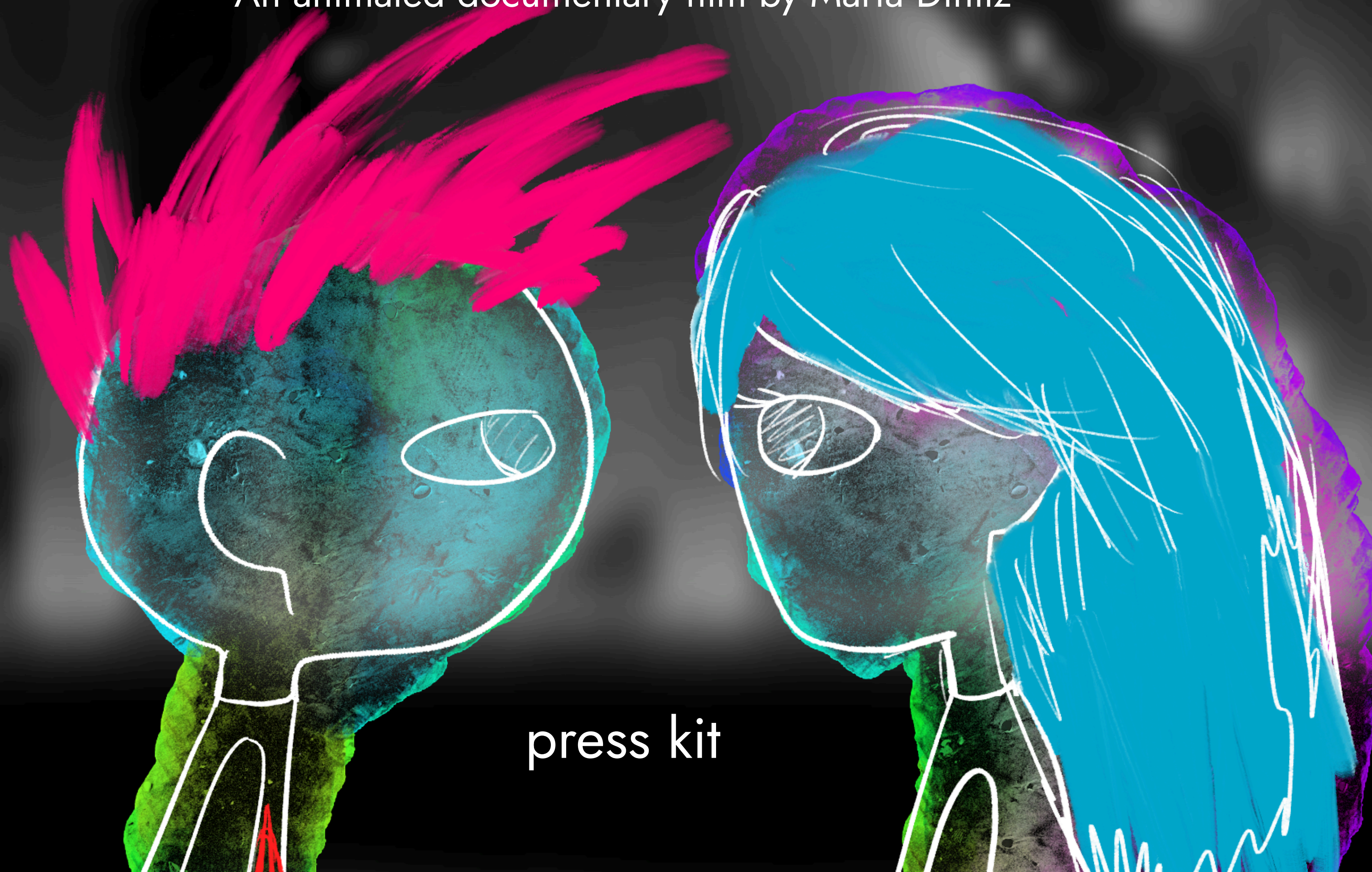




WILD BIRDS FLY

An animated documentary film by Maria Dinitz



press kit

WILD BIRDS FLY

Director: Maria Dinitz

Narrator: Frank Fuhrmann

Original title (german): Wilde Vögel Fliegen

Genre: Animation, Documentary, Student film

Completion date: September 27th 2023

Run time: 06:22 minutes

Country of origin: Germany

Age rating: FSK-16 / R — Restricted

SYNOPSIS

Set in 1995 Berlin, this short animated documentary follows Frank, a 15-year-old punk who runs away from home. Initially finding a sense of rebellion on the streets, Frank is soon confronted with the harsh realities of street life—substance abuse, loss, and survival.

This is a raw, intimate portrait of a young punk's struggle for identity in a world that offers both liberation and danger.

DIRECTOR STATEMENT

"This film is incredibly close to my heart. It's a story that needs to be told, not just for me but for countless others whose voices go unheard. Homeless teenagers are often overlooked, cast aside by society, and burdened with a stigma that strips away their humanity. They're seen through a lens of judgment, rarely with empathy or understanding. With this film, I wanted to shift that perspective—to tell the story of a young person who went through hell and back. It's a journey of love, loss, resilience, and the punk spirit that helped Frank survive.

This project is dedicated to the memory of Nicole "Nikki" Schwenker (1979, † 1995), who tragically lost her life on the streets. Though she is no longer with us, her impact will not be forgotten, and this film is my way of ensuring that her spirit lives on."*



FRANK FUHRMANN

The protagonist of the documentary, Frank Fuhrmann (* 1979) who tells the story from his perspective as a 15-year-old living on the streets in 1995, serves as the narrator, with his voice-over drawn from an interview conducted specifically for this film. Now a successful IT professional and father of two, Frank reflects on how these challenging experiences shaped him in profound ways. By sharing his story, he hopes to inspire others, showing that it's possible to overcome difficult life phases—even in unconventional and unexpected ways. His journey is a testament to resilience and the power of transformation.

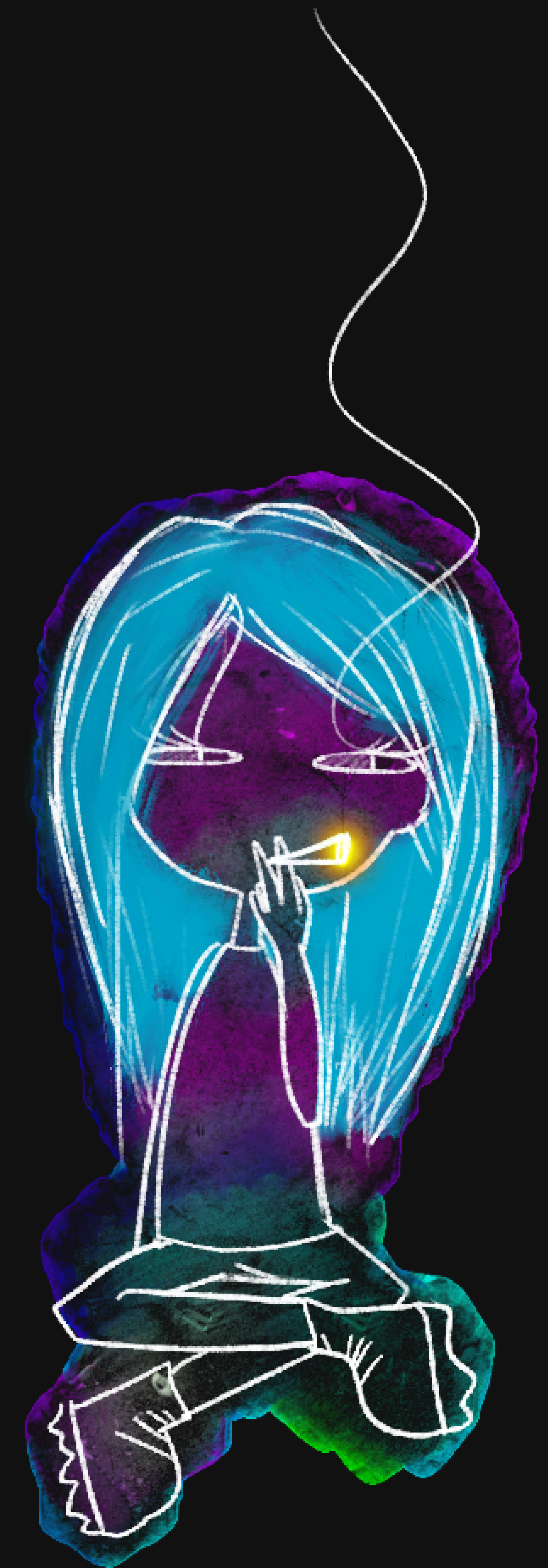
Character design is based on Frank's self-description.



NICOLE SCHWENKER

Nicole Schwenker (* 1979, † 1995), known by her nickname Nikki, is a key figure in Frank's story and a central supporting character in the documentary. A fellow teenage punk, Frank met Nikki on his first day after leaving home, and she quickly became his first love and companion during their time on the streets. Despite their strong connection, Nikki struggled with addiction, a battle she ultimately lost at just 16 years old. Her tragic passing left a deep mark on Frank, and through this documentary, her memory lives on as a reminder of the harsh realities of life on the streets. Nikki's spirit, resilience, and the love she and Frank shared will not be forgotten.

Character design is based on Frank's description.







DIRECTOR BIOGRAPHY

Maria is a communication design student at the University of Applied Sciences Potsdam, with a diverse background as a freelance illustrator, graphic designer, and motion designer. "Wild Birds Fly" marks her debut as a filmmaker, an animated short film that showcases her deep passion for storytelling. Created as part of her animation class, this student project is a one-woman production, brought to life with no budget but fueled by dedication and love.



NARRATION BY FRANK

The narration for the documentary is based on an in-depth interview with Frank, in which he candidly recounts his experiences during that time in his life. The interview was set up in a comfortable home setting, with prepared questions covering additional themes such as survival tactics on the streets, the dynamics within his punk group, political activism, and the specifics of his troubled home life.

The interview lasted just over two hours, but for the final film, many cuts had to be made due to the constraints of the class project and to shape a cohesive narrative. These editorial decisions were aimed at focusing on the most impactful parts of Frank's story, highlighting the emotional core of his journey.

PRODUCTION DETAILS

Supervisor: Prof. Klaus Dufke

Time frame: April 2023 – September 2023

Ratio: 16:9, Full-HD 1080p

Technique: Digital animation, Mixed media

Character animation: Procreate, frame-by-frame loops

SFX: Adobe After Effects

Backgrounds: Generative AI, Adobe Photoshop

STUDENT FILM

“Wild Birds Fly” was created as a student project during the summer semester of 2023 at the University of Applied Sciences Potsdam.

Initially developed for an animation class under the guidance of Professor Klaus Dufke, the film was conceptualized, directed, and produced entirely by Maria Dinitz. While benefiting from consultation and peer feedback, the project remains a personal artistic endeavor, showcasing a unique blend of storytelling and animation, reflecting the creative exploration undertaken in the class.

SCREENINGS

The Short Nights of Berlin

Kino Central, Berlin, Germany
August 12th 2024 — Debut

Pixel Vienna

University of Applied Arts, Vienna, Austria
November 7th 2024

Kurzfilmabend im Casino

Casino, Potsdam, Germany
October 15th 2024

Courage Film Festival

Wein Salon, Berlin, Germany
November 21st 2024

"TOO DRUNK TO WATCH" Punkfilmfest Berlin

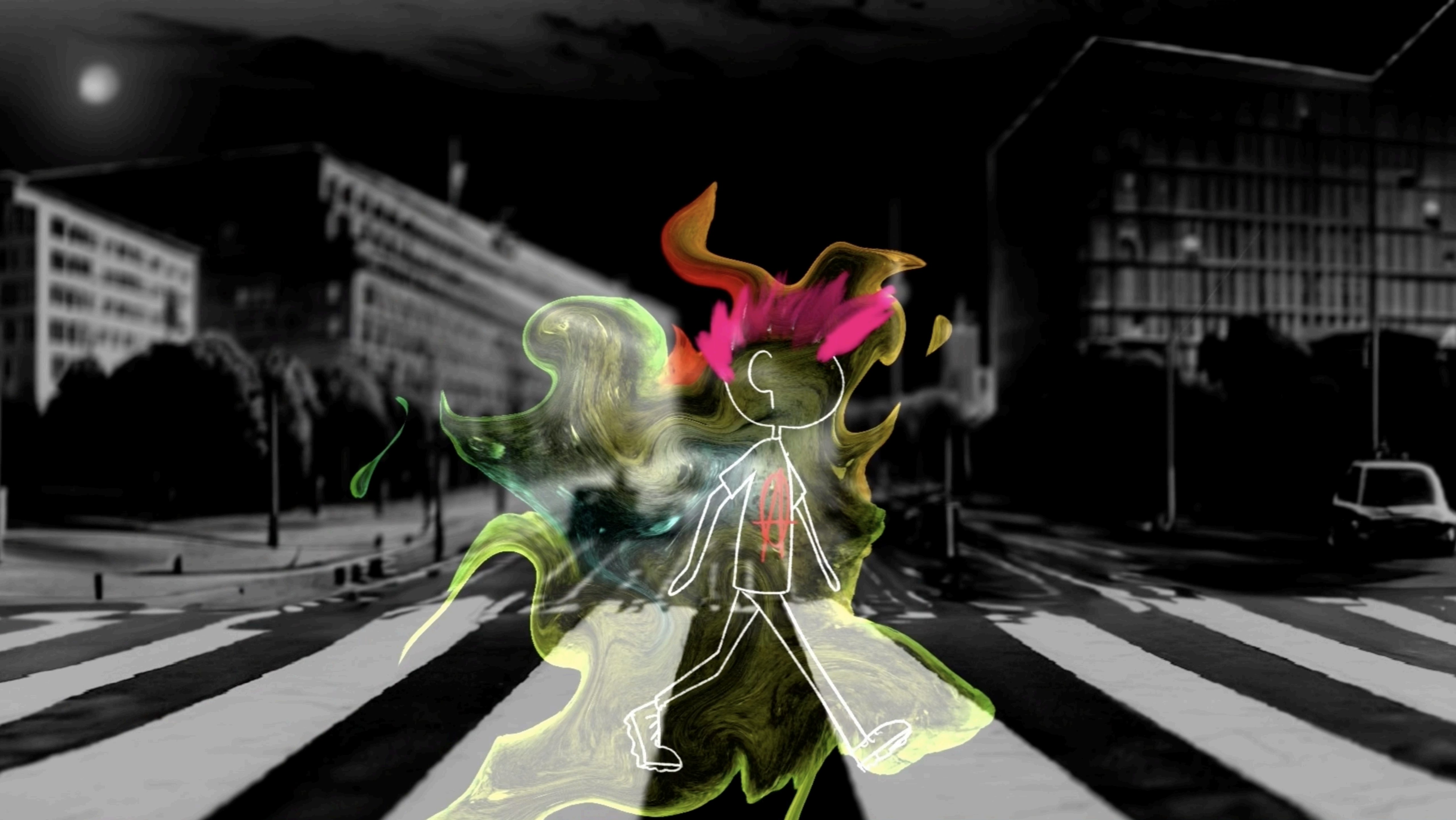
Lichtblick Kino, Berlin, Germany
October 17th 2024

YouTV (Fernsehsendung)

AlexTV, Berlin, Germany
April 14st 2025

AWARDS





CREDITS

Voice-over: Narrator — Frank Fuhrmann | Social worker/Judge — Maria Dinitz | **Production:** Director/
Producer/Editor — Maria Dinitz | Supervisor — Prof. Klaus Dufke | **Music:** Phantastonia — Background
music | Dritte Wahl — “Fliegen” (credit scene) | **University:** University of Applied Sciences Potsdam —
Communication design | © 2023



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An animated documentary film

By Maria Dinitz



VOICE-OVER: NARRATOR – FRANK FUHRMANN | SOCIAL WORKER/JUDGE – MARIA DINITZ | PRODUCTION: DIRECTOR/PRODUCER/EDITOR –

MARIA DINITZ | SUPERVISOR – PROF. KLAUS DUFKE | MUSIC: PHANTASTONIA – BACKGROUND MUSIC DRITTE WAHL – “FLIEGEN” (CREDIT SCENE)

UNIVERSITY: UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES POTSDAM – COMMUNICATION DESIGN | © 2023

CONTACT & LINKS

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LinkedIn: [@Maria \(Mascha\) Dinitz](#)

Trailer: [YouTube](#)

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