

Press Information

MILES & WAR



A film by
Anne Thoma

Produced by
T&C Film AG/zero one film GmbH/Terz Film

Coproduced by
**Suisse Television SRF/RTS/RSI
WDR/SWR**

In collaboration with
ARTE

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Download stills from: http://tcfilm.ch/home/?page_id=5514&language=de

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Technical data

Switzerland/Germany 2012

Duration: 78 and 52 min.
Ratio: 16:9
Sound: stereo

Original language version:
English/Arabic
German Subtitles

Contact production/world rights

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SHORT SUMMARY

Who are those people, who try to put an end to fighting and bloodshed in conflict areas, every day, again and again? A portrait of three men, who counter war and bombs with words. A personal view on today's conflicts, the endeavours to end them and the unusual occupation of private peace mediators.

PRESS NOTE

Today's wars and conflicts are increasingly complex and incomprehensible. Often, they are caused by local civil conflicts with global repercussions in the power struggle over territories and resources. This is why politicians employ those who understand the language, have access to expert knowledge and know how to be discrete. They employ experts, who turned "making peace" into a new, private business model.

"If you want to put an end to war, you have to talk to the fighters!" An exclusive group of international consultants are dedicated to this idea – it is their business, and their mission.

In her film, director Anne Thoma portrays three private mediators and their work, which they conduct in hotel lobbies, during business class flights and in secret conference rooms. The film follows the protagonists on their mission to put an end to armed conflict in the world. We learn to understand their motivation, share hopes and disappointment, the loneliness and their short, rare moments of triumph. We also get a glimpse into the every day chores of the job alongside war theatres – surprising and emotional insights into the private peace industry.

MILES & WAR is a documentary film by zero one film, Berlin and T&C Film, Zurich, in coproduction with Swiss Television, WDR/SWR, in collaboration with ARTE.

IN FRONT OF THE CAMERA

The main protagonists are three top-class private mediators: Dennis, David and Martin. They share a sense of adventure, a curiosity for people and their unrelenting belief in rapprochement. Their character and their methods, however, couldn't be more dissimilar.

DENNIS MC NAMARA

“It is hard to switch from Cambodian Genocide to the morning school run. It's a huge balancing act.”

The fun-loving, often noisy, yet highly sensitive New Zealander is in his mid 60s by now. He loves good whiskey, expensive cigars and enjoys fishing. After a very successful career at the United Nations he has dedicated his remaining professional life to the challenge of gathering the Sudanese Government and the Darfur Rebels around the negotiating table. He has already sacrificed a lot for his job. One reason for the failure of his marriage was the missions in Iraq and Cambodia. Today he lives in Geneva, yet quitting is not part of his plan. He describes it like this: *“It is a bit addictive, that's right. If you have done it for your entire life, like me for 35 years, it is hard to stay in one place.”*

DAVID GORMAN

“If I ran away every time violence flares up... This is about dialogue, about preventing conflict or solving it. If violence threw us off course every time, we'd never achieve anything.”

At first glance, the American reminds one of the boys next door. In his mid 40s, he's a father of three and lives with his family in the Philippine capital Manila. For more than six years now, he's been trying to solve the conflict between the government and the different Muslim groups, which has continued for many decades. His job takes him far into the jungle, where clans and rebels solve their problems still with arms and machetes. And to the streets of Libya, where he is sent at the onset of the Arab spring, to support the Libyan population finding a political solution for the conflicts. David is convinced: *“Despite the problems, despite the incidents (...) everybody in Libya agrees. Nobody says anything different: We need dialogue. We have to work on the future. (...) We have to be prepared to invest time and energy, to listen and to understand...”*

MARTIN GRIFFITHS

“One has to be far more patient than one wants to be, because everything takes so much longer than it should.”

The British intellectual thinks fast and outside the box. His ideas and visions have been put to the test and improved on countless missions as a diplomat or mediator. As the founder of the Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue he explored new paths to promote private mediation. Three or four journeys a month into different conflict zones are his average – business as usual. A large part of Martin's work is highly confidential and secrecy must be protected. The film embraces this challenge and focuses on the scenes, which reflect the character of his work, underlining the special circumstance under which the protagonists work. For Martin, it is *“a life, pretty much determined by other people...”*

BEHIND THE CAMERA (CREW)

Writer/Director	Anne Thoma
Executive Producer	Susa Katz (CH), Ann Carolin Renninger (D)
Producer	Marcel Hoehn (CH), Thomas Kufus (D)
Commissioning Editors	Christiane Hinz (WDR) Gudrun Hanke-El Ghomri (SWR) Sabine Rollberg (WDR/ARTE) Urs Augstburger (SRF) Irène Challand (RTS) Silvana Bezzola Rigolini (RSI)
Camera	Johann Feindt (BVK), Anne Thoma, Jakub Bejnarowicz, Pio Corradi, Jule Cramer, Jack McNamara, Börres Weiffenbach
Editing	Stephan Krumbiegel, Florian Miosge
Dramaturgical Consultant	Jutta Doberstein
Sound	Gilles Abravanel, Oswald Schwander
Music	Mathias Vetter, Jan Tilman Schade
Sound Design	Oswald Schwander
Mix	Jörg Höhne, Studio Mitte
Voice Over (D)	Ursina Lardi, Max Gertsch, Georg Scharegg, Reinhart Kuhnert
Colour Grading	Peter Guyer und Ueli Müller, Rec TV
Title Design	Brigae Haelg

ANNE THOMA

Anna Thoma studied International Relations at the London School of Economics and the Institute for International Relations in Geneva, graduating with a bachelor and a master. Realizing that her passion lies with non-fiction films and especially with social and political topics, she subsequently shot her first documentary film on street children in Brazil "Espera Menino". Her film was screened at the Human Rights Film Festival in Nürnberg. "Painful Peace", a portrait of four teenagers in Kosovo brought her the BR/Telepool Young Talent Award and a First Steps Nomination in 2008. From 2008 until 2011 she has worked as a videojournalist for the Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue which facilitated the exclusive access to the protagonists and the topic. In 2010 she received the Gerd Ruge scholarship of the Film und Medien Stiftung NRW for MILES & WAR. The director lives in Geneva and Berlin.

Filmography (Selection)

2012	MILES & WAR: Tracing Peace, 52' and 78'
2011	Sit! Dog training in a women's prison, Documentary, 60'
2008	PAINFUL PEACE, 52' and 84'
2005	MY WORLD, Documentary Series, Disney Channel
2004	ESPERA MENINO, Documentary, 30'

PRODUCERS

Since founded in 1976, the independent film production company **T&C Film** is based in Zurich. Main emphasis is the production of feature films and documentaries for cinema and television.

Initiator and co-founder of **T&C Film** is Marcel Hoehn. Until today, **T&C Film** has produced over 50 films in a small team of three colleagues. We have worked with renowned directors like Daniel Schmid, Francesco Rosi, Sandra Nettelbeck or Christoph Schaub.

Filmography: www.tcfilm.ch

zero one film is an independent production company based in Berlin, producing cinema and TV documentaries as well as art house fiction for the German and International market.

Over the past 20 years **zero one film** produced more than 80 documentaries, documentary television series and feature films. Many of them won international awards, among these "The Flat" by Arnon Goldfinger, "Gerhard Richter Painting" by Corinna Belz, "Black Box Germany" by Andres Veiel, or "Echoes of Home" by Stefan Schwieter. The collaboration with Aleksandr Sokurov on films like "Moloch" or "Father and Son" was highly acclaimed and awarded in Cannes. With "24h Berlin" the team broke new grounds, provoking broadcasters to cast aside the traditional slot structure for the duration of 24h allowing for a so far unprecedented 24 hours documentary.

Thomas Kufus is the CEO of zero one film. The company employs around 15 persons, engaged mainly in development, research and production.

For more information see www.zeroone.de

DIRECTOR'S NOTE

The idea for this film originated in my personal involvement with the work. I have studied international relations myself and worked for HD Centre for more than three years. The protagonists and the profession of mediation became my every day life. This raised questions, which determined the film: What can really be achieved by dialogue? How can one turn foes to friends? What kind of people are mediators and what motivates them? And the longer I observed them at their work, I asked myself, how one can deal with the daily horror of war on a personal level.

The film has no guiding theory, no ready-made point of view that wants to be confirmed or disproven. It rather documents my own quest. I want to observe war and the chaos of the conflict zones from a different perspective to get a better understanding. MILES & WAR is my personal insight into the business of war and peace.

Anne Thoma

NOTE ON THE CENTRE FOR HUMANITARIAN DIALOGUE

The Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue (the HD Centre) is an independent private diplomacy and mediation organisation that seeks, through mediation and dialogue, to help prevent and resolve armed conflicts around the world.

To do so, the HD Centre opens channels of communication and mediates between parties in conflict, as well as facilitates dialogue at all levels, including at the highest political level. It also supports dialogue processes lead by others, helps build architectures for the peaceful, sustainable prevention or resolution of conflicts, and provides support to the broader mediation and peacebuilding community. The HD Centre will facilitate dialogue in both confidential settings as well as public ones, and will adapt its support to the specific requirements of each context. Thanks to its low profile approach, it can open up confidential channels of communication and instigate dialogue processes in circumstances where it may be politically impossible for Governments and other institutions to intervene.

The organisation, founded in 1999, is motivated by humanitarian considerations: to reduce the suffering caused by armed conflicts around the world – where possible, to prevent such conflicts; otherwise to help resolve them; or to mitigate their consequences. The HD Centre is currently involved in some 25 initiatives around the world. It is headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland – also the location of its Middle East and North Africa programme - with regional offices in Africa and Asia.

For more information see **www.hdcentre.org**