

Rick Minnich



Profile

Storyteller, filmmaker, educator, husband, father, board game fan, avid traveler, keen observer of human idiosyncrasies, lifelong learner, incurable optimist

Experience

Member, Deutsche Filmakademie e.V. - since 2024

Rick is a member of the documentary section of the German Film Academy.

Owner, Our Man in Berlin (formerly Rickfilms), Berlin - since 2001

Own and operate my own small media production company. We produce web videos and documentaries, often in cooperation with other production companies and public broadcasters and film funds in Germany and throughout Europe.

Tutor, MET Film School Berlin – 2013-2022

Factual tutor for a variety of courses ranging from 8-week intensive documentary courses to the two-year B.A. program and one-year M.A. Documentary program.

Documentary Filmmaker in Residence, Robert Morris University, Pittsburgh, PA - Fall 2017

Taught an undergraduate documentary course, hosted a weekly campus film series, gave guest lectures in other classes and departments, worked on my own film projects.

Tutor/Dean, Sabah Film Academy, Borneo, Malaysia – 2015-2016

Documentary tutor during the two-week summer workshop with Malaysian filmmakers.

Director and Dean of Studies in 2015.

Tutor, Docstories Black Sea workshop, Sibiu, Romania, 2012

Director, SAT.1 (German TV) – 2002

Directed the 30-part series of 3-minute films “So gesehen” (“In This Regard”) about religious issues in contemporary society.

Writer / director, Deutsche Welle (German TV) – 1993-1995

Created 30-second trailers for 45-minute documentaries. Wrote the voice-over texts, directed the speakers, selected music, and supervised the editing.

Education

Film University Babelsberg "Konrad Wolf" - Diploma (MFA equivalent) Directing for Film & Television, 2001
CalArts - MFA candidate Live Action Film, 1991-92
Columbia University – B.A. English, 1990
Institute for European Studies, Vienna - semester abroad, 1989

Skills

Writing, directing, photographing, editing, and producing films and videos of all lengths and genres with a specialty in documentary filmmaking. Skilled interviewer and writer. Proficient in: Mac OS, FinalCutPro X, Adobe Premiere, Photoshop, Microsoft Office, Apple office suite, Facebook, X, LinkedIn, Instagram. Familiar with a wide range of DSLR, mirrorless, prosumer and professional cameras, drones, and various audio recording devices. A trusty bridge between the analogue and digital worlds.

English native speaker, fluent in German, basic knowledge of French, Spanish, Russian

Driver's license, drone pilot's license (EASA A1/A3 + A2 Open Sub Category), PADI open water license

References

Collaborations with German production companies Gebrüder Beetz, Hoferichter & Jacobs, Hanfgarn + Ufer, CineImpuls Leipzig, Kloos & Co., Torero Film, InOneMedia, German public broadcasters ZDF, ARTE, WDR, 3Sat, rbb, MDR, and with broadcasters throughout Europe and in Canada, Israel, India, China, Brazil.

Professional organizations

Deutsche Filmakademie e.V. (German Film Academy)
International Documentary Association IDA
Documentary Association of Europe DAE
AG DOK - German Documentary Association
D-Word

Residencies

1992-93 German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) grant in Berlin
1995 Writer's grant, Schloss Wiepersdorf, Germany
2006 Artist residency at the Villa Aurora in Pacific Palisades, California
2017 Documentary Filmmaker in Residence, Robert Morris University, Pittsburgh, PA

Master Classes/

Guest Lectures/Panels

2009 Master Class on "Forgetting Dad" - iDocs Conference, Beijing Film Academy
2009 Kickstart Panel "Writing for Documentary" - Hot Docs, Toronto
2009 Master Class - "How to Create a Film About Family Trauma," Planete Doc Film Festival, Warsaw, Poland
2009 Participant on Panel "Writing for Documentary" - Screen Producers Ireland, Dublin
2009 Visiting Artist - Stephens College, Columbia, Missouri
2009 Participant on panel "Families - They Really F*** You Up" - True/False Film Festival, Columbia, Missouri

2010 SOURCES 2 lecture on "Forgetting Dad" (together with co-director Matt Sweetwood) - workshop in Potsdam, Germany
2011 + 2022 Guest lectures/screenings at USC School of Cinematic Arts
2012 Master Class at Aalto University, Helsinki, Finland
2017 Led workshop "Dokumentarfilm: The Berlin Connection" at Pittsburgh Filmmakers, USA
2022 Guest lecture/screening at Loyola Marymount University, Los Angeles
2023 Guest lecture "Unfinished Sympathy" at Beholders Documentary Dialogues, The Netherlands

Film Festival Juries
2009 Documentary Jury, Interfilm Short Film Festival, Berlin
2010 Documentary Jury, Achtung Berlin/New Berlin Film Award, Germany
2010 Mid-length competition Jury, Ippokrates Health Film Festival, Kos, Greece
2012 Millennium Jury, Planete Doc Film Festival, Warsaw
2015 Sabah Pitching Forum jury, Kota Kinabalu International Film Festival, Malaysia
2018. Gdansk Documentary Film Festival, Poland
2022/2023 BYU Public Domain Film & Music Festival, USA
2024-2026 US International Awards
2024 IDA Awards - Feature Documentary Jury

Selected filmography
"The Presidents' Tailor - From Auschwitz to the White House" - 2024, 39/53 min., MDR (Germany), InOneMedia, Our Man in Berlin, Kulturstiftung des Freistaates Sachsen, Sächsische Landesmedienanstalt, Staatskanzlei Thüringen - co-writer, director and co-producer of the hourlong documentary about the Holocaust survivor and legendary tailor to US presidents and celebrities Martin Greenfield.
Awards: D-Facto Motion Works-in-Progress Prize - DOK Leipzig 2021, Best Documentary Short – Gig Harbor Film Festival (USA) Special Jury Award Short – Workers Unite Film Festival (USA), Honorable Mention – 17th Festiwal Filmowy NNW (Poland), Special Award – Meetings in Siberia Film Festival (Russia)

We Are Here: A Group of Friends Deliver Personalized Aid to the People of Ukraine, - 2023, 8', Meet the Good Ones / Our Man in Berlin. Co-writer, co-director, cinematographer. Collaboration with the YouTube Channel "Meet the Good Ones".

Awards: Nominated for the Smiley Charity Film Awards and the Geographical Better World Video Awards.

"The Strait Guys" - 2022, 99 min., MDR (Germany), YLE (Finland), Knowledge Network (Canada), Hanfgarn + Ufer, Cinelmpuls Leipzig, Torero Films, Mitteldeutsche Medienförderung MDM, MFG Medien- und Filmgesellschaft Baden-Württemberg, BKM, DFFF - writer and director of the feature documentary about an eclectic group of Russians and Americans who are trying to connect Asia and North America via a train tunnel beneath the Bering Strait.

Distribution: Theatrical release in Germany. TV broadcasts in Germany, Finland, Canada.

"The Bomb Hunters" - 2015, 52 min., RBB (Germany), Kloos & Co. Medien, Rickfilms - wrote, directed and co-produced TV documentary about unexploded World War II bombs in Oranienburg, Germany.

Distribution: Television broadcasts in Germany, Serbia

“Forgetting Dad” - 2008, 84 min, ZDF - Das kleine Fernsehspiel, Hoferichter & Jacobs, Rickfilms, Medienboard Berlin-Brandenburg, MDM, Kuratorium junger deutscher Film, Media - wrote, directed and co-produced documentary about my father's mysterious case of amnesia and the devastating effects it has had on my family.

Awards: Numerous prizes at film festivals including the Special Jury Award at the International Documentary Film Festival Amsterdam IDFA, Grand Jury Award GZ Docs Guangzhou (China), Honorable Mention – Achtung Berlin – New Berlin Film Award, Audience Award – Ippokrates International Health Film Festival, Kos (Greece), William Dieterle Filmpreis (Special Prize), Germany. Short-listed for the German Oscar “Lola”.
Distribution: Theatrical release in Germany, TV broadcasts in ten countries.

“Homemade Hillbilly Jam” - 2005, 80 min., Hoferichter & Jacobs, Medienboard Berlin-Brandenburg - wrote and directed documentary about modern-day hillbilly musicians in the Ozark Mountains of Missouri. Opening Night film Hot Springs Documentary Film Festival, closing night film True/False. Sheffield/British Film Institute Tour of the UK.

Distribution: Released on DVD through First Run Features (USA) and VOD worldwide.

“Heaven on Earth” - 2001, 50 min., Film University Babelsberg “Konrad Wolf” - wrote and directed documentary about evangelical entertainers in the Las Vegas of the Bible Belt – Branson, Missouri.

Awards: Babelsberger Media Prize for best graduation film in Germany, Fipa d’Or in Biarritz, nominated for the IDA/David L. Wolper Student Documentary Achievement Award.

Distribution: Television broadcasts in Germany, Switzerland, Austria, The Netherlands.

“Good Guys & Bad Guys” - 1997, 73 min., RBB-TV / Film University Babelsberg “Konrad Wolf” - wrote and directed documentary about two of my former friends and two of my former foes on the occasion of our 10th high school class reunion in Los Angeles.

Awards: Honorable Mention DOK Leipzig.

Distribution: Television broadcast in Germany.

“The Book of Lenins” - 1996, 24 min. - wrote, directed and produced short documentary about the fate of Lenin statues in Eastern Europe and the former USSR after the collapse of the Soviet Empire. Played at various film festivals including DOK Leipzig.

Distribution: Television broadcast on REN-TV (Russia). Part of the “Unveiled” exhibition at the Zitadelle Museum in Berlin-Spandau.

Contact

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