

**FATA MORGANA** / Film by **Peter Schreiner** / Austria 2010-12 / DCP / black and white / 16:9 / 140 min / cast **Giuliana Pachner**  
**Christian Schmidt** **Awad Elkish** / artistic collaboration / assistance realisation **Maria Schreiner** / music / sound recording / sound  
mixing / artistic collaboration **Johannes Schmelzer-Ziringer** / artistic collaboration **Giuliana Pachner** / sound recording / Libya  
**Leo Schreiner** / thanks to **Awad Elkish** **Bernhard Sallmann** **Christina Schmidt** **Diana Pachner** **Edeltraud Noack** **Elkish – family**  
/ Tripolis **Emanuele Pachner** **Hermann Krejcar** **Ingomar Mangl** **Jörg Noack** **Judith Zdesar** **Kathi Miedtank** **Manfred Noack**  
**Michael Pilz** **Moawia Elkish** **Olaf Hanspach** **Olaf Möller** **Rainer Komers** / drivers / attendance / Libya **Omar Greesch**  
**Ibrahim Abosalah** **Jalal Dubo** **Ahmed Dalah** **Ahmed Elhadad** / cook / Libya **"Dammah"** / travel - organisation / Libya **Ali**  
**Saidi** **Safari Tourism Services** / image processing / sound mix / subtitles / equipment **echt.zeit.film** / Digital Cinema Package  
**Listo-Videofilm** / translations **Sabine Rachbauer** / subtitling / photos **Paul Schreiner** / assistance production / documentation  
**Isabella Schreiner** / consulting / organisation / tour guide / Libya **Awad Elkish** / consulting / locations / Germany **Stephan**  
**Kaasche** / production management **Peter Schreiner** / concept / realisation / camera / editing **Peter Schreiner** / production  
**echt.zeit.film** **Peter Schreiner Filmproduktion** / contact **office@echtzeitfilm.at** / **www.echtzeitfilm.at** / world distribution  
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" *spiritualising but also stimulating* "  
(IFFR)

by Peter Schreiner

echt.zeit.film

# FATA MORGANA

### Giuliana Pachner (protagonist)

I imagine man's soul to be somehow like that: full of doors closed ...and you have to open them very carefully... ...maybe this death outside - having driven away already many people - has chased away our emotions as well?

What will be left of this desert? I detest my fears. Where shall I seek refuge? Thinking without feeling? Feeling without thinking? My life is like a house on the fringe of the desert where I feel both secure and shut in. And there is you. Close and yet beyond reach, intimate and yet unfamiliar. And it is this we long for and are afraid of. We cannot do otherwise.

### International Filmfestival Rotterdam

Austrian experimental documentary maker Peter Schreiner undertakes a psychoanalytic quest for human existence.

It's a cross between Freud and Sartre, magical and minimalist, as long as you dare.

Two wrinkled lovers, marked by life, expose their deepest inner emotions.

They talk slowly and calmly, looking for the right words for their inner demons.

It all comes down to reason and feeling and where the two meet.

About reality that looks both familiar and alienating.

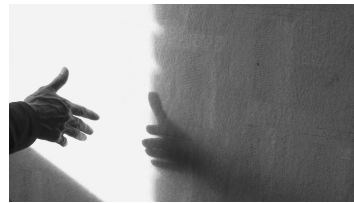
And about the impossibility of understanding yourself - let alone anyone else.

Schreiner's magnum opus is spiritualising but also stimulating.

Majestic panoramic landscape shots fade into close-ups of faces,

meticulously examined by the camera.

As such, Schreiner is hard yet humane, merciless yet tender.



### Vrääth Öhner

Should one attempt to judge what Peter Schreiner's FATA MORGANA intends to do in a single sentence, then the title of the first division of Martin Heidegger's *Time and Being* would be rather fitting:

"The Interpretation of Da-sein in terms of Temporality

and the Explication of time as the Transcendental Horizon of the Question of Being."

The film's three protagonists are occupied 140-minutes long with no less than the question of the meaning of existence. In other words, they are busy with a question for which the enlightened, secular Modern era has no understanding.

However, not in the sense of an ontological existential analysis, but rather, an experiment whose parameters Schreiner reveals right away in the first take. It shows the protagonists as three figures in a landscape. Awad Elkish rises to speak: "People had to find a point of reference or a foothold, and that, already, is a creative process." The sentence is not directed at the other actors, or at himself; it passes by the camera, to an undefined nowhere, addresses a place where the director could be located, the crew, or simply the continuation of the visible landscape - the desert, whose function in the experiment is clarified by Awad's next statement: "The space is cleared out."

In fact, the cleared-out, deserted, empty spaces of the geological and industrial deserts in FATA MORGANA could be interpreted as symbols of the search for meaning. In the sense of Heidegger, they would at least identify a spatial turning away from that improper "Dasein's flight before itself," which arises in taking care of everyday business. The interpretation is contradicted by the fact that the camera and microphone persistently emphasize the concrete, material presence of the empty spaces: Perhaps time is the transcendental horizon for the question of being, but in Peter Schreiner's film, it can only be posed in the here and now of the lived moment.

### Christian Schmidt (protagonist)

you think you are controlling all ...but it is something else ...and that's what has to be found out ...and the question then is ...having gotten on the bottom of it ...will you then be happier? ... that's what I'm sceptical about...

It is this house Giuliana and Christian live in, within me, in my life. Their distress is my distress.

This is both a feeling and a thought.

And no love story will come out of it. And yet it may.

Shall I start to love my fears?

### Rainer Komers

A story focussing on solitude, death, love and on thinking and feeling about this matter.

Death is a friend

Love is a stranger

The mourning over this experience is sheltered by a world of inner and outer sounds,

blown away by the ever-present wind -

### Judith Zdesar

The way you lead us into a strangely dreamlike world in its own way, in which we have to have a look at ourselves and our feelings, in which we can discover our fears, doubts and hopes in other people's faces, gives me a feeling of confidence, despite all transitoriness and anxiety.

Not only what and in which way you show it, it's just the very fact that you show it, this state of being unknown to others, full of anxiety, the longing for being understood, the longing for being seen, as a whole – together with all the dark, deep and terrifying aspects of man's existence, this search for your own self in a mirror and in others, seemingly so very difficult and sometimes impossible –

### Michael Pilz

By being adamant in its refusal to give any explanation and by being script, language and expression itself, the film passes on and leaves the burden and the pleasure up to me to find a solution for the riddle. Any attempt to inquire as to the meaning of the film is thwarted by the film itself, for it is constructed in a manner that does not allow any consideration and any analysis from the outside. This film deliberately refuses to give any explanation. And it gets away with it, because – with regard to its cinematographic elements – it is beyond reproach and simply perfect.

For the audience, the film is a double challenge. It is captivating and enchanting due to its materiality and it throws me back to my own self. In an existential way. Answers and a meaning thereof are found when I open myself to the film, accepting all the risks and inconsistencies, despite all reasoning. This film reveals anything I may discover within me.

There's no cheating. Anything that can be heard and can be seen is all that matters. Nothing else. Sounds and images do not give a meaning, they are.

### Peter Schreiner

FATA MORGANA ist the attempt to share, to communicate my feelings of deficiencies – and we indeed have experienced deficiencies during the making of the film: not only as to the war in Libya, but also in connection with conflicts within us – apart from the offending and vulnerability we had to deal with. And last but not least, the scenery – like an inner world projected outwards – having an effect on us (and on the film - something is taken away from us, it disappears, and we get it back as something that has undergone a change). By this film I wanted to find access to (first of all, my own) feelings, to make them clear - to create a place for them – for our sensations may only be found in a place called „art“- which may probably be a last resort in all the frantic breathlessness of consumption by which we are surrounded and even penetrated –

FATA MORGANA is my statement on the current situation as well as on my own situation. Fundamental crisis is a popular slogan. The film tries to function as a microscope for such a crisis in a psychological respect, which may be useful for people – maybe life-enhancing – and for the cinema as a place of dreamlike self reflection.