

G E B R U E D E R B E E T Z F I L M P R O D U K T I O N



**Experiencing history cross-medially: Two-part
Docu-drama, Online Learning Game, App & Exhibition**
starring Esther Schweins, Leonie Benesch and Valter Skarsgård, HD, 2014

Part 1 *Sigrun's wrath and the Discovery of Iceland*

Part 2 *Jova's heritage and the Fall of Haithabu*

2x52' / 2x43' in Coproduction with NDR, fabelaktiv, Luckyday
in Cooperation with ARTE, Servus TV, NRK, SVT, DR
Funded by nordmedia, FFHSH, Film 3 Norway

Gebrüder Beetz Filmproduktion Hamburg GmbH & Co. KG
Sitz der Gesellschaft: Hamburg · Amtsgericht Hamburg · HRA 108112
Persönlich haftende Gesellschafterin: Gebrüder Beetz Media GmbH
Sitz der Gesellschaft: Berlin · Amtsgericht Charlottenburg · HRB 112420 B
Geschäftsführer: Reinhardt Beetz · Christian Beetz

The Vikings changed Europe forever, yet half of them have almost completely disappeared from collective memory: the women. Quite unjustly so, as they played an important role in the world of the Vikings and performed extraordinary deeds: Viking women commanded ships and settled colonies. They took up arms and negotiated with emperors. Their traces can now be proven all the way from America to Kiev. Without their biographies the period of the Vikings stays incomplete.

The two-part documentary “VIKING WOMEN” gives completely new insights into a fascinating culture, about which it seemed everything was already known. Exclusive interviews with experts from around the globe draw an authentic picture of the Viking world according to the latest scientific findings. High quality recreations with an international top-class cast will lead us to the early medieval world of the Vikings and revive this fascinating, long-lost era. Based on characters of the Nordic sagas, the mini-series displays the life stories of two Viking women: those of Sigrun and Jova.

1. Sigrun's Wrath and the Discovery of Iceland

Norway in the year 872. Sigrun (Esther Schweins) could be a happy woman. As husfrea (housewife) she presides over an impressive Viking household on the coast, she has lots of children, her husband Ulf (Luca Maric) commands his own ship. Yet Sigrun's marriage is an unhappy one. The family is burdened by a dark secret: her husband stole her away from her home settlement during a raid when she was a young girl, killing her father and brother.

Sigrun has been secretly plotting her revenge ever since. When she hears news of a newly discovered island in the west, the time seems to have come at last: this is her chance to start a new life. Sigrun has enough time to prepare everything before her husband comes back from “viking”. She rallies together some followers and has a dragon-ship built, and waits for her opportunity. A spectacular escape to far-off shores begins.

2. Jova's heritage and the fall of Haithabu

Denmark in the year 1064. Jova (Leonie Benesch) lives as a servant in the household of the merchant Ottar, who runs his business in the town of Haithabu. One day she finds out that her father (Reiner Schöne) was a renowned warrior who set out to the east shortly after her birth and didn't come back. From then on Jova only has one thing on her mind: finding her father. She escapes from Ottar's house, dresses up like a man to hire on a ship that sails to the land of the Rus.

The story of Jova leads us deep inside the fundamentally changing society of the Vikings. At this time, Haithabu is one of the most important commercial centers of the Vikings with its numerous emporiums connected from all around the Baltic Sea to the Black Sea. Through the extensive trading with other peoples, Christianity gets intensified influence in the live of the Vikings. Especially kings, traders and women become strong supporters of this new religion. During this time strong kingdoms arise from the middle of the Viking princes. But Christianization and the emerging kingdoms are both a blessing and a curse and herald the destruction of Viking culture.

Insides & Productions Facts:

“Viking Women“ should find its audience among younger viewers as well. “Experiencing history cross-medially“ is the slogan under which a team of cross-media producers at Gebrüeder Beetz Filmproduktion, game designers, museum educators together with the Norwegian co-producers, and NDR Television developed ideas and story lines for a possible cross media companion piece. The result, next to the two-part mini series “Viking Women“ is an “Online Learning Game“ and an app that will released simultaneously with the first broadcast at the “World of the Vikings“ exhibition at the Martin Gropius Bau in Berlin.

Dramatic events require a dramatic implementation.

It was a great challenge bringing the Viking world and culture back to life both authentically and according to the latest state of scientific research. In contrast to most feature films this production took painstaking care to recreate historically accurate details such as clothing patterns, equipment, and dwellings.

A few dozen extras and internationally renowned Danish, Swedish, and German actors, such as Esther Schweins, Leonie Benesch, Valter Skarsgård, Reiner Schöne, Fredrik Dolk, and Torsten Münchow joined the elaborate shoot at the filming locations in Sweden and Denmark. Due to the international cast and the four languages spoken on set, German, English, Danish, and Swedish, all dialogue scenes were dubbed in a recording studio. The plot is driven by the voice-over commentary, the main characters’ inner monologues, historically derived from Icelandic sagas, as well as the dialogue in the key scenes.

To add even more colour and drama to the story, a number of extensive computer generated backgrounds and scenes were built. The challenge here was to visually convey an authentic impression of world history’s hot spots at

the time.

The basis for these complex and scientifically exact 3D animations, crowd replications, and set extensions were current archaeological excavations as well as aerial landscape scans in Germany, Scandinavia, and England. Finally, the 4K footage shot with the Red Epic was enhanced with matte paintings, a process by which photorealistic images are created digitally and inserted in the background. This way we were able to realistically recreate the busy northern German Viking trade port of HAITHABU and the large cult site THINGVELLIR in Iceland. To be able to stage the many Viking sea voyages we received support from the internationally renown Museum for Viking Ships in Roskilde, Denmark who provided six different Viking ships for the production.

For the shoot, which encompassed a total of 55 shooting days in Germany, Great Britain, Scandinavia, USA, and Russia between March and October 2013, interviews were conducted with the leading international scientists on the Viking era. These included Jan Bill, director of the Oseberg Museum and the Museum for Cultural History in Norway, professors Neil Price and Stefan Brink at the University of Aberdeen in Scotland, Judith Jesch, University of Nottingham, and Prof. Dr. Claus von Carnap-Bornheim, director of the archaeological State Museums in Schleswig-Holstein, among others.

More than two years in production

"Viking Women" was produced by Gebrueder Beetz Filmproduktion for NDR/arte and NDR, in co-production with the 2013 Emmy-winning Norwegian production company Fabelaktiv for NRK, SVT, and DR.

Documentaries by Gebrueder Beetz Filmproduktion are regularly featured in competition at large international film festivals and have received multitude of prestigious awards. These include three Grimme Awards, the Prix Europa, the Cinema for Peace Award, the German Film Award, the HotDocs Filmmakers Award, the Audience Award at the Montreal World Film Festival, the Special Jury Award at the IDFA 2013, and even an Academy Award nomination for best documentary short for the co-production „Open Heart“ .

The German Television Yearbook 2012 named Gebrueder Beetz Filmproduktion one of the most successful, non-fiction production companies in Germany. In 2014 GBF was included in the Realscreen „Global 100“ list of the most important international production companies.

For more than two years the team including Ira and Reinhardt Beetz (producers), Alexander Hogh (screenwriter), Onno Ehlers (creative producer),

Judith Voelker and Yogi Parish (re-enactment directors), and Kai Christiansen (director), as well as Marc Riemer and Markus Fraunholz (camera) worked on this elaborate two-part series. It was edited by Christoph Senn and Jens Greuner, the score was composed by Nils Kacirek. The complicated documentary research surrounding the excavations and exhibits from the Viking era was done by Mette Reynold and Jorge Scholz.

Ulrike Dotzer (head commissioning editor NDR/arte) and Dirk Neuhoff (NDR, head of documentations and reports) were in charge of the highly constructive editorial support and advice.

The production budget was approximately 1.2m Euros for the mini series and approximately 300.000 Euros for the game/app.

In addition to the support provided by NDR, ARTE, NRK, SVT, DR, and Servus TV the production received funding from Nordmedia Fonds GmbH in Lower Saxony and Bremen, Filmförderung Hamburg Schleswig-Holstein GmbH, Medienboard Berlin Brandenburg, Film 3 Norway, Ostnorsk Filmcenter, and FFF – Ein Netz für Kinder.

Further contributors include:

Prof. Claus von Carnap-Bornheim, Leading director of the State Museums of Schleswig Holstein, Schloss Gottorf, as scientific consultant for the entire project.

He received support from various leading professors and archaeologists.

Prof. Stefan Brink, Professor and head of the Centre for Scandinavian Studies, University of Aberdeen, GB

Judith Jesch, Professor of Viking Studies, Centre for the Study of the Viking Age, University of Nottingham, GB

Professor Jan Bill, head curator of the Viking Ship Collection, Museum of Cultural History Oslo, Norway

Prof. Neil Price, Professor of Archaeology, University of Aberdeen, GB

Prof. Ármann Jakobsson, Professor for medieval Icelandic literature, University of Iceland, Iceland

Dr. Gitte Hansen, Professor. University of Bergen, Norway

Ole Thirup Kastholm, Museum curator, Roskilde Museum, Denmark

Dr. Phil. Sigmund Oehrl, Academy of Science and Humanities Göttingen, Germany & Swedish National Heritage Board, Visby, Sweden

Hans Ole Mathiesen, Head of Collections National Museum of Denmark Kongernes Jelling, Denmark

Stefan Elgh, CEO, Foundation for Historic Preservation Mälarden, Sweden

Ole Risbøl, Senior Researcher, NIKU (Norwegian Institute for Cultural Heritage Research), Norway

Dr. Irene Baug, University of Bergen, Norway

Lena Lisdotter Börjesson, Navigation expert, Fosen, Norway

Frauke Witte, Archaeologist and museum curator, Museum Sønderjylland, Denmark

Gísli Sigurðsson, Professor Árni Magnússon Institute for Icelandic Studies University of Iceland, Iceland

Astrid Tummuscheit, Archaeologist, Dannewerk, Archäologischen Landesamt Schleswig-Holstein, Germany

Søren Nielsen, Head of Maritime Crafts, Reconstruction and Public Activities, Roskilde Viking Ship Museum, Denmark

Olga Soboleva, Head of Department on the Development of the National Park «Riurikovo gorodische», Novgorod State Museum, Russia



Serious Game

Along with the films, an exclusively created serious game will be published for the web – it provides additional information for children and teenagers at the age of 10-14 and allows to discover Viking history and culture by means of an educational online role play.

The entertaining web-based format consists of documentary video material, images, sounds and mini-games. Different characters and perspectives engage the players in a high-involving competition experience.

Contact

Gebrueder Beetz Filmproduktion Hamburg

Reinhardt Beetz

r.beetz@gebrueder-beetz.de

OnnO Ehlers

o.ehlers@gebrueder-beetz.de

+49 40 769 730 70

<http://www.gebrueder-beetz.de/en/produktionen/viking-women>

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FILMOGRAPHY KAI CHRISTIANSEN

director

DOB/POB: 29.03.1968 in Flensburg

Nationality: German

Education: diploma theater directing (Hochschule für Musik und Theater, Hamburg),
diploma TV directing (Kunsthochschule für Medien, Cologne)

Languages: German, English, French

Recent productions (excerpts):

- | | |
|-------------|--|
| 2013 | A Blind Hero – The Love of Otto Weidt
90min, Vincent TV, NDR/RBB/HR/WDR, Nordmedia,
Medienboard Berlin-Brandenburg |
| 2012 | Munchausen – The Truth Behind The Lies
52min, Gebrueder Beetz Filmproduktion Hamburg,
NDR/arte |
| 2012 | Dachshund – Little Dog and Star
Sagamedia, 43min, NDR/arte |
| 2011 | 100 Years of Hollywood – The Carl Laemmle Story
43/78min, Gebrueder Beetz Filmproduktion Hamburg,
SWR/arte |
| 2010 | Starfighter – With Hitech to Death
87min, Lichtfilm Köln, NDR/arte |
| 2009 | Pioneers turned Millionaires – John Jacob Astor
Docu-Drama, 43/52 min, Gebrueder Beetz Filmproduktion
Hamburg, NDR/arte |
| 2009 | Pioneers turned Millionaires – Henry John Heinz
Docu-Drama, 43/52 min, Gebrueder Beetz Filmproduktion
Hamburg, NDR/arte |

FILMOGRAPHY IRA BEETZ

author & producer

Date of birth: January 17, 1968

Nationality: Germany

Apprenticeship: Traineeship at Radio DDR, afterwards moderation and editorial department

Studies of journalism in Leipzig and Dortmund

Diploma holder of the Axel-Springer-journalism school in Berlin and Hamburg

Languages: German, English, Russian

(Chief Editor) has worked for more than twenty years as a producer, filmmaker and scriptwriter for, amongst others, WDR, ZDF, arte, RTL, VOX and SAT.1. She earned a master's degree in journalism and literature in Leipzig and Dortmund, as well as doing an internship at Radio DDR and graduating from Axel-Springer School of Journalism. She has produced over a hundred documentaries and reportages, and has worked for thirteen years as an editorial journalist for SPIEGEL TV. As chief editor of the gebrueder beetz filmproduktion in Hamburg, she is responsible for the editorial content and has carried out several international productions.

Recent productions (excerpts):

- | | |
|------------------|---|
| 2014 | Executive producer "Viking Women", 43/52min, 2-part drama documentary, NDR/arte, fabelaktiv, Luckyday, Servus TV, NRK, SVT, DR, nordmedia, FFHSH, Film 3 Norway |
| 2013 | Executive producer "The Medici Files", 43/52min, 2-part drama documentary, ZDF/arte, nordmedia, Business Location Southern Tyrol |
| 2012 | Executive producer "Munchausen. The Truth behind the Lies", 43/52min, drama documentary, NDR/arte, FFHSH, nordmedia |
| 2011 | Co-Author "100 Years of Hollywood -The Carl Laemmle Story", 78 min /SWR /Arte |
| 2008 | Author "Pioneers turned millionaires", 5x52 min drama-documentary, NDR/arte, WNET, FFHSH, nordmedia |
| 2007 | Author "Traumberuf Tierarzt", 10x 26 min docusoap, in collaboration with ZDF/Arte |
| 1995 | Editorial journalist in a salaried position at Spiegel TV |
| 1990–1995 | Freelancer author for television and radio at WDR |

Credits:

Starring (episode 1)

Sigrun	Esther Schweins
Ulf	Luca Maric
Grim	Michael Pink
Thorulf	Valter Skarsgård
Stenar	Torsten Münchow

Starring (episode 2)

Jova	Leonie Benesch
Tyra	Annette Lober
Björn	Jakob Benkhofer
Ragnar	Reiner Schöne
Ottar	Fritz Roth

Writer

Alexander Hogh

Director

Kai Christiansen
Judith Voelker
Yoav Parish

Assistant Director Reenactments

Florian Schwombeck
Cordula Stadter

Director of Photography

Marc Riemer
Markus Fraunholz
Holger Neuhäuser
Hans Jakobi
Torben Müller
Michael Kern
Reiner Bauer

Assistant Camera

Thomas Wozny

Sound

Urs Krüger
Yannik Fehling
Milan Bergheim
Christoph Knorr
Resa Asarschahab

Sound Mix

Pierre Brandt
Torben Seemann

Editor

Jens Greuner
Christoph Senn

Assistant Editor

Malte Haderer

VFX / CGI / Animation

Holger Neuhäuser
Stefan Matlik

Music

Nils Kacirek

Vocals

Wiltrud Weber

Narrator

Tom Vogt

Gaffer

Günter Berghaus
Sven Hoffmann
Nico Mölter

Production Design

Dennis Duis
Kay Kulke

Costume Design

Helen Nordmann

Make-up

Mike Reinecke
Lisa Edelmann

Production Management

Onno Ehlers – GBF
Bettina Kinski – GBF
Jost Nolting – NDR

Scientific Advisor

Prof. Claus von Carnap-Bornheim
Mette Reynold
Jorge Scholz

Archives

Roskilde Museum
Kulturhistorisches Museum Oslo
Le musée de la Tapisserie de Bayeux
Atle Ove Martinussen
DM Film
Framepool
The Norwegian Institute for Cultural Heritage Research

Producer

Ira Beetz
Onno Ehlers

Executive Producer

Reinhardt Beetz
Arild Halvorsen, Norway

Commissioning Editor

Ulrike Dotzer - NDR/arte
Carola Meyer - NDR
Dirk Neuhoff - NDR

A production by Gebrueder Beetz Filmproduktion Hamburg GmbH

Commissioned by NDR

In Coproduction with

Fabelaktiv, Lucky Day

In Collaboration with

ARTE, Servus TV, NRK, SVT, DR

Funded by Nordmedia Fonds GmbH
in Niedersachsen and Bremen
Filmförderung Hamburg Schleswig-Holstein GmbH
Film 3, Norway

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