

Pressinformation

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Synopsis

The story recounts the moving life story of 81 year old Alice Gimes, known as Lucy and mother of the film's author.

A divided life: one half in Hungary, the other in Switzerland. One half is set in reality while the other is spent in a dream world, so as to be able to endure the reality.

A splendid youth in the south of Hungary, then came a break down in history, a storm that turned her life upside down. Lucy escaped being deported to Auschwitz and after the war committed herself to the communist movement. She married the true to his party line journalist Miklós Gimes, the father of the film's author, whose communistic career was making a rocketing climb. After a personal political change, Miklós Gimes was executed in 1958 as a leader of the Hungarian revolt of 1956. Lucy Gimes fled to Switzerland where she and her small son made a new start to life as emigrants.

Since the end of the cold war, Lucy Gimes returns regularly to Hungary where her husband Miklós Gimes has a prestigious reputation as political martyr. However Lucy's life even now does not receive any peace. In Hungary she is confronted with the former lover of her husband's, who claims to be his widow. At the same time, Lucy is forced to clear up unpleasant questions in her homeland about her role during the dark Stalin period. At a ripe old age, Lucy Gimes must rewrite her life story. For her son though, who tells her story, it opens up an entirely new world: the magic and the burden of the past.

Why this film?

By Miklós Gimes

In the Summer of 1989, I looked up Peter Frey, my former editor in chief of 'TA-Magazine', who had since retired. I told him about the forthcoming rehabilitation of my father and asked him if I should go to Hungary as a private individual or as a journalist.

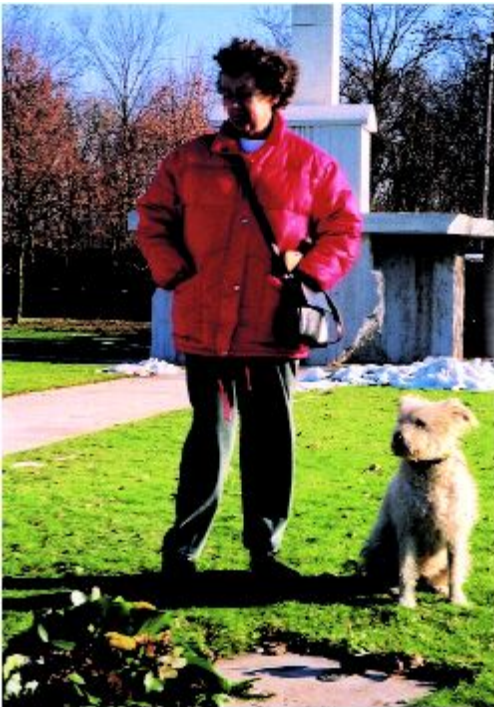
"Go as you want, but write something", says Frey, "that's what I would have requested if I were your boss". I didn't write anything. Neither at the funeral nor later or earlier. I never wrote anything. The subject of my origins was no subject for the public.

Maybe some of my relatives are right in saying that the seed of my mother has sprouted. Lucy purposely held me apart from the past so as not to be confronted with unpleasant questions. All these years I didn't want to be aware of the fact, that at least in Hungary I belong to a well known circle of people who consider me somewhat as an official figure, that represents a myth, the myth of a man who would die at all costs. In actual fact, my origins were rather embarrassing. I felt privileged compared to the Hungarian children who remained as repressed victims of the Hungarian uprising, who were discriminated against for years and who sometimes never found the path to a fulfilling life.

My father's friends and relatives were astounded at my lack of interest in my father's origins.

I noticed that in the scope of the groundwork for this film, I had my first intensive discussions with them since my childhood. It seemed as though they had been waiting a long time for me. Most important to them had always been my father's heir, the comrades and political ideals of their youths and yet finally now the interest in a film about my mother. Evidently I had had to wait until I was fifty years old to find a personal visual angle.

Did my private story appeal to the general public? To that I can only say: the general background is the personal side. In other words: the interplay of history and privacy gives the theme it's authenticity. Because for my mother, the political moment of the uprising is inseparably connected with the personal moment of the personal crisis, exactly this intense personal side creates a film that could appeal to the general public.



Lucy Gimes next to her husband's grave, Budapest 1997

The Story

By Miklos Gimes



Lucy and Miklos Summer 1958

A lorry drives from Budapest in the direction of the Austrian border. According to the consignment note it was supposed to be brimming with seedlings. However, under the tarpaulin, crouched people, covered by winter coats; refugees. It is November 1956 and the Russians have invaded Hungary. At that time I was 6 years old and my mother 35. Her name is Alice but she is known affectionately as Lucy. Escaping with us are my Aunt Juca and her three children. Her husband, my uncle Gàbor, who organised the flight, drives ahead of us. My father doesn't come with us. He remains hidden in Budapest where the Russians are searching for him. In the middle of the night they had hammered on our door looking for him. He is an important man in the resistance.

Just before the Austrian border our goods lorry was stopped. A Russian street block. We were given over to the Hungarian police and brought back to their zone. During the night, my uncle worked on a new route and new stage in an attempt to escape. My mother however can't cope anymore. She gives up. She doesn't want to leave her husband who is in danger. What could possibly happen to her? My mother had learnt during the war to follow her instinct in times strung between life and death. She also knows from those times, that she can endure a great deal. Yet in that night, not far from the Austrian border, my mother can't take anymore. She is no match for the vigour of my Aunt and Uncle's arguments. "You have to go" repeated my Uncle for the hundredth time, "not for yourself but for the sake of your child". "Okay" said my mother to Gàbor "I'll come, but only under one condition: that abroad we will never reproach ourselves." She thinks back on her last meeting with my father on a street corner in Budapest's shot down inner city, "Go, I beg you", he had said, "I can't do anything as long as the two of you are not safe".

On the following evening we were already sitting at a café in Vienna by St. Stephan's Cathedral and while we were being spoilt by our Austrian hosts, my mother found out that my father had been arrested. We went on to Switzerland, where we were accepted as refugees. Later, my Uncle Gàbor arrived too. No one arrived for Lucy. Thereafter ensued over forty years of emigration. A woman with a child, isolated in a foreign country. My mother worked at the post office, in a big hall of Zurich's Postal finance office. One hot summer day in June 1958 she was called to her boss. He had heard in the early morning news service, that my father had been executed, together with the commander of the Hungarian uprising, Imre Nagy.



Vienna, December 1956 – before leaving for Switzerland (f. l.t.r.: Lucy with her son Miklós, Juca Magos, Gabriel Magos, Judit Magos, Miklós Magos)



Lucy and her son in Switzerland after Miklos Gimes's death in 1958

For a few days, Lucy is in the international press, the widow of a martyr, a hero of the cold war. Strangers thronged into her tiny apartment, the post office employees collected for her.

Soon she travels with the local train to the city and sits herself down in front of her calculator. She is not a martyr. She had been a communist. Innocent people were arrested and tortured in the name of her party. She feels a sense of guilt which she is unable to make amends for. She was not entitled to the privileges belonging to the widow of a hero. She would rather stay anonymous, disappear, start from zero. And not only for the good of her son. Should one burden him with the picture of how his father was hanged one early morning in an empty jail yard? And that one doesn't really know where in fact he was hurriedly buried? Only during the night, when she can't sleep, does she find it almost unbearable: How did they execute him? How did he spend his last hours?

She functions like a machine during the day and five years pass before she finds the strength to make a new start.

Along with her work, she also studies to be a librarian; finds a job at Radio DRS ; brings up her son.

In the early seventies, Lucy received Swiss citizenship. She didn't go to Hungary. In 1989, five years after Lucy had retired, she received a call from Hungary. Her husband was to have an official burial, thirty years after his execution. She was asked if she were willing to identify his remains. Lucy travelled to Hungary. There she buried her last hope that her husband was perhaps still alive somewhere, that maybe all these years were just a frightful nightmare, sleepless nights in which she constantly asked herself what she could have done to have saved him from the gallows. Miklós Gimes is dead, it is time to bury him, in her dreams too. It is time, to find an inner peace. Alas new wounds open.

In the summer of 1989, hundreds of thousands gather in Budapest to remember the heroes of the Hungarian uprising.

Heads of governments come from around the world. It is the summer of the Wall, hordes of GDR citizens pour into the west via the Hungarian border. Lucy stands on the honorary platform behind her husband's coffin. However, her thoughts are elsewhere. Perhaps she is thinking about that night in November 1956 as my uncle and aunt, now standing beside the coffin, convinced her to run. What was now happening on the Budapest Place of Heroes, penetrated to her only through a veil, through a pain, that she had always suppressed. She felt like she was on the verge of collapsing with these conflicting emotions.



Lucy Gimes during the exhumation of her husband's remains in Budapest 1989



Lucy Gimes (2.f.l.) on an excursion in Hungary, 1937

Lucy's story began in the twenties in Szeged, a small University city in the south of Hungary. Her father, my grandfather, is an assimilated Jew. He was a tailor by trade and owned a small business for men's ready-to-wear clothing. Lucy lived a carefree youth, one of the happiest stages of her life. She is the youngest, favourite of her father's, who appreciates the pleasures of life, his three children, a game of cards with the men and on Sunday a cigar after a good meal. This idyll life lasted until Lucy was eight years old. In 1929 her mother dies from a bout of flu. Lucy fills the void of a lost security with the yearnings of a teenager. Her first loves are cinema, radio and the young men.

Lucy is just celebrating her finishing of school when the Second World War breaks out. There is no question of studying as there is a shortage of money and no Aryan birth certificate. Lucy goes to Budapest where she does an apprenticeship as a nurse. She shares an apartment with a girlfriend and leads an adventurous life. She gets to know a group of Serbian students who work in the Underground for Tito. In the Spring of 1944, when the Germans invaded, she said to herself "They won't deport me" She organised papers for her and her parents, who were unwilling to escape with false passports. Lucy hid, her parents were deported to Theresienstadt and survived; Karcsi, her brother, never returned from forced labour in the salt mountain works in Bor. Lucy had loved him dearly. After the war, Lucy returns to Budapest, joins the communist party and marries Miklós Gimes, a talented young journalist whose career is climbing rapidly. Gimes comes from a Jewish, intellectual family, his mother is a pioneer of psycho-analysis. For Lucy a whole new world opens.

At that time, Gimes lives with his mother in a rented house on the Klothild street, that functioned like a large residential community. His sister Juca lives in the house with her husband Gábor. A friend from his youth, Miklós Molnár, had rented the ground floor. These are the first years after the war, the life is difficult and sad, yet full of hopes. After her marriage with Gimes, Lucy belongs to the Stalin cadre shift and the young family moves into the villa of a displaced undertaker family. Her husband writes leading articles in the party's newspaper about decadents and those who stray, who when later, the worst comes to the worst, disappear into the torture the state security's chambers. While her country suffered under Stalin's rule, Lucy enjoys family happiness, works at different jobs, looks after her small son and does an evening course in History.



Karcsi (2nd row, right, Lucy Gimes's brother before departing to the labour camp in 1941



Lucy Gimes being congratulated by a communist official, Budapest 1948

As the jails of the secret police are revealed after Stalin's death, the communist views of the Gimes couple began to waver. When Miklós Gimes is sent as a reporter to Geneva for the Indochina conference, he experiences the West as a revelation, it dawns on him, that for years he had assisted a dictator. During seven years as correspondent, he spends several months in Paris, where a previous love affair with a fellow student who had fled from Hungary in 1948, blossoms again. It is the love of his life. Nevertheless, Miklós Gimes returns to Hungary and later both women, my mother and the other, would reproach themselves for not having convinced him to remain in Paris. In the Summer of 1954, Gimes's political career makes a radical change. He would be made the advisor of the reformed communist Imre Nagy, who after Stalin's death wanted to realise a "communism with a humane countenance". However their relationship is strained as even in Nagy's circle my father is looked upon as extreme. There is for him no third way between communism and democracy. Under the "reformed communists" of that time, he is one of the few who regards communism to be the reason for not being able to reform. It is presumably this intellectual radicalism that later cost him his head.

For Lucy too, her world broke apart, not politically, but emotionally. After his return from Paris, my father informs her that he wants a separation. Meanwhile, events are simmering in Hungary. After the so called "melting period", the reformers installed the old Stalin followers. Gimes doesn't talk anymore about immigrating to France, as it is now clear that he is needed at home, where he wants to shake himself free of Stalin's guilt. In that time of personal instability, a ten year younger lady appear in his life and out of political discussions there surfaced a hidden love, that in the days of the revolt, became public. He didn't share the adventures of the Hungarian uprising with my mother, but instead with his lover.

That was how my parent's life looked in November 1956, as my father, after the marching in of the Russians, convinced my mother to escape from Hungary. That was their last meeting. Gimes was changing apartments all the time, night after night. The only person with whom he still had contact was his girlfriend and my uncle. Soon afterwards, he was arrested. In jail, my father tried to arrange to divorce Lucy. By then though, my mother was already in the west.

Only then, in 1989, during the celebratory restoration of my father on the Budapest Heroes Square did my mother realise, that it was her rivals who through all those years had taken the roles of martyr widows and who had fought for the rehabilitation of Miklós Gimes,- the state burial seemed to be the hour of their triumph.



The family Gimes in Summer 1955 in Budapest



Lucy Gimes at Radio Studio Zurich, 1964

Amidst the hundreds of thousands, my mother feels alone. She resolves to draw a line between herself and those, who after 89, found peace within themselves. Between restlessness and the appeasement of others. Looking back, she doesn't see herself as the same independent person, who let herself be persuaded to flee, but rather as an appendage of a powerful family branch, a chess piece in a familiar game of power.

And even here the story does not end. For even today another commotion has seized the ghost of appeasement. Stalin's horrors are being analysed everywhere. After all, who were these communists? What sort of people were they, who in the name of their country tortured men, murdered, let people disappear? To be able to judge that in today's society, one must be a dead revolutionary like my father. And what counts for him, also counts for the woman who had lived next to him for nine years, whether she is the official widow or not.

Today Lucy lives alone in an apartment block near the Lake of Zurich. Since 1989 she travels backwards and forwards between Zurich and Budapest. She could be at an age where she just calmly recollects the past,- yet she can not cut herself off, she had not yet turned the last page.

The people interviewed



One of the last photos of Miklós Gimes before his arrest in 1956

Most of the interviews took place between June 2001 and April 2002. The material was supplemented with extracts taken from the Hungarian National Library Budapest OSZK (Országos S echényi K onyvt ar) Video –archive of oral history , which was established in the second half of the 90’s.

Zsuzsa Varga, born in 1921. School friend of Lucy Gimes. My mother’s school friend from Szeged, lives in Budapest with her husband. After leaving school, married into the well-to-do Varga family. In 1944 Zsuzsa Varga was loaded into a cattle wagon together with her new born baby. Thanks to an exchange action, both were saved from being deported to Auschwitz. She was the only member of her family to survive.

Mikl s V s rhelyi, born in 1917, a friend of Mikl s and Lucy Gimes,

Mikl s Gimes’s working colleague at the Party newspaper “Szabad N p”. A convinced communist since his school days. During the war, worked for the resistance. In 1953 he became the vice press chief for Imre Nagy’s administration. Later he belonged to the closest circle of the reform communists. In 1958 he was convicted in a process against Imre Nagy, condemned to a full term of imprisonment and in 1963 was given amnesty. Until his death in the summer of 2001, shortly after the filming of “Mother”, Mikl s V s rhelyi was deemed as the most prominent survivor of the leading rank during the Hungarian revolt and before the Wall, as a rallying point of the opposition against the K d rsystem. In the 80’s, he became the advisor to the Hungarian descended financier and philanthropist George Soros, who directed the Hungarian branch of the Soros Foundation. He was at the head of the “Committee for Historic Amends”, which had organised the ceremonious re-burial of the victims of the uprising.

Mikl s Moln r, born in 1918. Old friend of Mikl s Gimes

Mikl s Moln r’s career runs much on the same lines as that of Mikl s Gimes.

In the communist days he was a journalist, and after Stalin’s death went along the reformist path. After the suppression of the insurrection, he fled with his family to Switzerland, where he acquired a second career as a historian- Professor at the University in Lausanne. His book about the uprising “Victoire d’une d faite” is a classic. Lives in Geneva.

Aliz Halda, born in 1927. Friend of Miklós Gimes

Aliz Halda lives alone in Budapest. After the suppression of the uprising, the teacher of Hungarian literature earned her living for years from typing. Later she was transferred to the direction of a ladies college, where she was also pensioned. After the changes, she was delegated to the Hungarian parliament in the line of social liberators SZDSZ, from which the opposition movement against the KàdàrRegime emerged. This summer, her autobiographical book appeared "Magàn ügy" ("Private Matter") about her time with Miklós Gimes.

Juca Magos, born in 1920. Lucy Gimes's sister-in-law

The sister of Miklós Gimes, lives in Dubendorf near Zurich, Wife of Gàbor Magos. Has known Lucy Gimes since 1946 in Budapest when they lived in the same house as her brother Miklós. During the communist era, she was a functionary of the party and teacher at the party's school. In November 1956 she escaped to Switzerland together with Lucy and her three children. Juca Magos wrote-together with her husband Gàbor - her life story in a book from the psych analyst Regula Schiess "Like the life after the fire". Her husband Gàbor Magos, born in 1914, a close friend of Miklós Gimes since the thirties, died in January 2000

Judit Luif, born in 1943. Lucy Gimes niece

Daughter of Juca and Gàbor Magos. Judit Luif, mother of two grown-up children, manages the Zurich Youth and Culture Haus Dynamo

Miklós Magos, born in 1946. Lucy Gimes nephew

Son of Juca and Gàbor Magos. Miklós Magos, whose profession is primary school teacher, works in a home for old people and gives tango lessons in Zurich.

Emil Zalai, born in 1923, Lucy Gimes's party comrade

Already as a young man worked for the Budapest Labour movement. Was arrested for anti german propaganda by the Hungarian police and detained in Dachau during the last year of the war. Went to the school of the Party with Lucy Gimes. Remained loyal to communism even after the uprising in 1956, worked until retirement as a middle cadre. Lives in Budapest.

Peter Kende, born in 1927. Miklós Gimes cousin

Peter Kende, who began a career in journalism at a young age, was a working colleague of Miklós Gimes's at the "Szabad Nép" and a close companion in the opposition. Fled to France, where he studied and made a name for himself as a specialist in Eastern Europe. Member of the Hungarian Academy of Scholars. Lives in Paris and Budapest.

Judit Gyenes, born in 1930. Widow of Pal Maleter

Judit Gyenes was still a young woman when Pal Maleter was executed. She was made to suffer and given neither work nor a passport. Lives in Budapest.

Tibor and Rosza Meray, both born in 1924. Friends of Miklós and Lucy Gimes

The journalist and writer Tibor Meray was a working colleague of Miklós Gimes at the "Szabad Nép". Fled to Paris in 1956 with his wife Rozsa, where he was, until the changeover, the editor of "Irodalmi Ujsag" (Gazette Littéraire). He was the most important, intellectual voice of the Hungarian emigration. Live in Paris and Budapest

Zoltán Pesko, born in 1937. Friend of Lucy Gimes

The conductor Zoltán Pesko, son of a reformed church musician, emigrated in 1964 to the West where he studied with Pierre Boulez, amongst others. After seven years with the German Opera Berlin, next to Lorin Maazel, he began his own solo career.

Today he is the director of the Portuguese State Opera and gives guest performances around the world. Lives in Ticino.

Lászlo Rajk Junior, born in 1949

Fifty one year old architect and former parliamentary delegate, lives in Budapest. Rajk has the same name as his father, who was the Spanish fighter and ex communist external minister, unjustly sentenced to death in 1949. The young Rajk never knew his father. His mother, also arrested, found him years after the trial, in an orphanage. In the seventies and eighties, mother and son turned into prominent figures of the Hungarian dissident scene.



Twenty two year old Lucy Gimes

The Music for the Film

Music plays a great role in Lucy Gimes's life and she improvises on the piano to this day. Her musical memories are a document of our time and go from the young Friday who she saw conducting in Szeged, to the great Hungarian popular songs from the period between the wars. Even more important for the film though, was not those colourful times, but rather the presence of music and its emotional effect. The range of emotions is interpreted by means of three elements:

Popular Songs

The excerpt taken from the feature film "Ida Regenye" (1934) is from the first golden age of the Hungarian film industry and then became a Hungarian evergreen; "Oda vagyok magaert..." ("I am in raptures for you..."). Some ten years later, the unforgettable Jenő Horváth composed his hit "A szerelmi abecében" ("In the ABC of Love"). The piece was sung by Kapitány Anna, who performed it in Abbazia on the Oktogon during the period straight after the war. In 1947 Kapitány Anna emigrated to the USA where she got a contract with RCA.

György Ligeti

The use of the "Metamorphosis Nocturnes" from the György Ligeti's first string quartet, was achievable for the project "Mother", thanks to the kindness of the Hungarian composer himself. Ligeti's biography: born in 1923 in Siebenburgen, and lived synchronically the same historical incidents as featured in the film: in 1943 was sent to labour camp and after the Hungarian revolt in 1956, emigrated to the west. It is these foremost biographical experiences, which Ligeti's music convey in the film.

Dés László

The connecting element between the popular songs and Ligeti is László Dés. Born in 1954, one of the greatest Hungarian pop stars, whose musical spectrum ranges from appearances in avant-garde jazz festivals (Pori) to children's musicals. Dés, who since 1981 also writes music for films, made the bridge between himself, the popular songs and Ligeti with his own score for the film.



One of the last walks together in Hungary, Winter 1955



The show trial against Laszlo Rajk in 1949



Stampede on the Hungarian- Austrian border, November 1956

Historical Background

A summing up of Hungary and it's history by Miklós Gimes

In one or two years, the middle east European nations will enter the European Union,- what do we know about their history? What do we know about Hungary, which will strengthen the circle of the European Union countries, those who haven't experienced any civil revolution.

1921 1945

Shadows of k. and k monarchy

Lucy Gimes was born in 1921 in a bankrupted country of the k.a k. monarchy, which the victorious forces of the First World War abused for their good. Hungary lost about one half of their territory and a third of its population to the surrounding countries.

In this mood of abasement, any democracy would have had it hard, not to mention

a land that had been ruled for ages by aristocrats and wealthy landowners.

Therefore, not surprisingly, after the collapse of the monarchy a communist Soviet republic, after the soviet example, would come into power. That nonetheless after a hundred days from English, French and Rumanian armed forces, would be captured from all sides. The resulting dictator, a reactionary military junta under the rule of Miklós Horthy, the last rear-admiral of the k. a k. Fleet, promised the western authorities to respect the new boundaries. Horthy managed with a coalition from the upper class, clergymen and the military, a kind of enlightened pseudo parliamentary dictatorship. This gave the country a certain stability, but at the same time bestowed upon it a formidable constriction of the spirit, even though Horthy had an amity with England.

Anti Semitism

That the question of the lost Hungarian territories dominated the public lives, is best evident by the fact that the country under Horthy's regime was the first country in Europe during the early twenties to have initiated anti Semitic laws. For example, the number of restricted entries in the universities calculated for a country which was way ahead in Jewish assimilation.

And even so, Horthy had to find a new picture of hostility to drain the bottled nationalistic feelings. The socially successful Jews, a tenth of the Hungarian population, were given the blame. The result of the Jewish laws was a devastating outflow of academics and artists to the west. This was the country in which Lucy grew up.

After Hitler's massive takeover, Horthy looked for contact with the Fuhrer who had honoured the alliance partner with the restoration of it's lost state territories. By the time the war broke out, Horthy tried to wriggle out and to keep

the Germans clear of the Hungarian border by sending them troops to use as cannon-fodder in Russia. However in the Spring of 1944, as Horthy aspired for a special peace with England, the Germans took possession of Hungary. It was Adolf Eichman's hour, who with the energetic support of robust anti Semitic Hungarian Police soldiers, in a matter of a few months, deported about half a million Hungarian Jews to Auschwitz. Already in the years before, Hungary had hurriedly and obediently erected labour camps for the Jewish men. In one of these, Lucy's brother died.

From 1945 until today Salami –Tactic

In the winter of 1944/45 after the embittered battle around Budapest, Hungary was occupied by the Russians. Hungary was attached to the to the Russian authoritarian zone of the victorious power. In the first free elections, the civilians dominated the coalition and the communists won only a sixth of the votes received. During Horthy's dictatorship, the communist faction was practically shattered. Hungary's newly constructed party was supported by the presence of the Russian army, the in Moscow formed commanding stratum, and the thousands of young idealists like my mother and father, who after the second world war dreamed of a better future. In the following years a communist peoples republic was generated through intentional terror and rigged elections. Party leader Rakosi called what preceded the prowling power takeover "Salami tactic". It came to an end in 1948.

In Stalinist Times

Between 1949 and 1953, a Russian model of Stalin show trials came to Hungary. Innocent people were forced to confess through torture, to serve as a warning to propagandists. Enemies of the classes of all kinds were confined to camps similar to KZ. Most of the victims found themselves within the communist party, of whose members would be intimidated to unsuspecting party soldiers. The most prominent victim of this cleansing was the Secretary of State for foreign affairs Lászlo Rajk. After Stalin's death in 1953, all the jails and camps were emptied, for which the reformed communist Imre Nagy won great popularity. But a turn about in Moscow brought the old Stalinists back to the rudder in 1955.



The reformed communist Imre Nagy in 1956

The 1956 Uprising



Peaceful demonstrations in Autumn 1956

In the autumn of 1956, an explosion of fury amongst the people broke out in Poland and then in Hungary. The vehemence of the Hungarian uprising also surprised the reformed communists. Within 24 hours a peaceful demonstration became an armed mass rebellion. The reform communists yet again at the helm, allowed the forbidden civil and social democrats to shout out their national neutralities. After four days of bloody fighting the first Russian troops left the country. A hardening of the international situation by an attack of the English and French on the Suez Canal caused the Russians to make an about turn. In a few days Hungary was inundated with Russian troops and the revolt was broken up. (America had given the Russians free way). An appeal to the passive opposition and a general strike gave the new Russian affable government lead by the deserted Nagy follower Janos Kadar, a few more months of wind. But already in the spring of 1957, the new regime had the country under its control.

The Kádár-Regime and the Change

After dark years and inexorable repression, thousands of victims killed, the Kádár -regime was so well established that it could begin with careful reforms (private property, travel abroad). In the following years, Hungary was considered the “amusing barrack” of socialism. The memory of the 1956 uprising was systematically dislodged by the regime. In the 1989 summer of the changeover, as the deceased from the uprising were buried, the first opportunity came for many people, to speak about the displaced past. Today the 23 October, the first day of the uprising, is the official National Day of Hungary.

The Hungarian Uprising and the West

The Hungarian uprising was in the western head lines for many weeks. The communist movement had experienced a short recoil, thousands resigned from the communist party.

For Switzerland the Hungarian uprising was also an incisive event. From the more than hundred thousand refugees, ten thousand found entrance to Switzerland. The Swiss showed great solidarity to the suppressed minor state in the east. Sporadically it came to anti communistic pogroms.

Because the revolt signalled the beginning of the end of the Soviet power, historians believe the Hungarian uprising to be one of the central events of the second half of the twentieth century. Hungary in 1956 was the start of a long line of revolts in Eastern Europe, finding only an end in Belgrade in the autumn of 2000.



Janos Kádár in the fifties

Technical Details

Length 95 minutes
 Format 35 mm (FAZ), Dolby SR
 Original version German/ Hungarian

Production Team

Director	Miklós Gimes
Camera	Pio Corradi
Camera assistant	Men Lareida
Sound	Jens Rövekamp
Sound design	Jürg von Allmen
Editing	Gio-Reto Killias
Music	György Ligeti, Dés Lászlo
Music composition	Dés Lászlo
Production Manager	Susa Katz
Period of filming	June 2001- April 2002
Film location	Hungary and Switzerland

A production of T&C Film, Switzerland 2002 in cooperation with Swiss Television DRS and Teleclub. With the support of the federal office for culture (EDI) Switzerland, city and canton Zurich, Succès Cinéma, Alfred Richterich Foundation, Migros Culture Percent, Volkart Stiftung.

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*Impressum: T&C Film August 2002
 Photos: Private archives, Museum 1956
 Budapest or from archive material used in the
 film. For press revues about this film a download
 possible at: www.tcfilm.ch/down1d.htm*

Biographies

Miklós Gimes (Director)

Born in 1950 in Budapest, since 1956 lives in Switzerland (Zurich), Swiss citizen. Went to school in Zurich, licentiate of economic science University Zurich. Journalist for "Tages-Anzeiger" since 1985, until 1990 film critic in the culture edition, after 1990 editor for "Magazine", 1994 till 1997 deputy chief editor, today editorial contributor. Zurich Prize for Journalism (2000)

Filmography

2002 "Mother" cinema documentary film, 95 min.
1998 "Eleven Friends" (Co-director) with Michele Andreoli, TV Documentary DRS/ Arte, 52 min.

Pio Corradi (Camera)

Born in 1940 in Basel. Technical art school and training as photographer. Since 1978 worked as a freelance camera man for more than 30 films. Most well known from films such as "High Fire" (1985), "Full Moon" (1998), "Gripsholm" (1999) or documentary works amongst others "Congress of Penguins" (1992), "The Knowledge of Healing" (1996), "The Salt men from Tibet" (1997)

Gion- Reto Killias (Editor)

Born in 1970 in Switzerland. Education at the High School of Creative Production, Zurich (HGKZ). Worked on various films and videos. "Mother" is his first work for a cinema documentary film.

Dés Lászlo (Composer)

Born in Budapest, 1954, educated as saxophonist, graduated from the Jazz High School. Performed with the (Trio Stendhal, Budapest Big Band). Well known for his compositions for pop songs, Children's' Musicals, Film Music. Home Page: [www. Dés.hu](http://www.Dés.hu)

Gyorgy Ligeti (Music used for the film)

The composer Gyorgy Ligeti was born to Hungarian-Jewish parents on 28 May, 1923 in Discoszentmarton (today Tirnaveni, Siebenburgen). He gained his musical education before and after the war in Budapest. In 1950 he was appointed teacher for harmony, counterpoint and formal analysis at the Franz Liszt Academy. After the 1956 uprising in Hungary, Ligeti had to leave the country. Whilst he had previously applied himself to mainly Folk music, in Vienna he devoted himself more to the New age music, above all the works of Karlheinz Stockhausens, Gottfried Michael Koenigs and Herbert Eimerts. Ligeti first caused an international sensation with his compositions 'Apparitions' (1958) and 'Atmospheres' (1961). For his 'Requiem' (1963-65 he was awarded the Bonner Beethoven Prize in 1967.

Ligeti's works 'Atmospheres', 'Requiem' and 'Lux aeterna' were later made renowned when used as soundtracks for **Stanley Kubricks'** films "2001:A Space Odyssey", "Shining" and "Eyes Wide Shut". After a several years in Germany and Austria, Ligeti became a citizen of Austria in 1967.

In the documentary film "Mother" the pieces String Quartet No.1 and No.2 "Metamorphoses nocturnes" were used.

T&C FILM A G

(founded in 1976)

Cinema (Features and Documentaries)

- 2002 MOTHER (Mutter) by Miklos Gimes. Documentary.
- 2001 SECRET LOVE (STILLE LIEBE) by Christoph Schaub.
With Emmanuelle Laborit, Lars Otterstedt, Wolfram Berger, Renate Becker. (World Premiere ,Festival des Films du Monde' Montreal' 2001.)
- 1999 BERESINA or THE LAST DAYS OF SWITZERLAND (Beresina oder Die letzten Tage der Schweiz) by Daniel Schmid. CH/D/A. With Elena Panova, Geraldine Chaplin, Martin Benrath, Ulrich Noethen, Stefan Kurt (Official Selection UN CERTAIN REGARD Cannes 1999, Quality Award FDI).
- 1999 SANTIAGO CALATRAVA'S TRAVELS (Die Reisen des Santiago Calatrava) by Christoph Schaub. Documentary.
- 1999 COINCIDENCE IN PARADISE (Ein Zufall im Paradies) by Matthias von Gunten. Documentary. CH/A. (Quality Award FDI).
- 1998 BRAIN CONCERT by Bruno Moll. Documentary.
- 1998 FULL MOON (Vollmond) by Fredi M. Murer. CH/D/F. ('Grandprix' The World Film Festival Montreal 1998, Quality Award FDI).
- 1996 THE KNOWLEDGE OF HEALING (Das Wissen vom Heilen) by Franz Reichle. Documentary. (Quality Award FDI, Film Award Zurich).
- 1995 THE WRITTEN FACE (Das geschriebene Gesicht) by Daniel Schmid. Documentary-fiction. CH/J. (Quality Award FDI, Film Award Zurich).
- 1995 MEKONG by Bruno Moll.
With Andrea Zogg, Sinta Tamsjadi.
- 1992 MEN OF THE SEA (Gente di Mare) by Bruno Moll. Documentary. (Quality Award FDI).
- 1992 OFF SEASON (Zwischensaison) by Daniel Schmid. CH/D/F. (Quality Award FDI, Film Award Zurich).
With Sami Frey, Andrea Ferréol, Maria M. Fellini, Dieter Meier, Arielle Dombasle.
- 1987 THE WAY THINGS GO (Der Lauf der Dinge) by Peter Fischli and David Weiss. Shortfilm. (Study Award FDI).
- 1985 AFTER DARKNESS by Dominique Othenin-Girard and Sergio Guerraz. With John Hurt, Julian Sands, Victoria Abril. (Quality Award FDI, Competition Berlin 1985).
- 1984 TOSCA'S KISS (Il Bacio di Tosca) by Daniel Schmid. Documentary-fiction. (Winner of several festival Awards, Quality Award FDI).

- 1983 THE RIGHT WAY (Der rechte Weg) by Peter Fischli and David Weiss. Short feature film. (Study Award FDI).
- 1982 HECATE by Daniel Schmid. CH/F. With Lauren Hutton, Bernard Giraudeau. (Quality Award FDI, Competition Berlin 1983).
- 1981 LONELY HEARTS CALL VIDEO (Kassettenliebe) by Rolf Lyssy. With Emil Steinberger.
- 1978 THE SWISSMAKERS (Die Schweizermacher) by Rolf Lyssy. With Emil Steinberger and Walo Lüönd. 1 million spectators only in Switzerland. (Quality Award FDI).

TV-Documentaries (selection):

- 2002 TALKING DRUMS (Sprechende Trommeln) by Wolfgang Rommel
- 2001 DRUMS AND TRANCE (Trommeln und Trance) by Bruno Moll.
- 2000 BODY OF SOUND (Klangkörper) – The Swiss Pavillon on the EXPO 2000 in Hannover by Bruno Moll.
- 1999 THE HERDSMEN'S FEAST (Das Fest der Hirten) by Bruno Moll.

Coproductions:

- 2001 MOSTLY MARTHA (3 Sterne) by Sandra Nettelbeck. D/CH/A. With Martina Gedeck, Sergio Castellitto, Sibylle Canonica. (World Premiere ‚Festival Internazionale del Film‘ Locarno 2001.) (Quality Award FDI).
- 2001 THE MARBLE ROAD (La Strada del Marmo) by Michael Trabitzsch. Documentary. D/CH.
- 1998 SECRET DEFENSE by Jacques Rivette. F/CH/I.
- 1997 THE TRUCE (La Tregua) by Francesco Rosi. I/F/CH/D. With John Turturro. Competition Cannes 1997.
- 1996 THE CRY OF SILK (Le Cri de la Soie) by Yvon Marciano. F/CH/B. With Sergio Castellitto, Marie Trintignant, Anémone. (Quality Award FDI).
- 1993 BARNABO OF THE MOUNTAINS (Barnabo delle Montagne) by Mario Brenta. I/CH/F. (Competition Cannes 1994, Quality Award FDI).

In production (selection):

MONTE GRANDE (working title) by Franz Reichle.
Documentary