



WINNER
SPEZIALPREIS
REGION BASEL
2024


DOC@PÖFF
TALLINN
BLACK NIGHTS
FILM FESTIVAL
2024

A film by **MAX CARLO KOHAL**

VRACHT

FEATURE DOCUMENTARY - PRESS KIT

 **ZÜRCHER
FILMSTIFTUNG**


 **DYNAMIC FRAME**

Fachausschuss Film und Medienkunst
Basel
Landschaft
Kultur

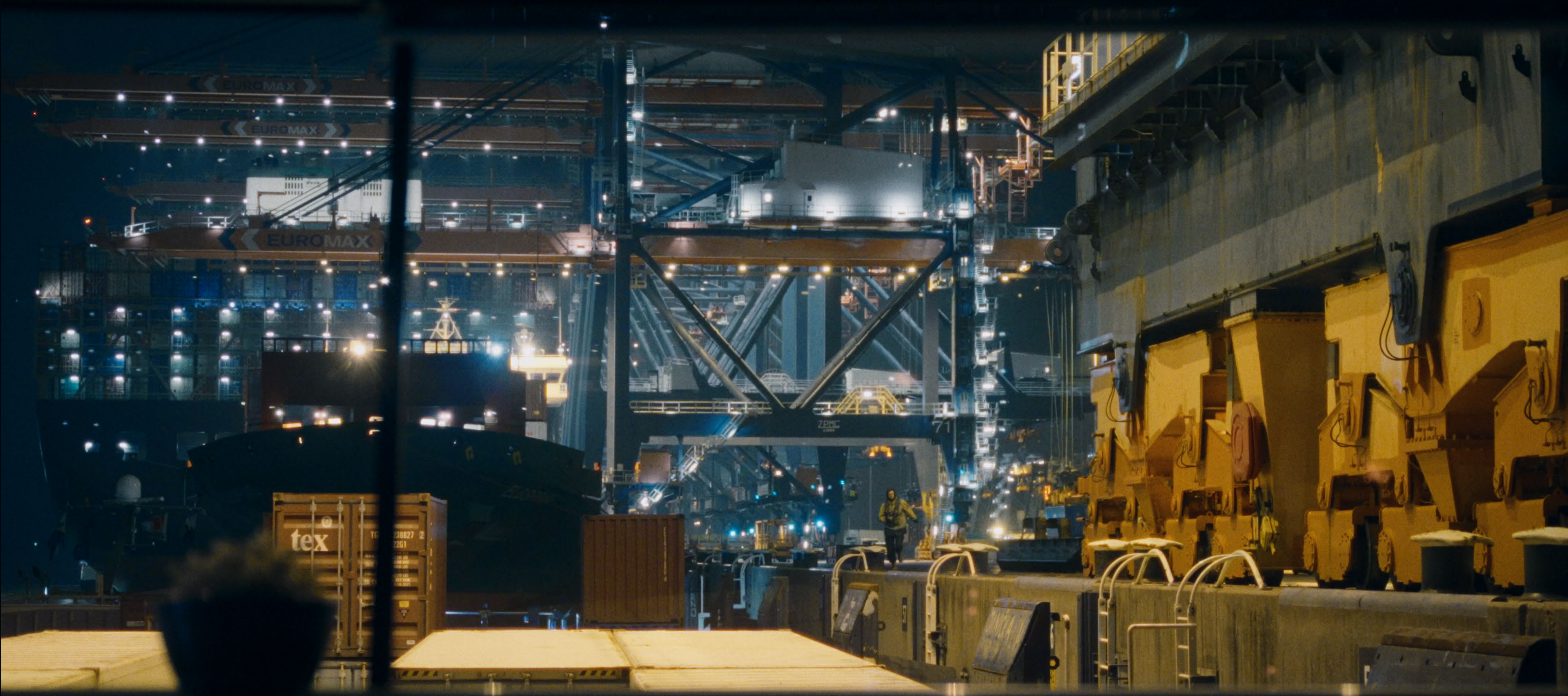
SRF Schweizer Radio
und Fernsehen

suissimage

Z **hdk**
Zürcher Hochschule der Künste
Zurich University of the Arts

 Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra
Eidgenössisches Departement des Innern EDI
Bundesamt für Kultur BAK

In a world of stapling containers, 16-year-old Rudmer dreams of becoming a barge ship captain, toughening in an ever-changing surrounding.



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SYNOPSIS

On a container ship, the young sailor Rudmer dreams of becoming a captain himself one day. When newcomer Tycho comes on board, Rudmer is annoyed by his colleague's laziness. He tries to motivate Tycho, but he leaves the ship. His place is taken by Leanne, with whom Rudmer quickly builds up trust. But their closeness only lasts for a short time, as Leanne decides to switch to another ship.



INTERVIEW

Nils Altland, journalist at NDR with Max Carlo Kohal

VRACHT gives a deep insight into everyday working life on the Panerai.

What interests you about river shipping?

Since I moved to Basel on the Rhine in 2016, the river has had a special significance for the city and for me. The Rhine ports in Basel are important for Swiss imports and exports. At the same time, the Rhine is a meeting place for everyone who lives here to cool off in the summer: you swim downstream past barges coming towards you. I've always wondered who the people are who live on these ships and how I relate to this means of transport. When I thought of globalisation, I thought of trucks, trains and huge container ships on the world's oceans, but some of this goods handling seems to take place right on my doorstep, with people who are in the service of this logistics. For me, life on a ship is a world that I had no idea how it works. I had a romantic idea of living on a ship - sailing out into the vastness of the great harbours of Europe. I spent hours in the ports of Basel watching containers being loaded, aluminium being transported and hundreds of tonnes of scrap steel being loaded and unload-



ed. After I started my research, the romanticism of ship drivers quickly began to crumble. I got to know young people from different parts of Europe who do the back-breaking job of a sailor or captain. Long days and nights in harbours, loading, unloading, exposed to the elements, maintaining the ship. I was particularly mesmerised by the young people who start their training on the ships at the age of 15. Would I have been able to spend my youth two weeks away from home with strangers? To leave my family and friends behind and put my life in the hands of a captain next to roaring engines, squeaking loading terminals and containers weighing tonnes?

The film focuses on the young sailor Rudmer and his coming of age. How did you find him and get to know him?

The first days of filming took place in May 2021 in the port of Basel, and from then on we followed the Panerai courses for 4 consecutive years. And that is also what brought the constant motivation of the people on the Panerai: We always wanted to see them grow from teenagers to young adults. Each time we came back, they all matured in small visible steps, but also in characteristic ways.

The film shows Rudmer, Leanne and their colleagues growing older in visible steps. How long did you accompany them and what fascinated you most about that?

The first days of filming took place in May 2021 in the port of Basel, and from then on we followed the Panerai courses for 4 consecutive years. And that is also what brought the constant motivation of the people on the Panerai: We always wanted to see them grow from teenagers to young adults. Each time we came back, they all matured in small visible steps, but also in characteristic ways.

You and your cameraman got quite close to your protagonists in intimate moments. How did you manage that?

At first I was worried about how they would behave if I brought a cameraman, but I think time, communication and trust helped. We always explained what we were doing, showed them footage we had shot and often just turned off our equipment to enjoy the time with them. We ate together, slept on the ship next to their rooms, discussed what was going on in their worlds and ours. Before we filmed them in their rooms or living areas, we asked

their permission. We wanted them to know that we would be filming a dinner, a lunch break, or something else besides their work, which became our modus operandi, to just be there with the camera, wait for moments and learn our way to become invisible to them.

In the first scene, Rudmer cuts his hand. In other scenes, we see him arguing with colleagues. You were obviously there with the camera at the right moments. How lucky were you during filming?

I wouldn't say we were lucky during the filming - the great luck was in finding this crew and this opportunity. Things like arguments, discussion or small accidents happen on all sorts of ships, but the opportunity to be there, to live with them, to enjoy their trust and companionship, was what made this film possible in the first place. We were very fortunate to find a company that would allow us to be on the Panerai whenever we wanted. Of course, Rudmer cutting his finger and the camera rolling was a lucky moment - but the real luck was in finding a diverse crew willing to let us film them and give us a glimpse into their lives.

The DoP Lukas Gut created impressive images.

How did this collaboration come about and how did it work on the Panerai?

Lukas and I started studying together at the Zurich University of the Arts, where he was doing his master's degree in cinematography and I was studying to become a documentary director. We became good friends and enjoyed working together on other projects before I asked him to be my DoP on VRACHT. And I am really happy that he helped me with this film. A lot of times I was lost, not knowing what to do or what to shoot and how to deal with the pressure to come back from the ship with good footage. But he would be there, just keep on shooting, give me space to think and review and reflect on what we were doing. His constant willingness to put on his life jacket and get the camera close to our protagonists was, along with the creation of great images, his great contribution to the making of this documentary.

In two shots you can see a funfair on the shore. The beautiful, colourful world on land passes the young people by - they grow up on board. Did you ever accompany Rudmer or Leanne ashore? What is their life like when they are not working?

We stayed in the Netherlands for a week and visited Daan and Leanne at home. Rudmer's parents weren't in good health so we couldn't visit him. We went to a fair with Leanne and her friends and we followed Daan after he became a captain and filmed a family dinner at his parents' house. But as we were editing the film, we realised that we wanted to focus on their life on the ship and leave the life on land behind. Through these images of the shore, we wanted to give a glimpse of what their life off the ship might be like.

VRACHT hardly provides any orientation in terms of place, time or direction of travel, only occasionally can you recognise Cologne Cathedral or find out which terminal is currently loading containers. The Panerai becomes a microcosm. How does that fit in with your experience on the ship?

In the first few weeks of sailing on the Panerai, I completely lost track of time and place. With the ship moving around the clock and the crew working around the clock, it's hard to know where you are and what's going on. Between Basel and Strasbourg there are 11 logs, in Antwerp and Rotterdam you are in harbours with famous ships like the Evergiven. It feels like a constant drift through Europe-

an ports, where you go to sleep surrounded by nature and wake up under a container terminal in a big city. The film recreates that feeling of being lost between stops, although we tried to give it an authentic structure when moving from north to south or vice versa.

The duo Roman Stocker and Tania Stöcklin edited the film, which was certainly no easy task. What makes their work on the film special?

The editing of VRACHT took about a year and a half, starting with Roman, also a friend from my studies. We started by selecting over 200 hours of footage. When Tania (Roman and I are big fans of her) joined the project, we really became a great team in the editing room. Roman was creative in working on scenes, while Tania brought her expertise to the dramaturgy of this film. We worked really hard to shape the characters of the film while staying as close as possible to the reality of Rudmer's and his comrades' lives. It took a lot of attention to detail to find the great moments in the huge amount of footage. Once we had found the basic structure of the film, each image was discussed and aligned with the narrative of the film. I am very grateful for their perseverance and for always checking to see if we had missed anything in all the material.



MRSU 345 208 4
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| | |
|-----------|---------------------|
| MAX.GROSS | 32,500 KGS |
| | 71,650 LBS |
| TARE WT. | 3,810 KGS |
| | 8,400 LBS |
| PAYLOAD | 28,690 KGS |
| | 63,250 LBS |
| CUBE | 76.4 M ³ |



TECH-SHEET

11

| | |
|-----------------------|--|
| ORIGINAL TITLE | Vracht |
| ENGLISH TITLE | Freight |
| PRODUCTION | Dynamic Frame GmbH |
| CO-PRODUCTION | Zürcher Hochschule der Künste - Master Of Arts in Film SRF Schweizer Radio und Fernsehen |
| LENGTH | 80 min |
| GENRE | Documentary |
| LANGUAGE | Dutch |
| SUBTITLES | English, French, German |
| COMPLETION | April 2024 |



ISAN

0000-0006-1E38-0000-B-0000-0000-4

CREW & CAST

DIRECTOR

Max Carlo Kohal (he/him)

WRITERS

Max Carlo Kohal (he/him)

Tania Stöcklin (she/her)

Roman Stocker (he/him)

PRODUCER

Nicole Ulrich (she/her)

Jonas Ulrich (he/him)

Philipp Ritler (he/him)

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER

Luzius Fischer (he/him) / Dynamic Frame

CO-PRODUCER

Karin Koch (she/her) / ZHdK

Urs Augstburger (he/him) / SRF

DOP

Lukas Gut (he/him)

EDITORS

Roman Stocker (he/him)

Tania Stöcklin (she/her)

MUSIC

Mirjam Skal (she/her)

SOUND DESIGN

Oscar van Hoogevest (he/him)

COLOR GRADING

Daniel Loepfe (he/him)

PROTAGONISTS

Rudmer Souverein

Leanne van Turenhout

Tycho van de Waal

Daan Bonsing

Martin Greck





MAERSK

AUTOMATIC DE-ICE
SYSTEM
-
INTEGRATED
-
WATERPROOF
-
WATERPROOF
-
WATERPROOF



DIRECTORS BIOGRAPHY

Max Carlo Kohal, born in 1993 in Houston/Texas, grew up near Freiburg im Breisgau and moved to Basel in 2016 to study experimental design. In 2018, he completed his Bachelor's degree in Industrial and Product Design at the Basel University of Art and Design. In June 2024 he finished his studies in MA Realization Documentary Film at ZHdK. He won the Alexis-Victor-Thalbergpreis for "Mister Ben". In 2024 Max Carlo Kohal won the 'Basler Filmpreis Special for Upcoming Director' for his work on "Vracht".

TUTTO RIMANE | IN PRODUCTION

WÜRENLOS | 2024 | SHORT DOCUMENTARY

59. Solothurner Filmtage, nominated «Prix du Public», 2024

MISTER BEN | 2023 | SHORT DOCUMENTARY

VICTOR-THALBERG Dokumentarfilmpreis

BOYS DON'T CRY | 2019 | SHORT DOCUMENTARY

Audience and 3rd Jury Prize Swiss Youth Film Festival, 2020 Basel
Film Festival Gässli, 2020

PRODUCTION

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DYNAMIC FRAME GMBH

is an independent production company based in Zurich, Switzerland. Dynamic Frame has been focusing on the development of shorts, feature films and documentaries since 2018. Young writers and talents develop their ideas in close collaboration with the production team, consisting of Jonas Ulrich (executive producer, writer and director), Luzius Fischer (executive producer), Nicole Boner-Ulrich (producer) and Philipp Ritler (producer, director). The producers provide intense support from the very first draft to the international distribution, across genre boundaries and always with high aesthetic standards. The focus lies on experimentation with content, often combined with a strict visual concept. So far, the collaborations have resulted in feature films and documentaries as well as hybrid formats.

WWW.VRACHT-FILM.COM

& CONTACT

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