

## BIOGRAPHIE

**1955** geboren in Hannover | schon früh mit dem Vater Helmut Jahn unterwegs auf dem Sattelschlepper | mit der Mutter Margarethe Jahn von Ungern-Sternberg unterwegs auf dem Fahrrad an die Ricklinger Kiesteiche | erste Filmbelichtungen mit der Super8-Kamera in der Schulzeit | Verunsichert durch die Nachricht, dass irgendwo im Museum ein Konzertflügel zersägt wird. | Ständig in Bewegung im Vierer ohne Steuernummer und per Anhalter durch Europa und Nordafrika. | Mit Geologen Nachtbesteigung des Stromboli und Biwak am Kraterand neben dem Spezialist für den Retuschierpinsel im Studio für Werbefotografie bei Peter Gauditz, Hannover | Mit einem italienischen Filmprojektor läßt sich die Geschwindigkeit der Super8-Filme bis auf 8 Bilder pro Sekunde manuell verlangsamen. Damit erster abendfüllender Erfolg im Kommunalen Kino Hannover

**1974 – 78** Studium der Kunsterziehung in Hannover, Staatsexamen

**1978 – 80** Studium der Kunsterziehung und Erwachsenenbildung an der Hochschule der Künste Berlin bei Prof. Dr. Diethard Kerbs und Prof. Dr. Helmut Hartwig und an der Freien Universität Berlin, Diplom

Filmkomparsen bei Faßbinder, Trotta, Sanders-Brahms, Beauvais | Super8-Filme in Brokdorf, Tirana, Langeland, Hannover, Schwaz | Videoarbeiten für *amnesty international* | Treffen auf Gerd Conradt in der *medioperative* Berlin und Beginn der Zusammenarbeit an dem Videoband *Über Holger Meins*

**1982** Teilnahme und Auszeichnung auf den internationalen Festivals in Berlin, Den Haag und Montbéliard | Die Berliner Mauer reizt zum Tabubruch, zunehmende Zeitreisen in die DDR | Treffen auf Peter Wensierski und Beginn der Zusammenarbeit an deutsch-deutschen Themen: *Schwerter zu Pflugscharen*

**1983** Gründung des Künstlerateliers *Confu-Baja-Video* mit Hanno Baethe, Monika Funke-Stern und Gerd Conradt in Berlin. | Experimentelle Arbeiten zum elektronischen Bild | Teilnahme und Auszeichnung auf den internationalen Festivals in Berlin, New York und Montbéliard | Treffen auf Carlos Bustamante und langjährige Zusammenarbeit mit ihm als Kameramann und Peter Wensierski als Co-Autor u.a. bei den Filmen *Transitträume*, *Berliner Blau* und *Die Entführung Europas*. Seitdem wird das Budget ausgeglichen kontrolliert von Paul D. Müller

Auszeichnungen auf dem Max-Ophüls-Preis Saarbrücken, Nominierung zum Deutschen Filmpreis und Bester Europäischer Kurzfilm, Cork Filmfestival

**1986** nach der Reaktorkatastrophe von Tschernobyl Beginn des Video-Langzeitprojekts *Bleibende Werte* zu den Ohnmachts-Phantasien von Jugendlichen

**1987 – 88** Dozent für das elektronische Bild an der Deutschen Film- und Fernsehakademie Berlin (DFfB) | Vorträge und Vorführungen für das Goethe-Institut u.a. in Hongkong, Neu Delhi, Bombay und Marseille

**1988 – 91** Wissenschaftlicher Mitarbeiter am Institut für Audio-Visuelle Medien (AMi) der Universität Hildesheim bei Prof. Dr. Jan Berg | Im dortigen Studio entstehen die Aufnahmen mit dem Akt-Modell Ingeborg Freudenberg

**1989** Spaziergang am 9.11. auf der Berliner Mauer | Gründung des ersten Ost-West-Berliner Kunstvereins *Videokunst und Multimedia e.V.* u.a. mit Günter Petzold, Egon Bunne, Veit-Lup, Antal Lux und Ahmet Dogan

**1991 – 94** Produktion der erfolgreichen Spielfilme *Der Erdnussmann* von Dietmar Klein, *Weltmeister* von Zoran Solomun und *Das schafft die nie* von Lih Janowitz mit der Redaktion *Das Kleine Fernsehspiel / ZDF*, Dr. Hans Kutnewsky | Max-Ophüls-Preis für den Erdnussmann und Auszeichnung für Claudia Michelsen als beste Nachwuchsdarstellerin in *Das schafft die nie* | Auseinandersetzung mit dem elektronischen Bild für den narrativen Film für die ersten Themenabende im ARTE-Versuchsprogramm und im Tanztheater, Zusammenarbeit mit Amanda Ooms, Magita Haberland, Vera Schrankl, Henryk M. Broder und Mark Tompkins und Sasha Waltz

**1994** Deutscher Videokunstpreis des ZKM Karlsruhe für *Akt: Inge*

**1995** Stipendium der Senatsverwaltung für Wissenschaft, Forschung und Kultur Berlin | Stipendium der SK Stiftung Köln für Video/Tanz, Zusammenarbeit mit Toulia Limnaios | Auflösung der Produzentengruppe *Confu-Baja-Video* Berlin | Zusammenarbeit mit dem Elektroakustischen Studio der Akademie der Künste Berlin und Gerd Rische, Entwicklung und Initiierung eines audio-visuellen Forschungsstudios in Berlin bleiben Zukunftsmusik, Zusammenarbeit mit den Komponisten Lutz Glandien, Erhard Grosskopf, Günther Heinz, Georg Katzer, Bert Wrede und Helmut Zapf

**1996** Beteiligung an der Ausstellung *sonambiente* mit dem Gruppenprojekt *Vortex* in Berlin | Abschluss des Projekts *Bleibende Werte* für den Sender Freies Berlin zehn Jahre nach der Katastrophe von Tschernobyl

**1997** Beteiligung an der Ausstellung *deutschlandbilder* im Gropiusbau Berlin und an der Ausstellung zum *Marler Videokunstpreis* | Entwicklung des Projekts *Electronic Landscape* für die Sommerakademie der Akademie der Künste Berlin | Zusammenarbeit mit Gerhard Stäbler bei dem Projekt *Voix(time)* bei den Darmstädter Ferienkursen für Neue Musik | Ana Cristina Fernández bringt glücklich die gemeinsame Tochter Cirenía Annabella zur Welt

**1998** Professur für Film- und Mediengestaltung am FB Gestaltung der FH Mainz | Initiierung und Einrichtung des Virtuellen Studios im Studiengang Mediendesign der FH Mainz

**2001** Erneute Zusammenarbeit mit Gerd Conradt an dem Film *Starbuck – Holger Meins* Nach den Festivals in Leipzig, Rotterdam und Göteborg wird der Film eingeladen in das Museum of Modern Art, New York und die Harvard University, Boston

**2002** Spezialpreis des 10. Marler Videokunstpreises für *Jingle Jungle* und Präsentation in den Goethe Instituten London, Athen, Istanbul, Montevideo, Uruguay, Madras, Bombay, Wellington, HongKong, Florenz | Beginn der Filmreihe *Gold, Kupfer und Diamanten – Die tiefsten Löcher der Welt* in der Zusammenarbeit mit Armin Fausten. Dreharbeiten in Namibia, Chile und Nevada

**2003** Präsentation der Arbeiten *Deutsch-Deutsche Fragmente* und *Immersion* in der Nationalgalerie Berlin | Aus Anlaß des vierzigsten Jahrestages der Fluxus-Aktion in Wiesbaden Beginn mit dem Projekt *Schalten Sie Ihren Fernseher ab. 40 Jahre Fluxus*. Besuch und Filmaufnahmen mit allen Künstlern, die für die eigene Arbeit seit den siebziger Jahren wichtig waren: Ben Vautier, Nizza, N.J. Paik, Larry Miller, Alison Knowles, Carolee Schneemann, New York, Emmett Williams, Berlin. Eric Andersen, Kopenhagen, Daniel Spoerri, Grosseto, Ben Patterson, Wiesbaden, Willem de Ridder, Amsterdam

**2005** Nach dem Film und der Ausstellung (*European Media Art Festival Osnabrück /-foro artistico hannover*) ist dieses Projekt geplant als durch die Künstler medial-lebendig erzählte datenbankbasierte interaktive Kunstgeschichte

**2006** Das Langzeitprojekt *Über Holger Meins – ein Versuch* aus dem Jahr 1982 wird präsentiert im ZKM Karlsruhe, Lenbachhaus München, K21/Kunstsammlung Nordrhein-Westfalen, Düsseldorf, der Kunsthalle Bremen und dem Neuen Museum für die Bildenden Künste Leipzig als Teil der Ausstellung *40jahrevideokunst.de* – Videokunst in Deutschland von 1963 bis heute, ein Initiativprojekt der Kulturstiftung des Bundes

## BIOGRAPHY

Hartmut Jahn was born in Hanover, Germany in 1955. A video artist and film director, he has resided and been creating video works, installations and films in Berlin since the end of the 70s.

In his work Hartmut Jahn celebrates the experimental poetry of documental artifacts. His films and videotapes have received numerous awards, including the German Video Art Award of ZKM Karlsruhe, the Golden Gate Award of the San Francisco Film Festival, the Marl Video Art Award, the prize as Best European Short Film (Cork, Ireland) and the First Prize of the One-Minute-Festival of Sao Paolo.

He has lectured on the electronic image at the German Film & TV Academy Berlin (DFfB) and at the University of Hildesheim. Over the past years he has conducted video workshops all over the world. He is co-founder of *Confu-Baja-Video* Berlin, and his own production company, *pantafilm*, has successfully produced a wide range of visual media for cinema, television and exhibitions. He has been a professor at the University of Applied Sciences in Mainz since 1998.

Everything started in the early seventies when he began experimenting with an old Super 8 camera. After studying fine arts in Hanover he moved to Berlin. In this city divided by the Berlin Wall he met Gerd Conradt who was researching a video project *about Holger Meins*, a member of the Red Army Faction who had died after a 50-day hunger strike. For three years they jointly worked on the no-budget project. In 1982 the documentary was screened at the first World Wide Video Festival in The Hague.



**PETER PANTHER** of the **BERLIN CITY**

**MAGAZINE** Tip wrote that same year: “Love and anarchy – The Berlin video artists Conradt and Jahn approach the phenome-non of Holger Meins in their own way. The piece ‘Über Holger Meins / About Holger Meins’ counterpoints Meins’ slogan ‘The only thing that counts is the fight!’ in an effective manner. The film takes a controversial position. For those who only want to see the brutal terrorist, this attempt is equally scandalous as for those who have the myth of the consistent fighter in their minds. The reviewer spent a sleepless night filled with stressful nightmares after the screening. This attempted portrayal of a murderous theme goes deep under the skin because so many different levels of emotions are touched. Vehemently disputed at earlier screenings was the form that the two renowned video makers have chosen. For example, the father’s descriptions of the solitary confinement are superimposed with a picture of caressing lovers – an intensive provocation of the senses. The film also deals with the father’s love for his son, the community of comrades, the girlfriend’s love for Holger. It even deals with the loves of the ex-Boy Scout Holger, which he expresses in one of his films, and attempts to get close to the person by observation and not through an ideological view.”

While looking for a place to show the film, Conradt and Jahn were offered a studio by the expanded media group *Notorische Reflexe*. A year later, together with Monika Funke Stern and Hanno Baethe, they founded a production group called *Confu-Baja-Video* – and continued collaborating: “One hears about amazing things from London, of new forms of artistic entertainment combining music, recitation, performance, visual arts in actions, theatre, film, electronic and mystic fuss all in one entrancing show. Okay, we have that here, too! (...) ‘Notorische Re

*flexe’* and ‘Confu-Baja-Video’, in the framework of the exhibition ‘Die Zukunft der Metropolen / The Future of the Metropolis’.

What this group of individual masters is able to create and mimic visually, musically, materially, and physically from their fantasies is really wonderful! Go, see, hear and be amazed – and save the trip to London.”

**THEO RADEWAGEN, ZITTY 1995**

During this same period Hartmut Jahn was living on Berlin’s Friedrichstraße in a roommate situation with five other men, one of whom was Peter Wensierski. The windows with a view to Checkpoint Charlie opened their minds to the strange situation of a city divided by a wall. This was first expressed in their documentary film about new movements in East Germany. *Swords into Ploughshares* was a slogan of that time – and it became an image after a sword was really hammered into a ploughshare. The sequence is exclusively seen in this film, which was shown all over the world. After this experience they started the script for a feature film, the comedy *Transitträume / Dreams of Transit*. “The dreams of Hartmut Jahn and Peter Wensierski are an excellent example of this specific television media – sometimes bewildering, but not once confused; witty, but not trite. The gentle, almost tenderly told story about identical twins – one living in East Berlin and the other in West Berlin – who swap roles for awhile abounds in symbolism, double meanings and ironic allusion.

To this background, which is constantly interrupted with powerful statements and collages of original shots from the 50s and 60s, Marita Marschall moves like Alice in Wonderland. She masters her difficult double role as Marie-West and Anna-East with remarkable charisma and attractive simplicity, until the Wall is torn down at the very end of the dream.” **GEORG M. BALSSEN, RHEINPFALZ, 1986**

A year later they used the Berlin Wall as an artistic screen for visual projection. The cinemascope film *Berliner Blau / Berlin Blue* shows internationally renowned painters and artists working on the Wall – and after awhile the Berlin Wall is even turned upside down ... With advanced technology and clever special effects, the Berlin Wall is transformed from a political object into a subjective area for art alienation.

**THE MELBOURNE FILM FESTIVAL** described the movie as “a film combining disparate art forms – including the art of film itself – to paint a psychological portrait of the Berlin Wall’s effect on the German psyche.”

Another videotape of this time is the *Deutsch-Deutsche Fragmente / A Double German Fantasy*. This video experiments with the media of the East and West and the linguistic “war of words” of the 50s and 60s. Rather than simply outline the basic existing ideas, Hartmut Jahn produces and montages an artistic work. Using blue-box effects, one can not only tap-dance on the Wall but beautiful mirages can appear on it as well. The journey through time begins at the fallow border crossings and leads from Germany to the erection of new concrete barriers. The rules of speech and the official pictures in the newsreels of the East and West wrap up the new relationship, producing nostalgic feelings.

The videotape *A Double German Fantasy* takes these newsreel pictures apart and sets them together anew. It extracts the pictures from the beautiful historical view, making them rough-edged. Instead of smoothing the edges, it adds new facets through montage. The journey ends at the new border security installations, which unexpectedly turn out to be made of cardboard. Thus ends the videotape – but not German history. This specific topic reappears in all the genres in which Hartmut Jahn works, including his installations and expanded media works. With his original, angrily political view and use of stylish avant-garde imagery, Jahn’s films and videotapes have been successful worldwide. As of the early nineties, through his production company pantafilm, Jahn has also started producing the work of other young talented directors, such as Dietmar Klein’s *Der Erdnussmann / Shaky* (DoP: Michael Hammon) and Zoran Solomon’s *Weltmeister / World Champion* (DoP: Slawomir Idziak).

While running the production company, he himself has continued to be active in media art and with the experimental use of electronic images in narrative film – for example, with Amanda Ooms in *Honeckers vergessene Tochter / Berlin Alexanderplatz* – as well as live on stage with Mark Tompkin’s *Wheel of Fortune*. In the mid-nineties, the video *Akt: Inge / Nude Model: Inge* was a success at festivals and museums around the world. It was awarded the German Video Prize in the ZKM Karlsruhe. In 1996 he finished *Bleibende Werte / Lasting Values*, a long-term project he had initiated ten years before: Berlin children talking about their emotions, fears and fantasies after the horrific accident in Chernobyl, USSR. In 1986, the children were between 7 and 14 years old; in 1996, they were between 17 and 24 – as a result, their commentary revealed several time layers about themselves.

“And when the teenagers listen to their words as children and look at their baby faces, a very noteworthy energy develops between the times and the film suddenly transcends far beyond its initial theme. It narrates the coming into adulthood of children for whom the announcement of wars and environmental catastrophes is a part of daily life; of the way that they set up their lives, go against their parents, strive for their own future, move into their first apartments, deal with their first jobs and imagine the world. Suddenly the film’s title *Bleibende Werte / Lasting Values* no longer stands just for long-term radioactive irradiation. She was very early very little a child, says Vera, thus speaking to an extant for all those confronted young by the fact that the generation of their parents and grandparents were irrevocably destroying the environment.

**ANKE STERNEBORG, SÜDDEUTSCHE ZEITUNG, 25.4.1996**

In the late nineties, Hartmut Jahn went hunting: Man and animal, images and sounds of animals and of men eating animals – cows, goats, sheep, and geese. His collaboration with the composer Lutz Glandien led to a research into image/sound relationships which resulted in experimental works such as *Konzert in Muh / Concert in Moo, Echt Schaf / Really Sheep, Concert in Mäh / Concert in Maaa*, and *Jingle Jungle*. For *Jingle Jungle* he received the Special Jury’s Prize of the Marl Media Art Prize for Video. Starting from a jingle (a short, aesthetically arranged television spot, in this case produced for the ARTE TV program *Die Liebe zum Land / Love to the Country*, Hartmut Jahn, together with the composer Lutz Glandien, reworks a story in a manner that displays both associative power and an aesthetical quality. The impressive and clearly cut images of the video, as well as the carefully prepared soundtrack, create an aphoristic narrative stream which describes the political and social aspects of the so-called Third World and the West’s claim of ubiquitous power. The cornfield with its metal-like clicking stalks, the withered face of an old man half-covered by cloths, the wooden plow ripping open the dry earth, the absurd dance of an armed soldier, the vast plateau menaced by dark clouds and the costumes of the women and men upon it: All this is unified in a melancholic atmosphere and speaks of bearing, trembling and hoping. The jingle loses its symbolic character due to the remake of the story and becomes a rather new element, the metaphor of a disturbed sphere of life, enriched and intensified by pictures, words and music.



Jahn started with Gerd Conradt to rework the biography of Holger Meins just as a dispute arose in the German Parliament about the student revolt of '68 and the role the current Foreign Secretary Josef Fischer had had in it.

Conradt and Jahn trace Meins' development from Boy Scout and young artist of promise to helmsman of the Red Army Faction, a group that terrorized Germany in the early 1970s. They interview Meins' father, his lovers, and his Berlin classmates, including the filmmakers Michael Ballhaus, Harun Farocki, Peter Lilienthal, and Wolfgang Petersen.

Starbuck was the codename of the German terrorist Holger Meins, who died while on hunger strike in 1974, becoming the first Red Army Faction member to die in custody in prison. Information on his journey through this tragic chapter of German history is supplied by a wide range of companions and is supplemented with the widest variety of contemporary documents.

The result is the documentary film *Starbuck – Holger Meins*. A successful cinema release was followed by festival screenings in Leipzig, Rotterdam, Gothenburg and the Museum of Modern Art, New York.

For four years his production company *Caramba Film* has concerned itself with short films and, as artistic director, has produced *Kurzschluss / Short Circuit*, the short film magazine for ARTE TV. The French film publication *Objectif Cinéma* called this TV magazine: "One of the most strikingly impassioned magazines of current TV programming."

In recent years, Jahn has been traveling around the world visiting media art workshops such as the Video Circle in Hong Kong to either present his work or direct documentaries such as *Die tiefsten Löcher der Welt / The Deepest Holes of the World* in Namibia, Chile and Nevada.

With the *Fluxus Project Schalten Sie Ihren Fernseher ab / Switch off Your TV* Jahn has returned to the "start" of *Fluxus*, visiting and interviewing about 24 artists of the original *Fluxus* pioneers, artists who were also important influences of his own work. The result is an installation, a documentary film and an interactive media data-bank of this last movement of the fine arts in the twentieth century.

In 2006 the long-term-project *About Holger Meins - an Approach / Über Holger Meins - ein Versuch* (1982) is part of the exhibition *40yearsvideoart.de* – video art in Germany from 1963 to the present. The project will be presented by five leading art institutions in Germany: the ZKM | Center for Art and Media Karlsruhe and the K21 / Kunstsammlung Nordrhein-Westfalen in cooperation with the partners Kunsthalle Bremen, Lenbachhaus Munich and Museum of Fine Arts, Leipzig. with funds from the Kulturstiftung des Bundes / The Federal Cultural Foundation.



