

Biography Pepe Danquart

Pepe Danquart started shooting his first films on Super-8 back in 1968. In 1977 he became the initiator and co-founder of the Medienwerkstatt Freiburg (MWF Engl.: Media Workshop Freiburg). Between 1978 and 1991 Danquart worked on over 30 documentaries as author, director and/ or producer. Among these initial projects classics such as "Paßt bloß auf" (1980) or "Geisterfahrer – Eine utopische Kolportage" (1985) emerged and won a host of awards, culminating in the 1987 Documentary Film Award of German Film Critics for the Medienwerkstatt's overall output.

Two years later Pepe Danquart left the Freiburg collective for Berlin where he shot his first fictional short film "Schwarzfahrer". Its success was overwhelming and in 1994 it received an Oscar[®] for Best Live Action Short Film. Danquart's follow-up movie "Nach Saison" (1994–1997) collected several awards including the Berlinale Peace Film Award, the Grand Prize at San Francisco Film Festival, Grand Prize Valladolid and the Pare Lorentz Award, L.A. and so solidified the writer/ director's growing international renown.

At this time Danquart entered into a thriving collaboration with Mirjam Quinte (Quintefilm), who has since produced all of his documentaries, accompanying each project - from the initial idea to the final product - with great insight and conviction. In 2000 Danquart and Quinte formed a production partnership and released Michael Glawogger's well-received cinema documentaries "Working Man's Death" and "Whores' Glory".

In 1999 Danquart released the first of his sports trilogy "Heimspiel", which explores the German Reunification through the story of Berlin's ice hockey team the "Eisbären". The film's box-office success indicates that documentaries do have a place in the cinema. "Heimspiel" received several awards including the German Film Award for Best Director in 2000.

The second part of his trilogy, "Höllentour" (2004), captures the lives of professional cyclists and their suffering and social interaction during the Tour de France. With it Danquart set new standards in shooting sporting events. The third and final part of the trilogy, "Am Limit", is about extreme climbers Thomas und Alexander Huber and was released in Germany in 2007. Both these follow-up films enjoyed box-office success and won numerous awards (Bavarian Film Award, two nominations for German and European Film Award for Best Documentary). In 2008 Danquart began work on "Joschka und Herr Fischer" (released in 2011); a documentary with an unusually innovative aesthetic, it recounts Joschka Fischer's extraordinary biography whilst reflecting 60 years of German history. It's a thrilling document of contemporary history that reaches far beyond the classical portrait or historical film. Besides making documentaries Pepe Danquart has also released a row of feature films such as "Daedalus" (1991), "Mörderinnen" (2001), "Semana Santa" (2002) and "C@ook" (2004 official title: Basta. Rotwein oder Totsein.) Back in 1995 Pepe Danquart began directing music videos, in 2005 he started directing commercials (mostly with BIGFISH Film Production), and in August 2006 his first play, "Human Voices" premiered at the Berlin Tipi. It ran for several months with such success that it was included in the program again in 2007.

Together with Susa Kusche, Andrea Roman and Uwe Spiller Danquart founded the production company bittersuess pictures GmbH whose aim it is to produce motion pictures that “the viewer would recommend to friends”. Their very first production “Shahada”, a graduate thesis film by Burhan Qurbani from Ludwigsburg Film Academy, made its way into the official international competition of the Berlinale in 2010.

Danquart’s most ambitious feature film to date, “Lauf Junge, lauf!” will go into production in Spring 2012 as an international co-production.

In April 2008 Danquart received a professorship for film at the University of Fine Arts in Hamburg. He is also a member of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, of the European Film Academy and co-founder of the German Film Academy in which he is a board member since 2012.