.

W: The dynamics of these biographies has something ghostly, and precisely in terms of politics.

E: Well, the personnel shortage is so large that one keeps encountering them in other positions again and again.

W: So then you were rescued from this German cesspool, where one was bound to go crazy, and you suddenly came to America. What was that all about?

E: That was super. That was the nest which Larry Gottheim had set up in Binghamton.

W: Where is Binghamton?

E: Binghamton is about a four-hour drive into upstate New York, near Ithaca, up the Hudson River and then to the left. He had invited me to go there. He had a film department there. Nicholas Ray, Ken Jacobs and Ernie Gear were there. Students there were Jim Hoberman, David Marc, Art Spiegelman, Marcia Bronstein, Steve Anker. They all came from this nest. Already after one week I got to know many of them, and then I moved to NYC after two weeks. Jim Jennings and Sheila McLaughlin were on Hudson Street. It was a funny sort of nomadic state of being for me, between New York and Hamburg until the end of the 80s. We also met in Brooklyn in 1975 because you had a job in Binghamton. You asked what the significance of that was? That one knows there is another world, and very intelligent people live there who reflect on the same things I'm interested in. And I'm not the freak.

W: I have to laugh my head off about America-bashing. The idea that America is just a daft culture, that nobody there has a clue. And then there was this extreme intellectual biotope. Which was totally creative, if you were inside of it. Germany was a complete desert in comparison.

E: That also has to do with New York. Most of our friends there came from the Jewish culture, which didn't exist here. There was absolute curiosity there. Here, it was the most repulsive vacuum that one could imagine. And as repressive as the ocean is wide. It was entirely different there, and hugely appealing to stay there and put down roots.

W: Actually, people had never understood what it meant that we lost the war.

E: We lost the war? I didn't lose any war.

W: Okay, Germany lost the war. And the deformations that this brought about in people's psyches, I mean the consequential damages, also in ours.

W: At the same time, I see that as a privilege, starting over from zero. I could do what I wanted to do since I was eight, because my father wasn't interested when I said, I'm not going to school. So I didn't go to school. There was no authority figure, and I thought this was great. At first I thought, why does everyone else get spanked except for me? That really embarrassed me. It wasn't until later that I was really thankful for that. He was a broken man. Then I didn't go to school because I wanted to learn a profession. Then I didn't want to do the job anymore and wanted to go back to school. They had to put up with that too. And afterwards I dropped out of my studies. That sure was brutal, the things one did on this path of self-discovery. Nobody was there who had the authority to say, you're going to change your ways. You're going to become a Nazi kid and work your way up into the party.

W: The mercy that comes with being defeated.

E: You suffered from it? I found it insanely interesting.

W: I don't know if I suffered from it. The word "suffer" is completely absurd in this context. It only describes a deformation as opposed to the usual socialization in other countries. That's totally obvious. That becomes increasingly clear to me the older I get, no doubt about it.

E: Definitely.

W: Everything gets tied to this at some point. How one reacts is important. One doesn't dare to formulate certain things.

E: We traveled to Bremen often. As a child you are brought along on a shopping trip to Bremen. And there you see a completely destroyed city.

W: You remember that?

E: In part, Bremen was still a ruin at the beginning of the 50s. Right where we lived, which was 20 km outside of Bremen on a train route, was a gigantic junkyard where the rubble from the destroyed buildings was brought. A weird world. Then everything was reconstructed. In the course of one life, an entire city reconstructs itself, and the junkyards disappear. Really weird. What kind of society is that?

W: Biological Darwinism.

E: Hardly anyone else experienced this first hand. It was entirely normal for us as children to play in ruins.

W: Until now there has always been an organic development for the better. It's gorgeous, this Germany. The cities are glorious.

E: Oh, really?

W: There are wonderful restaurants everywhere. You can buy DVDs, all the cultural things to do, cheap flights all over the world. Germany was never as beautiful as it is now. That goes without saying.

E: If you say so.

W: How expensive were the *Schenec-Tady* films actually? What did the capital expenditure consist of, if there was even any?

E: I don't remember. There was the camera. There wasn't any money for any of the seven films which we're discussing. There was that Mr. Peters at the Hamburg Cultural Board. He made me a donation of some cutting gear.

W: So it was 100 Euro or something.

E: Yes, round about that. Then I had to go around begging in the processing lab. Might I please throw this in to get copied?

W: The biggest costs were in the processing lab. It cost a thousand or so.

E: I have no idea anymore. But there was no funding for these films. You had a TV film once?

W: I had four TV films at that time. That was a peculiar story. I was the privileged one in that respect. They never interfered with me.

E: That was definitely another time, with Mr. Stein.

W: Yes, with Stein. However, with the last film, *Das Szenische Opfer*, it got radical. I somehow didn't manage to make any sound for the film. It was a film about the Ruhr Valley, and I said that it was quite good silent. I showed it once at Hilke's in the bookstore. Alright, they said, we'll broadcast it silent. Then it was broadcast as a 50-minute flicker film. It was described in the *Bild* newspaper on page one as the biggest disturbance in image and sound since the beginning of TV broadcasting. Thereupon they didn't produce any more films of mine.

E: Back then, everyone had three shots.

W: And I had four. I couldn't complain at all.

E: I showed Mr. Stein *Demon*. I traveled to ZDF, and then he said, "But Mr. Emigholz, we do it for *them*" and pointed at the TV antennas.

W: Ah, the television antennas.

E: I wanted to do *Normalsatz* there. So he didn't co-produce that. But after *Normalsatz* they did *Die Basis des Make-Up*. He did, however, say that it was the worst film they had ever produced. So at most you were the second worst.

W: He had a short memory, I'd say.

E: And I should never send them anything again. Then I sent something but it was returned immediately. It doesn't matter, though. One shouldn't complain. These people and institutions all have their own life to live.

W: One should be grateful if it works out. It's useless to demand sponsorship for oneself, with all one's private and aesthetic obsessions.

E: The *Hamburger Filmbüro* and this kind of self-organization arose out of the Coop movement, through this kind of filmmaking, starting everything fundamentally anew.

W: That didn't start until 1980.

E: Are you sure? I was in America at the time.

W: Totally sure. In the time we're discussing, we were entirely autonomous, practically our own business.

E: *Normalsatz* had nothing to do with the *Filmbüro*.

W: What sort of audience did you actually do that for? Your films, which actually didn't cost anything.

E: Maybe for people who hoped to gain from them, or did gain, an impact similar to the one I got. A moment ago you mentioned the word meditation. It was an extreme experience of time that one could have there, and for me film was appropriate, it was *the* medium one should use in order to place such energies into the world. *Demon* is indeed a literary adaptation, but one which acts altogether differently than a normal translation of a material. For example your film *Bartleby*, it was shot in *Zippelhaus*, where these films were created back then.

W: Yes, that was a powerhouse, the *Zippelhaus*.

E: This is the room where we shot *Demon*. There are definitely extreme decisions in *Bartleby*. What can we even take? What is even a literary adaptation after all? That's also a question in the film. I can imagine that there are *Bartleby* films where someone is really playing Bartleby, putting on a sad face and all that.

W: Yes, something like that just played.

E: In those days we said, that's complete rubbish. Maybe today one doesn't say such things so sharply, but back then one was super radical against such junk. It even included Fassbinder, that one said, I don't want to watch this anymore.

W: Yes, that's right. It was too wasteful. Somehow it seemed to make no sense, wasting so much money on decoration without the essence being strengthened.

E: A moment ago you yourself addressed the project of having an ideal viewer in mind, namely one who can maybe make use of a film for his brain waves. Why does one go to the cinema anyway? Because one wants to be provided with energy in a concentrated place. If I have to expend energy there, then I'd rather just stay home. But good films, or those you personally consider good, transmit energy. And that's why one gets addicted to watching them, because they happen on a frequency where I become active, where I want to keep being active. This was of course always the motivation for making films.

W: Then there were showplaces that one produced for. The *Collective for Living Cinema* or the *Anthology*. Those were places for which one made films, to show them there. It was also self-evident that they would be shown. One didn't have to beg for it. We were in a very privileged situation there, which by the way makes me marvel that we got a foothold so easily in New York.

E: I was there for a long while. I was in an element of total curiosity then. We were the first young Germans who cavorted in the scene. And one was welcomed with curiosity. Even to the point when someone said, you have to leave now. My grandmother's on her way over, and she doesn't allow Germans to wander around the house. And the curiosity was mutual. An interest materialized then between these people, and it's still going strong.

W: I remember you had a screening of *Schenec-Tady* back when the *Collective for Living Cinema* was still uptown. I don't remember exactly where.

E: It was in a sort of church hall.

W: Such a big, beautiful, dark space. Suddenly you were doing a whole program there. Before that I only knew you had made just one film. When I came to America myself, I suddenly realized you were an author with a full program. Shortly afterwards Ulrich Gregor came to New York to invite you to the *Berlinale*.

E: No, it happened differently. He came after 1977. He had seen *Demon* at the *Millennium* and approached me about it. But one person who anyway showed my films in Berlin in my absence Alf Bold. In 1974 and '75 he showed *Schenec-Tady* and *Arrowplane*. He didn't even tell me until later. I had no idea there was something like the *Forum*.

W: Right. Alf also showed films of mine there. Actually the *Forum* didn't even yet exist as a public event.

E: They started only then.

W: The films were also never reviewed.

E: Wait a second, I still have the flyer.

W: They made a flyer, but that was it.

E: *International Forum* 1974. 1975 was the fifth. They started in 1970. *Schenec-Tady* screened there. But I wasn't present. Alf Bold organized it. What you said with the long show, that can't have had anything to do with Hamburg. I had made lots of slide shows, also with sound. I incorporated them there, single slides too. I had a program back then which brought me into the show, because I wasn't capable of performing publicly. I had to force myself. I built sets in which I had to perform. When I began at the university here in Berlin, I did something similar. I gave a lecture every week about a film that I like. I did this for seven years. One can learn a lot.

W: A self therapy, in effect.

E: Or a learning process, as in acting. That's why later on I didn't care about acting at all. I liked it or I didn't, in any case it wasn't that I thought it's a state of exception which one has to prepare for massively. To go to acting school and do whatever the hell else. Practical experience was the key issue then, because you actually don't have to be present when films are shown. But when you do a slide show, you have to be there to change slides.

W: I remember this slide show, it aroused a lot of interest, the one you did in Hudson Street. That was a meeting point for artistic activity, wasn't it?

E: At Hudson Street 100 there was an empty office building, near the World Trade Center. The north tower of the World Trade Center wasn't completely finished until 1975.

W: The area was a big construction site?

E: The World Trade Center had caused a vacuum in the old office spaces. All the tenants moved to the Trade Center, and then there were all these beautiful old office buildings. They were no longer needed so the landlords brought in artists, many artists relocated around the World Trade Center at the time. Hudson Street 100 was crammed. It was gentrified in the 80s. Naturally, there are high-class stock broker lofts there now.

W: And you had a little apartment in this thing, or what? That's the view from the window?

E: No, I had a huge burnt-out office floor, without water, daytime heating only, and no heating on the weekend or at night. But it only cost 125 dollars rent. That was very little back then. Jim Jennings and Sheila McLaughlin were there too. And at night you could break into the still-existing offices there to make overseas telephone calls.

W: Overseas telephone calls? Who did you call from there?

E: I made calls to Germany, for example. Sheila got caught at one point and was pursued because of these insanely high telephone bills that always accrued during the night. We were all thrown out at the end of 1974/75, and we moved to Brooklyn.

W: Where is this chair here? It's from Hudson Street, isn't it?

E: Look! You mean this one? Yes, that's Hudson Street.

W: It was also the centerpiece of this slide show. On the one hand, they were all from private space, these slides that you did. And on the other hand, there was nothing sociological to them. And that was very good.

E: What do you mean by "sociological"?

W: I don't know, I did some kind of commune film in 1970. Hence I know what's shit. It was called *Rot war das Abenteuer, Blau war die Reue*.

E: It's interesting how money misleads one to want to make such communicative charades.

W: Rüdiger Neumann did camera for it. I had the editing table. It became an altogether orderly production. If you don't act too dumb, you can achieve something, having a sociological background. Then there was also an article *Spiegel*. It wasn't until *Die Geburt der Nation* that I felt competent enough to not be phased by what the TV people think about the thing. Starting then I just marched to the beat of my own drum.

E: But it was *Die Geburt der Nation* that was so highly recognized in America. Jim Hoberman immediately wrote a very good article about it. Actually it was a structuralist film. You made a disposition and took the it apart. Which means, the film analyzes itself.

W: What one later defined as deconstruction is demonstrated exemplarily there.

E: Let's go back to these shows one more time. Bringing oneself into the picture, having to be present, forcing oneself onto the stage. This continued intensively in Hamburg for quite a while. And also in America with Peter Blegvad. Nico was also involved for a while. We did these funny tours there with *Henry Crow* and John Gieves.

W: Once I traveled along to Washington. It was in a kind of theater there. Fred Frith did something, and you did a kind of interim act.

E: That was also in New York City, in Mudd Club, in Zu Club, one could earn money this way. It was really interesting that we earned money, because I really didn't have any. There was more cohesion there with the musicians. Then they had this German freak onstage, who did something, in German if possible. When I was in America for the first time, I got a letter from you. We're doing a magazine, send us a couple of drawings. That was 1974/75.

W: It started with one piece. Somehow it got noticed, and I asked you to join in. Then you sent something, and it grew and grew. I had a 30-page article on film theory in the third issue.

W: And Because Silke Grossmann and you both participated, it suddenly reached a certain standard. I knew what high standards meant in America. Hilke Nordhausen

had a bookstore at Marktstrasse where she sold the entire *Citylights* program, all Beatnik poets. Suddenly there was the best library in Europe on the shelf. All the modern poets up to Anne Waldman were available there.

E: They also came for a visit.

W: Anne Waldman stayed in my apartment for two weeks.

E: Bob Dylan had given her money to travel around the world.

W: In any case, the best of Beatnik literature was collected in that bookstore. Then it came about that Hilke said, we're going to do a weekly event here where we present our stuff that isn't in the literary periodicals. A mixture of poetry readings, performances and films. We did have a lot of films over time. The pressure to produce was generated anew.

E: Hilka did that actually to get out of the art prison and open a public location.

E: Then it also became a contact point. Kippenberger, Oehlen and Büttner all painted their murals there. I found it strange that during the late 70s a kind of competition erupted. The painters then thought that the filmmakers were too famous. They absolutely had to rebel against this.

W: Yes, something like that was present.

E: There was a funny atmosphere. They maybe hadn't yet predicted that they would be punished with immense fame. But maybe they wanted this too.

W: How did the jump from this pan film to *Hotel* come about? That was, in effect, an entirely new genre for you. It was as if you had made Westerns before and now Sternberg.

E: I always had the Nizo with me. By the way, I'm busy with a film now that uses all this material. I had also used the Nizo to do tests for the *Scenec-Tady* films. One day something happened to me in San Diego while I was walking down the street. Two people were walking in front of me, a white person and a black person, and I was there with the camera in hand and I watched this. I filmed it, didn't look through the viewer, but instead made my way with the camera sort of against the wall. This produced the system of coordinates of street, wall, people, traffic, walking, and I thought, this is really crazy. It's funny, because this is perhaps a totally banal shot in someone else's eyes. But that was my point of departure for taking apart live time and putting it back together again.

W: Yes, that was a dramatic change in style.

E: Yes, the other stuff was already complete as a program. Of course I could have continued forever.

W: It's funny, but I can't remember *Hotel* very well. How did it go, the sequence of motifs there?

E: It was set up semi-didactically. A walk in San Diego from A to B.

W: It was black and white?

E: It was all black and white. View from the window in Hudson Street, cars.

W: That's this.

E: No, that's the wide shot. First a close shot, the cars on the cobblestones, and they drive into the blurriness of my windowsill. Then there's the wide shot with the hot dog stand and then the sudden change to the *Zippelhaus*, where Silke and I are sitting at the breakfast table. Then there's this transformation passage with sound, where the two spaces start to merge, two takes that get interleaved with increasing speed until two spaces occur simultaneously.

W: Where is the airplane?

E: That's in *Demon*. After that, there were declinations of the material which was shown before. Positive-negative, horizontally flipped, and then going from A to B and simultaneously from B to A.

W: That was a practical reference to the film-form from before?

E: Yes, but the other films didn't have anything to do with live action takes. And this one uses self-made found footage, which was then processed on a primitive optical printer that Rüdiger had built.

W: We built that for the house film. You used it too?

E: Yes, I had to optical print the material. *Demon* is something completely different. It's really about the language level.

W: Why was the film called *Hotel*?

E: Because I had the feeling we all lived in a hotel, we're all tourists somewhere, and one isn't at home anywhere. It came from the lifestyle. It's a funny literary title. But it's also bilingual. I always found this important back then. *Demon* is also bilingual, so one doesn't have to perform any translation work. The feeling that we live here and there, the nomadic aspect of the hotel. Using spaces and then leaving. That's why it's called *Hotel*.

W: *Demon* was your next film. It was a radical departure towards something else, I would say. Because the rhythm was generated by the language and the text itself.

E: In French it's called "Demon of Analogy". The analogical, the association or the correlation, this is what I wanted to thematize. I translated a lot back then, and translation was the theme. Because of the bilingualism one was surrounded by, with all these people.

W: I'm familiar with this too. Because you developed a bilingual brain?

E: Yes, one began to dream in English. Everyone knows about this, it's nothing special. But the film wanted to sort of represent something which doesn't exist, namely the gap between the languages. A non-place film.

W: But I didn't feel it that way.

E: Well. It can't be felt. But that's the structure.

W: It has this language that jumps out at you. Because it's reinforced by the images. So each word is, like, full throttle.

E: Then these absurd stories came in, the water and the instrument shop. Which was the tool shop around the corner from us. In the Mallarmé text, someone walks down the street and thinks about a palm branch and then sees a violin somewhere.

W: Trivial reality transforms, which also happens on a solitary walk. That's quite beautiful.

E: This astonishment and surprise when fantasy suddenly becomes reality.

W: It's astonishing that these lyricisms constantly appear with Mallarmé. The reference to the immediate surroundings first occurred through American poetry.

E: In Mallarmé there is of course this throw of the dice, *Coup de dés*. At that same time Straub/Huillet made this Mallarmé film, also in 1977.

W: Don't have any knowledge of that.

E: Frieda Grafe once showed them both together. But they anyway did it like they always do. The actors stand in front of the wall where the Communards were shot, you know. More that something becomes represented.

W: The historical machine.

E: The place is cited again there. It's another method to put something in motion. Mallarmé is indeed utterly interesting in a philosophical sense, because he says that the throw of the dice will not suspend chance. But you throw the dice, and then reality is there. So the world can't rid itself of it. This feeling in film, to make a setting composed of these highly complicated combinations of spaces which then stand in for grammatical figures or punctuation marks. In *Normal/satz* there's a passage with the piece *The Interpretation of Facts* by Lynne Tillman. The theme of *Demon* gets taken up again. It's with Kiev Stigl, and they all sit in a bedroom reciting Lynne Tillman's text "The interpretation of facts is a beautiful thing". That's where it emerges again.

W: I'm looking at the photo from *Demon*. I find Marcia Bronstein, Silke Grossmann, Hannes Hatje, myself. What is her name?

E: Gabriele Kreis. Later she wrote books about exile literature. That's Christoph Derschau.

W: It's just crazy, when one saw how that became so chopped up through this idea of the Ballet. It looks like some kind of modern dance arrangement, like by Yvonne Rainer. It gained such a jumpy choppiness through the editing. That was an expansion of the idea of the ballet into time itself.

E: None of you were very gifted dancers in that sense. But you knew what you had to do. There were words written on the wall, and when they were spoken out, you had to do something. So you had to listen and turn around or whatever.

W: I don't remember that at all.

E: You had to turn around, or whatever the hell else.

W: As an actor, one forgets everything.

E: Fortunately, there weren't any actors.

W: The terrible thing about acting is the brevity of the moment of being filmed, and that one does so many other things.

E: There are actors who can cite every scene they've ever played.

W: Really, even from film shoots?

E: What happened during the shooting.

H: Wow, they retain that too?

E: You didn't have to say anything.

W: I don't remember any of your directing. Why is Marcia sitting there on the chair?

E: That's the English chair. She's speaking. Whoever sits in the middle speaks.

W: Was I allowed to sit in the chair?

E: No, only the women were allowed to speak.

W: I get it. In the film I have always really loved this jump to the so-called antique shop with the spade and the gardening devices. It was always such an exhilarating cut. And then the ending passage was great, into which you cut this airplane.

E: The airplane was first and foremost the association with "palm branch". Every time the term "palm branch" appears, there's a little piece of airplane. This film has increasing amount of inserts towards the end. And then suddenly the airplane takes off.

E: And then the airplane appears again as a negative and begins taking off again. Then a third airplane is added, and there's a total collision of airplanes.

W: It's really fantastic ballet. What begins as modern dance ballet turns into a ballet for spades and airplanes. A very extreme thing.

E: But it corresponds to the complexity of a palm branch.

W: Yes, right. I believe we traveled at some point with the film to Hyères in the South of France. I believe I showed *Pictures Of The Lost Word* there. Didn't *Demon* get shown there, too?

E: It was shown there and it also won a prize. We drove there in a Volkswagen van. Then the good Martin Langbein called me later and said he had read somewhere that it won a prize. But I didn't know it. We departed before that, I believe, and then we stopped over at Martin's in Freiburg. There was this earthquake there.

W: Oh yeah, earthquake in Freiburg. My goodness.

E: They say there's always an earthquake in South Germany when Max Ernst has an exhibition in Stuttgart. It was the same then. And then Martin called and said, you've won prize money. Martin, your French is so good. Why don't you ask them to send me the money. The check came half a year later, but it bounced.

W: Oh, it bounced. Yes, the dear French. At least they gave us Mallarmé and Baudelaire – and a little Godard, too.