



BEAST

A GLIMPSE BEHIND THE VISIBLE APPEARANCE OF A YOUNG MAN'S LIFE



HESSE FILM
CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT BY 8HORSES
A FILM BY LORENZ MERZ



TECHNICAL INFORMATION

Title: *Beast*
Director: Lorenz Merz
Screenplay: Lorenz Merz
Producer: Simon Hesse
Nationality: Switzerland
Genre: Drama
Format: 4K Digital Cinema
Length: 100 min
Shooting: Summer 2017



SYNOPSIS

Gabriel (17), a passionate skateboarder, takes care of his 2 year-old son Jamie. On a delirious summer night, Gabriel's best friend Joel presents his enigmatic girlfriend Cory. The three break-into a zoo and encounter a magnificent giraffe. In their irrational state, they release the Giraffe together with a group of wild animals.

Gabriel and Cory fall deeply in love, while in town a state of emergency is declared. Cory will return soon to Guatemala and Gabriel should come with her. Gabriel is torn between freedom and his responsibility as a father. He lies about his son, even though there is no one else than him to take care of Jamie. When Joel finds out about the betrayal, he reveals the truth to Cory about Gabriel's tumultuous real life. There's not only a child, there's also the unpredictable mother of the child, Zoé. In the midst of exhilarating street riots caused by the spreading animals, Gabriel misses the ultimate chance to run after his dream of freedom. Zoé takes Jamie in custody while Joel, deeply hurt, speeds up on his motorbike and causes a terrible accident with Cory on his back seat. Cory's overwhelming death turns Gabriel's young life upside down - a paradoxical counter movement.

Desperate Gabriel fights back his son. Like outlaws they hide together in the intermediate zones of the city that has transformed into a jungle, similar to the wilderness in Gabriel's heart. There they encounter the entrapped and injured giraffe from the zoo. Gabriel needs to liberate the exotic beast from its fate.

DIRECTOR'S BIOGRAPHY

Lorenz Merz was born 1981 in Zurich from Swiss-American parents. After formation in painting and photography he studied film at University of the Arts Zurich and Universidad del Cine Buenos Aires. His graduate piece *Un día y nada* (2008) won international awards, including the Pardino d'argento at the 61st Locarno IFF and the Swiss Film Prize (2009). His first feature film *Cherry Pie* (2013), presented at 66th Locarno IFF, Rotterdam IFF and others, won international awards including the Luna de Valencia at the Valencia IFF (2014). As DoP he received awards including the Swiss Film Prize for *Summer Games* (2011) by Rolando Colla and for *Chrieg/War* (2014) by Simon Jaquemet.

In 2013, he and fellow filmmakers founded the Zurich based production company *8horses*. In 2015 he was part of the international Jury at the 68th Locarno IFF (Pardi di Domani) and the NIFFF Neuchâtel Fantastic IFF. Lorenz Merz is a member of the EFA European Film Academy, the SFA Swiss Film Academy and the SCS Swiss Cinematographer's Society. He's father of two sons, lives in Paris and Zurich.

PRODUCTION

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DIRECTORS NOTE

It is mainly the harsh blows that stir up our superficial existence and reveal the core of our being. I witnessed the birth of my first son and the sudden death of my youth love when I was 18 years old.

Paradoxically, I went through these events, with almost identical sensations. So, as if hot and cold water touches the skin at the same time and for a brief moment it's not clear, which feeling belongs to which event. Every thing around me was more intense than the reality I previously knew. In both moments, an almost transcendent but raw perception of the world opened up.

BEAST is not another coming-of-age but a contemporary coming-into-life film, dedicated to two inevitable, universal themes that concern us at all ages.

