

Venus Boyz

A Film by
Gabriel Baur

2001, 35 mm, 104 minutes, color



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VENUS BOYZ

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With Dréd Gerestant, Diane Torr, Del LaGrace Volcano, Bridge Markland, Mo Fischer,
Storme Webber, Queen Bee Luscious, Mistress Formika, Judith Halberstam

CH / D / USA 2001 – 104 Min. – Colour – 35mm – Format 1: 1,85 – Dolby SR

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www.venusboyz.net

"Certainly what happens on a Drag King stage is a form of gender performance but it goes way beyond simply saying anyone can be anything. That's not the message behind the Drag King performance. Many of the mainstream media commentators on Drag Kings wanted to emphasize the idea that a very pretty feminine woman could be transformed through props and costumes and a little bit of facial hair into a very convincing man. That was basically the angle that mainstream media took on Drag King culture. There is a more interesting and subversive story to be told about Drag King culture that has to do with reinventing and rescripting, to some extent, gender norms. That's what I think Drag King culture is really good at, and good for."

Judith Halberstam, Gendertheorist

Short summary

A film journey through a universe of female masculinity. A legendary Drag King Night in New York is the point of departure for an odyssey to transgendered worlds, where women become men - some for a night, others for their whole lives. What motivates them? What changes take place? What do they dream of? The drag kings of New York meet in clubs and change lustfully into their male alter egos, parodying them and exploring male eroticism and power strategies. In London we see women experiment with hormones to become *new men* and *cyborgs*. Masculinity and transformation as performance, subversion or existential necessity. An intimate film about people who create intermediate sexual identities.



WITH THE PARTICIPATION OF:

Diane Torr
Dréd Gerestant
Del LaGrace Volcano
Bridge Markland
Mo B. Dick - Mo Fischer
Storme Webber
Shelly Mars
Dee Finley
Queen Bee Luscious - Zanthony Preston
Mistress Formika
Hans Scheirl
Svar Simpson
Simo Maronati
Judith Halberstam
Philly Abe
Martina Meijer Torr
Marcel Meijer
Murray Hill
Penelope Tuesday
Backdoor Boys
Buster Hyman - Tracy Chapmer
Johnny Science
"Bob"
Valeria Solomonoff
Rebecca Shulman
Alana Amram
Raquel Warley-Goodwin
Brixton Brady
Jane Czyzewska



TEAM

Producers

Kurt Maeder

Co-producers

Gabriel Baur

Nina Froriep

Andrea Hanke

Heike Hempel

Written and directed by

Gabriel Baur

Production

ONIX Filmproduction, Zürich

Co-Production

Clock Wise Productions, New York, Nina Froriep

WDR, Köln, Heike Hempel, Andrea Hanke

Teleclub, Zürich, Manuela Meier

Cinematography

Sophie Maintigneux

Archiv- and experimentel camera

Gabriel Baur

Salome Pitschen

Vita Gottlieb

Sound

Ingrid Städeli

Rupert Ivey

Music Supervisor

Margot Core

Original music composed by

David Shiller

Editing

Salome Pitschen

Jean Vites

Daniela Roderer

Sound editor / Sound Mix

Florian Eidenbenz, Magnetix

With the support of

Kanton und Stadt Zürich, Visual Arts/Migros Kulturprozent, Kulturstiftung

Landis & Gyr, European Media Development Agency/BAK

Written and directed by: GABRIEL BAUR

After completing studies in Cultural Anthropology at the University of Zurich, Gabriel Baur attended the Film Department of New York University in 1983-84, where she made her first shorts. Dividing her time between New York and Central America, she worked as assistant director on film and theater productions, and made a documentary on the struggle of women in a revolution-torn Nicaragua. In 1988, she returns to Europe to devote her time to experimental film and script writing, among others 1990 "Lulutopia", a story about the fantasies of men and women. She studies directing and dramatic technique in-depth with Wojciech Marczewski (PL), Krzysztof Kieslowski (PL) and Frank Daniels (USA). 1994 she realizes "Die Bettkönigin"/"Queen of Bed". 1996 she starts research for her documentary feature "Venus Boyz".

FILMS, selection:

- 1984 A TALE (USA/Switzerland, short film).
Solothurner Filmtage (Ch, 1984).
- 1986/87 CADA DIA HISTORIA (Nicaragua/Switzerland, documentary). In collaboration with Kristina Konrad.
National and international festivals, selection: The Leipzig International Documentary Filmfestival (1986),
Nyon International Festival of Documentary Films (1987), International Festival of the New Latin American
Cinema, Havana (1987), Ibero-American Film Festival, Huelva (Spain, 1988), Women in the Director's
Chair, Chicago (1989).
- 1992 DIE AUSNAHME UND DIE REGEL/ "The Exception and the Rule" (Switzerland/Austria, experimental
film).
- 1994 DIE BETTKÖNIGIN / "Queen of Bed" (Switzerland, fiction).
Festivals/Invitations, selection: International Film Festival of Locarno (1994), International Film Festival
"Figueira da Foz" (Portugal, 1994), International Forum "Arsenals" (Riga, 1994), Feminale (Germany,
1994), Chicago / Women in the Director's Chair (1995), Montreal / Silences elles tourment (1996),
New York City / Anthology Filmarchives, Invitation by Jonas Mekas (1997).
- 2001 VENUS BOYZ (Switzerland, Germany, Usa, documentary).
World/national Premiere at the Semaine de la Critique / Filmfestival Locarno.

AWARDS, selection :

- 1987 CADA DIA HISTORIA: Federal Study Award.
- 1990 Award for the feature film project LULUTOPIA (National Competition 1991).
- 1994 DIE BETTKÖNIGIN: Special Prize for Feature Film / International Film Festival "Figueira da Foz"
(Portugal 1994), Distinction / International Film Forum "Arsenals" (Riga 1994), Federal Study Award
- 1995 Work Year of Canton Aargau.
- 2001 VENUS BOYZ: Best Film / Critics Week, Filmfestival Locarno.

