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HollywoodGlee sits down with the critically acclaimed Dream Boat director, Tristan Ferland Milewski

Description

Tristan Ferland Milewski has directed numerous documentary portraits about top pop acts like Madonna, Britney Spears and Marilyn Manson among others and was responsible for the script and direction of the documentary series MAKE LOVE â?? ONE CAN LEARN HOW TO MAKE LOVE (nominated for the German Television Prize 2017, a gebrueder beetz production). DREAM BOAT (also by gebrueder beetz filmproduktion) is his first feature-length documentary for theatrical release.



What made you want to take a documentary approach to this story of a party cruise?

A cruise ship and 3000 men from 89 nations. My producer, Christian Beetz, and myself were in love with this idea from the start.

The boat is like a microcosm with its own codes, yet, in many ways, it mirrors society on a much grander scale. This is why, in the end, the questions and topics that the film addresses are not only relevant for gay men, but also for each and everyone one of us.

Ultimately, the film is a quest about longing to live and love as you are.

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This film centers around a core group of men and you keep coming back to them. What was it that kept bringing you back to them as both protagonists and subject? What drew you to these particular protagonists?

I felt that for each of my protagonists this trip had great emotional significance.

For Dipankar from India, for example, it was his first time to be in an environment with only gay men. He was almost in a state of culture shock. Yet, it was an important step in his life towards being proud of who he is. After the film he decided to come out at his workplace and to his family and was fully accepted.

How did you find your protagonists for Dream Boat, as they all have such varied and interesting stories?

I went on this cruise one year before, where we already did some filming and where I already met two of my protagonists. There is also a closed facebook group where all future passengers and regular passengers can meet. Here, I got in contact with many guys and was able to tell everyone more about the ideas behind the film.

Of course, on this boat there are guests from oppressive countries or maybe those who have not outed themselves in their home countries, so making this film carried a large responsibility for me. It was important to be clear with my efforts and approachable all the time â?? before, during and even after the actual shooting of film. In other words, during the entire process.
Additionally, I met all my protagonists before the trip, most of them in their home countries, to get to know them and their stories better and develop a true base of trust.

This film explores some deep emotions, specifically the struggle with gay men who go on cruises looking for love and relationship. What is it about cruise ships and the gay community that inspired you to tell these stories?

Naturally, in a city like Berlin, I can live quite freely as a gay man. But if you look at our world as it is, thereâ??s still a lot of discrimination and threatening situations going on for gays and itâ??s getting worse. So as long as these repressive situations still exist, â??islandsâ?• like this boat also need to exist so people can be who they are and be free.

What is also interesting is that the limit of time on the boat brings with it a lot of pressure and expectations.

Everything has to happen in this short time period, before you get kicked out into reality again. Time and space become abstract; we shot almost 24h a day. Everything is condensed so that, in the end, you are confronted with the real questions of life.

The film shows beautiful love stories, but also a certain loneliness which brings us to ask fundamental questions about our western civilization. In these times of selfies and self-optimization, we present ourselves on the market as a commodity in our search for love or acceptance. Yet, sometimes when we present this mere surface, we often receive emptiness in return.

This is a powerful film and you have been lucky enough to screen your work at the Berlin international film festival. How have you been able to master navigating the film festival world? Do you have any advice for other filmmakers who are having their first festival experiences?

Film is team work, therefore, it is a wonderful and very special moment to enjoy and celebrate together, as you go through such a deep journey. When youâ??re passionate about something, then other people become passionate about it too and this hopefully transfers to the audience. For me, it was such a big gift that the film was so well-received by a very mixed audience.

And most importantly by the real stars of the Dream Boat. Most of the protagonists were able to join the world premiere in Berlin. They are very happy with the film. We had really emotional screenings at the

festival, full of love, tears and laughing.

http://www.critic.de/typo3conf/ext/critic_de/pi1/flash/player.swf

Category

1. #Berlinale
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