

SHELLAC PRESENTS A FAKTURA FILM PRODUCTION  
IN COPRODUCTION WITH WDR/ARTE, LES FILMS DE L'APRÈS-MIDI, DART FILM IN ASSOCIATION WITH HERETIC



# *Music*

A FILM BY **ANGELA SCHANELEC**

*FREELY INSPIRED BY THE MYTH OF OEDIPUS*

ALIOCHA SCHNEIDER

AGATHE BONITZER

MARISHA TRIANTAFYLLOU

ARGYRIS XAFIS



*Abandoned at birth in the Greek mountains on a stormy night,  
Jon is taken in and adopted, without having known his father or mother..*

*As a young man, he meets Iro, a warden in the prison where he is incarcerated  
after a deadly tragic accident. She seems to seek out his presence, takes care  
of him, records music for him. Jon's eyesight begins to fail...*

*From then on, for every loss he suffers, he will gain something in return.  
Thus, in spite of going blind, he will live his life more fully than ever.*

**2023 - Germany, France, Serbia**

**108 minutes - 1.85:1 - 5.1 - original version in Greek and English**



**AN INTERVIEW  
WITH ANGELA SCHANELEC**

*by Mikhail Ratgauz*



**What led to your decision to deal with Oedipus? What got you started?**

*There are questions in my life, and thus also in my films, to which I have no answers. They relate to family and family relationships as well as to fate, or mere chance, that determines us and to which we must bow. The myth of*

*Oedipus encompasses all of this, including the pain of it all. And there was also a theater production that I saw as a very young actress.*

**Sophocles' Oedipus in the Hölderlin version as directed by Jürgen Gosch, right?**

*Yes. The cast played with cothurns (e.g. platform boots Greek tragedy actors wore on stage) and large masks. The stage consisted of a staircase leading up to a tent with a simple slit for an entrance. Oedipus forced*

*himself out of this slit at every entrance and then back again through it at the end of the scene. Due to the limited and restricted movements, which were made even harder by the cothurns, this production was very physical. It made you physically feel his pain. His whole existence seemed painful to me.*

**So there's a way from this pain to music?**

*Yes. Due to the pain, there was a reason, a necessity for music. I find the thought that we can survive, or that we can succeed in enduring our lives or fates... How should I put it? It's a fantastic thought. Here Jon develops the capacity of facing his fate, and that is singing. He sings.*

**Your most radical break with the classical myth is that Oedipus, in your version Jon, never finds out about his origins or his guilt; he's spared this knowledge.**

*Yes. It's how the story developed as I wrote. Even if Sophocles was my starting point, during the writing process, characters*

*emerged – as they did in my other films – who were human beings rather than mythical figures. I spare Jon the extent of knowledge so that he doesn't have to stab out his eyes as Oedipus does. He loses his eyesight over many years and doesn't live as a blind man in the forest after Jocasta's death, but instead with his daughter and among people. I am not interested in what makes the myth unique, but rather in what it can tell us today. I'm interested in what I can share with everyone, the normal and the relatable. Everything else lies in the unconscious of the character, which is also from where Jon's singing arises.*





**But you don't spare Jocasta, who's called Iro in the film. Ultimately, this means her death.**

*Jon has nothing to repress because he knows nothing and is unaware of his past. Iro does, however. She hopes, fears, represses and dies when the limits of what she can endure have been overstepped.*

**What was important for you with Lucian, the character Laius in the myth?**

*To me, Lucian epitomizes the tragic figure because he has no chance, he's innocent, yet must meet his fate. To save the mother, he abandons his child after birth. This failing destroys him; that is, he no longer has a code by which to abide, no longer knows how to act as part of society, and finally dies because of it – at the hands of a son he doesn't know. He sees this young man and feels an attraction, wants to kiss him.*

**It seems to me that your film language is also very much altered by the import of myth. The imagery is far denser.**

*I think you're referring to the silence. The narrative develops through that which goes unsaid; it emerges because there's no language for it. It was a matter of finding images for incidents for which, in my opinion, there are no words. As in life. One does something and remains silent about it. This is simply human. Language is an attempt to break a silence, but it's only an attempt. Our lives are full of failed communication.*

**In Music, you again work elliptically. The distance between the remote locations and the elapsed times is as easily bridged in your film as was the case in the theater of yore, in Shakespeare, say...**

*Omission doesn't mean that something hasn't occurred, it only means that it wasn't seen. Nobody questions that in theater. Of course you can say the film is what you saw on the screen, but the images*

*only came about because certain omissions were decided on. Everyone's actually aware of this, and if you consider the editing process, then it's more obvious still. Omission is a prerequisite of narration. Everything follows from omission: the locations I can go to, the time I can let pass...*

**I'd like to return to music. The songs that Jon sings are by Doug Tielli. How did you find him?**

*It was a long quest. The music Jon sings in the second part is his true language, but I couldn't write it. I imagined it, but it was very difficult for me to put into words. I listened to music for more than a year until I came across Doug Tielli, who lives in rural Canada and whom I then met in Toronto. After our encounter he sent me songs he was working on and hadn't yet released. I never doubted the decision to go with his music, it was a stroke of luck for me – as was the cast: Aliocha Schneider and Agathe Bonitzer, Marisha Triantafyllidou and Argyris Xafis. These were all very fortunate encounters, also with the other actors in Greece. Because there's so much silence in the film, the focus on faces, bodies and movement increases – everything emerges from these actors and from nature.*



## ANGELA SCHANELEC

*Born in 1962, writer-director Angela Schanelec first worked as a theater actress before she began making films. Her films, including My Sister's Good Fortune (1995), Places in Cities (1998), Marseille (2004), Orly (2010), The Dreamed Path (2016), and I was at home, but... (2019), premiered at Berlinale, Cannes and Locarno and have won numerous awards, among them the Silver Bear for Best Director at the 2019 Berlinale.*

**2019** *I was at home, but...*

**2016** *The Dreamed Path*

**2014** *The Bridges of Sarajevo / Princip Text* (short)

**2010** *Orly*

**2009** *Deutschland 09 / Erster Tag* (short)

**2007** *Afternoon*

**2004** *Marseille*

**2001** *Passing Summer*

**1998** *Places in Cities*

**1995** *My Sister's Good Fortune*

**1993** *I Stayed in Berlin All Summer*



## CAST

*Aliocha Schneider* ..... Jon  
*Agathe Bonitzer* ..... Iro  
*Marisha Triantafyllidou* ..... Merope  
*Argyris Xafis* ..... Elias  
*Frida Tarana* ..... Phoebe  
at 6 years old  
*Ninel Skrzypczyk* ..... Phoebe  
at 14 years old  
*Miriam Jakob* ..... Marta  
*Wolfgang Michael* ..... Hugh  
*Finn-Henry Reyels* ..... Ezra

## CREW

*Angela Schanelec* ..... writer, director & editor  
*Ivan Markovic* ..... photography  
*Rainer Gerlach* ..... sound  
*Dimitris Apostolou*  
& *Bohdan Graczyk* ..... assistant directors  
*Ingo Klier* ..... production design  
*Anette Guther* ..... costumes  
*Monika Münnich*  
*Mina Ghoraishi* ..... make-up  
*Makis Gazis*  
& *Nadia Fedorova* ..... casting  
*Panos Karabinos*  
*Romana Janik* ..... production managers  
*Kirill Krasovski*  
(*faktura film*) ..... producer  
*François d'Artemare*  
(*Les Films de l'Après-Midi*)  
*Vladimir Vidic*  
& *Nataša Damjanovic*  
(*dart.film*) ..... co-producers  
*Giorgos Karnavas*  
& *Konstantinos Kontovrakis*  
(*Heretic*) ..... executive producers



*A Shellac*  
*international presentation*

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