

# KATRIN ROTHE

FOCO | FOCUS

BIS GRAS WÄCHST  
JOHNNY & ME: EINE ZEITREISE MIT JOHN  
HEARTFELD  
SKIZZENFILM – 50 JAHRE ROBOTROM  
DER WHARE OKTOBER

## // DE TESOIRAS E DIALÉCTICAS // ABOUT SCISSORS AND DIALECTICS

**Katrin Rothe** leva case tres décadas desenvolvendo singulares proxectos audiovisuais no marco do cinema documental e de animación de autor europeo. Independentemente da súa orixe –encargos ou proxectos da propia cineasta– ou destino –televisión, rede ou cinema–, os seus traballos xogan cos límites duns xéneros histórica e ontoloxicamente preconcebidos como compartimentos estancos: o cinema documental, que remite directamente ao mundo sensible e histórico; o cinema de ficción, suposto hiato respecto ao anterior, e a animación, concibida como unha fuga radical respecto a esa grávida realidade física e histórica.

Mais convén salientar que esa interacción é posible grazas ao rigor investigador previo á construción argumental dos filmes, ao risco asumido á hora de formalizar devanditos argumentos, e a unha radical e meditada aposta polo lúdico e o gozoso, que se manifesta nesa interpelación cómplice a un público que se achega a uns filmes que encontran na dialéctica a súa principal razón de ser. A investigación e a revisión histórico-política e social, a afortunada colisión entre xéneros, a coexistencia de heterodoxas e imaxinativas técnicas de animación, a militancia, así como a crenza no poder ilustrador da arte maniféstanse mediante múltiples ligazóns que amplifican exponencialmente tanto o desenvolvemento dramático dos filmes, como a propia percepción dos mesmos.

Falamos dunha dialéctica que imanta a súa obra tanto a nivel argumental, como a nivel ideolóxico, estético e formal. Pois todos os estratos vense afectados en maior ou menor medida por esa loita: a da linguaxe, as ideas e o pensamento. Mais sendo o cinema un medio sensorial, esa pugna é perceptible desde o grado cero: ben sexa porque os propios argumentos e o seu desenvolvemento así o revelen –a investigación dunha cineasta sobre a revolución de outubro de 1917, ou a viaxe espazo-temporal dunha creativa en crise ao universo dun artista político radical–, ben sexa porque tanto a posta en escena como a montaxe, en franco diálogo coas prácticas artísticas de vangarda, revelan que a colisión entre imaxes e

sons de diversa natureza e materialidade producen múltiples e frutíferas plusvalías. Movémonos no terreo dunha autoreflexividade na que a linguaxe plástica e a cinematográfica afloran na propia superficie do filme.

Por outra banda, as longametraxes do foco semellan formar un díptico sobre o compromiso ideolóxico dos individuos en períodos históricos tan convulsos como violentos. Namentres a trama de *The Real October* gravita sobre o colectivo: as accións dun grupo de intelectuais e artistas nun momento crucial da historia europea; *Johnny and Me* focaliza todo o seu potencial no singular: no exemplar periplo vital e artístico dunha figura capital para entender o porque dunha arte política tan radical como comprometida co seu tempo. Rafael Sánchez Ferlosio titulou un dos seus versos *Vendrán más años malos y nos harán más ciegos*, a obra de Katrin Rothe, ademais de dialogar con mestres do cinema como Alexander Kluge e roubarnos máis dun sorriso, lémbraunos que as ideas son as únicas armas válidas para comprender e transformar a nosa realidade.

Dúas curtametraxes, unha do seu período de formación académica, *Bis Gras Wächs*, no que podemos intuír o que estaba por vir, e unha imaxinativa lectura sobre a linguaxe informática, a súa evolución, e a súa influencia no noso devir como homo technicus, *Skizzenfilm*, axúdannos a conformar unha aproximación á obra dunha cineasta tan singular como merecedora do primeiro foco peninsular dedicado ao seu traballo.

Suso Novás

**Katrin Rothe** has spent almost three decades developing unique audiovisual projects within the framework of European documentary and animation cinema. Regardless of their origin – whether they are born from a commission or emanate directly from the interest of the filmmaker herself – or destination – television, network or cinema –, her works play with the limits of genres historically and ontologically preconceived as hermetic compartments: documentary cinema, that refers directly to the sensible and historical world; fiction cinema, a supposed hiatus from the previous one, and animation, conceived as a radical escape from that pregnant physical and historical reality.

However, it is worth highlighting that this interaction is possible thanks to the investigative rigor prior to the plot construction of the films, the risk assumed when formalizing said plots, and a radical and thoughtful commitment to the playful and joyful, which is manifested in that complicit interpellation to an audience that approaches films that find their main reason of being in dialectic. The historical-political and social research and review, the fortunate collision between genres, the coexistence of heterodox and imaginative animation techniques, militancy, as well as the belief in the illustrative power of art are manifested through multiple links that exponentially amplify both the dramatic development of the films, as well as their perception.

We talk about a dialectic that magnetizes her work both at the plot level and at the ideological, aesthetic and formal level. Well, all levels are affected to a greater or lesser extent by this struggle: language, ideas and thought. But since cinema is a sensory medium, this struggle is perceptible from the zero level: either because the arguments themselves and their development reveal it - a filmmaker's investigation of the October Revolution of 1917, or the space-time journey of a creative in crisis to the universe of a radical political artist – either because both the staging and the editing, in dialogue with avant-garde artistic practices, reveal that the collision between images

and sounds of diverse nature and materiality produce multiple and fruitful capital gains. We move in the terrain of a self-reflexivity in which plastic and cinematographic language emerge on the surface of the film itself. On the other hand, the feature films at the festival seem to form a diptych on the ideological commitment of individuals in turbulent and violent historical periods. Meanwhile, the plot of *The Real October* gravitates towards the collective: the actions of a group of intellectuals and artists at a crucial moment in European history; *Johnny and Me* focuses all its potential on the singular: on the exemplary vital and artistic journey of a capital figure to understand the reason for a political art as radical as it is committed to its time. Rafael Sánchez Ferlosio titled one of her *Vendrán más años malos y nos harán más ciegos*, the work of Katrin Rothe, in addition to conversing with masters like Alexander Kluge and stealing more than one smile from us, reminds us that ideas are the only valid weapons to understand and transform our reality.

Two short films, one from her period of academic training, *Bis Gras Wächs*, in which we can sense what was to come, and an imaginative reading about computer language, its evolution, and its influence on our future as homo technicus; and *Skizzenfilm*, help us form an approach to the work of a filmmaker as unique as she is deserving of the first peninsular focus dedicated to her work.

Suso Novás



**Filmografía / Filmography**

- JOHNNY & ME: EINE ZEITREISE MIT JOHN HEARTFELD, (2023 | 100')
- MEINE WENDE, UNSERE EINHEIT (2020 | 6')
- DER BRIEF (2020 | 8')
- SKIZZENFILM – 50 JAHRE ROBOTROM (2019 | 14')
- 1917 - DER WHARE OKTOBER (2017 | 90')
- BETONGOLD / CONCRETE GOLD – HOW THE FINANCIAL CRISIS FLUTTERED INTO MY ROOM (2013 | 52')
- HERZLICHEN GLÜCKWUNSCH ZUM GEBURTSTAG, DIE MAINZER WIRD GERÄUMT (2010 | 44')
- POLEN FÜR ANFÄNGER - EIN ROADMOVIE MIT KURT KRÖMER UND STEFFEN MÖLLER (2010 | 44')
- DIE EX BIN ICH (2009 | 88')
- WAS TUST DU EIGENTLICH...? (2008 | 10x2'30")
- STELMICHEIN! (2006 | 4x28'30")
- CHINA GIBT ES NICHT (1998 | 8')
- BIS DAS GRAS WAECHST (1996 | 3'30")

**Katrin Rothe** (RDA, 1970) é unha escritora, directora e produtora cinematográfica radicada en Berlín. Estudou realización de Cinema Experimental na Udk (Berlín) na Central St. Martins (College of Art and Design, Londres). Desde 2003 Rothe dirixe fundamentalmente mediometraxes y longametraxes documentais. Rothe es una cineasta independente cuxa productora, Katrin Rothe Filmproduction, xurdiu da empresa Karotoons (2001), una start-up creativa pioneira en crear animacións para Internet en Alemaña. A súa versatilidade para producir contidos, formatos e estilos de animación pouco convencionais, denota unha singular maneira de combinar ficción, documental e animación.

*1917 - The Real October* exhibiuse, entre outros, en Annecy IAFF (Francia), Manchester IF (RU), FANTOSCHE IAFF (Suiza), Bucheon IAFF (Corea), CinAnima (Portugal) or FICXIXÓN (España). A súa última longametraxe, *Johnny & Me - A Journey through Time with John Heartfield*, estreouse mundialmente en Annecy, e exhibiuse en Animage (Brasil) e DOK Leipzig (Alemaña), entre outros.

**Katrin Rothe** (1970, East Germany) is a writer, filmmaker, and producer based in Berlin. She studied Experimental film-making at the Udk (Berlin) and at the Central St. Martins (College of Art and Design, London). She is a freelance filmmaker and has primarily directed feature-length documentaries since 2003. Katrin Rothe Filmproduction arose from the company Karotoons, a creative start-up from 2001 that was the first to create internet animations in Germany. Within the production of unconventional animated content, styles, and formats, a special know-how has formed for producing mixtures of fiction and documentaries with a certain amount of animation.

*1917 - The Real October* was screened in Annecy IAFF (France), Manchester IF (UK), FANTOSCHE IAFF (Swiss), Bucheon IAFF (Korea), CinAnima (Portugal) or FICXIXÓN (Spain), among others. Her last long feature, *Johnny & Me - A Journey through Time with John Heartfield*, had its world premiere in Annecy, and screened in Animage (Brazil) and DOK Leipzig (Germany), among others.

16

DEC.  
20.00 h.  
Teatro Principal

*Coloquio coa directora*  
Q&A with the filmmaker



## BIS GRAS WÄCHST

Until Grass Grows  
RU, Alemaña | 1996 | 3'30" | Cor

**Dirección/Direction:** Katrin Rothe. **Guión/Script:** Katrin Rothe.  
**Montaxe/Editing:** : Hannes Starz, Katrin Rothe. **Música/Music:** Gunnar Jacobson. **Son/Sound:** Harry Ansoerge. **Animación/Animation:** : Katrin Rothe. **Voz/Voice:** Marla Dina Diniz. **Técnica/Tech:** Photography, Oil on glass. **Produción/Production:** CSM, London HdK Berlin.

Intervención artística que parte dunha cita do escritor Jean Améry. Pintura sobre fotografías privadas.

Artistic implementation of a quote from the writer Jean Améry. Painted over private photos.



ESTREA EN ESPAÑA

## JOHNNY & ME: EINE ZEITREISE MIT JOHN HEARTFIELD

Johnny & Me - A Journey Through Time With John Heartfield  
Alemaña, Austria, Suíza | 2023 | 100' | Cor

**Dirección/Direction:** : Katrin Rothe. **Guión/Script:** : Katrin Rothe. **Montaxe/Editing:** Hannes Starz and Katrin Rothe. **Son/Sound:** Luis Cotallo. **Música/Music:** Micha Kaplan and Thomas Mävers. **Diseño&Arte/Design&Art:** Lydia Günther, Tonina Matamalas, Caroline Hamann, Gyula Szabo. **Marionetas Vestuario/Puppets Costumer:** Anne-Sophie Réamy, Werner Kernebeck, Lisa Sinram. **Marnionetas Voces/Puppets Voices:** Michael Hatzius and Dorothee Carls. **Produción/Production:** Bettina Morlock, Susanne Berger, Sereina Gabathuler, Konrad Weiße, Benjamin Swiczinsky. Prod: Gunter Hanfgarn, Andrea Ufer, Ralph Wieser, Sereina Gabathuler, Werner Schweizer. **Productora/Production Company:** HANFGARN & UFER, Mischief Films, Dschoint Ventschr.

A deseñadora gráfica Stefanie afronta unha crise creativa: anuncios publicitarios insulsos e un xefe que non a valora. Durante unha visita a un museo, séntese hipnóticamente atraída polas fotomontaxes satíricas do mundialmente famoso John Heartfield, radical opositor ao nazismo. Entón, prodúcese o milagre: volve ao seu estudo, e colle as tesoiras e ao papel. Comeza así un venturoso viaxe a través da extraordinaria vida de Heartfield.

The graphic designer Stefanie finds herself in a creative crisis: boring advertising assignments and a boss who does not value her work. On a visit to a museum, she is magically attracted by the satirical photomontages of the world-famous, and Nazi opponent, John Heartfield. Then the miracle happens. She ends up in his studio, where she finally picks up scissors and paper again. An adventurous journey through Heartfield's extraordinary life.

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Anney IAFF 2023. Feature Films Contrechamp in Competition  
FANTOCHE (Baden, Switzerland) 2023. Extras  
Animage IAFF (Recife, Brasil) 2023  
DOK Leipzig 2023. International Competition Animated Film

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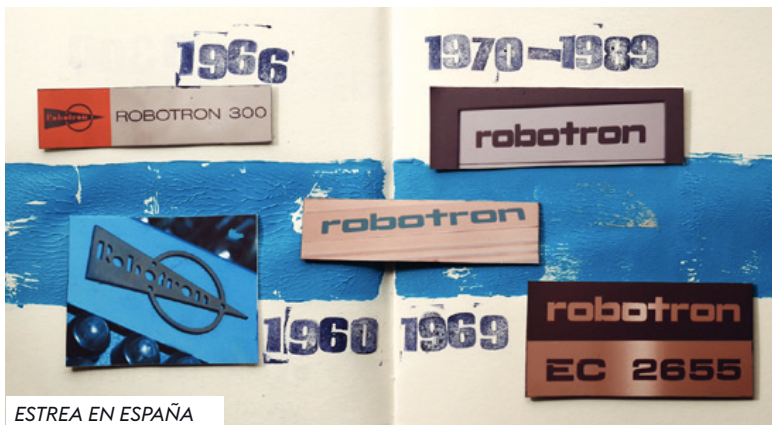
DEC.  
20.00 h.  
Teatro Principal

Coloquio coa directora  
Q&A with the filmmaker

17

DEC.  
17.00 h.  
Teatro Principal

*Coloquio coa directora  
Q&A with the filmmaker*



ESTREA EN ESPAÑA

## SKIZZENFILM – 50 JAHRE ROBOTROM

Alemaña | 2019 | 14'30" | Cor

**Dirección/Direction:** Katrin Rothe. **Guión/Script:** Katrin Rothe.  
**Libro/Book:** Katrin Rothe. **Animación/Animation:** Katrin Rothe, Lydia Günther.  
**Montaxe/Editing:** Thorsten Pengel. **Son/Sound:** Harri Ansorge.  
**Produción/Production:** Katrin Rothe. **Productora/Production Company:**  
Katrin Rothe Filmproduktion, Robotrom Geschichte Informatik, Technischen  
Sammlungen Dresden.

A historia da firma Robotrom, conglomerado de empresas de Alemaña do leste (Dresde) pioneiras do eido informático, posibilita unha creativa reflexión sobre a evolución da informática a través da rede de relacións que se establecen entre necesidade e tecnoloxía, entre home e máquina, e entre pensamento, linguaxe e creatividade.

The history of the Robotrom firm, a conglomerate of companies from East Germany (Dresden) pioneers in the computing field, enables a creative reflection on the evolution of IT through the network of relationships that are established between need and technology, between man and machines, and between thought, language and creativity.





ESTREA EN GALICIA

17

DEC.  
17.00 h.  
Teatro Principal

Coloquio coa directora  
Q&A with the filmmaker

## 1917 - DER WHARE OKTOBER

1917 - The Real October  
Alemaña, Suíza | 2017 | 90' | Cor

**Dirección/Direction:** Katrin Rothe. **Guión/Script:** Katrin Rothe. **Fotografía/Cinematography:** Robert O.J. Laatz, Thomas Schneider, Björn Ullrich, Markus Wustmann. **Montaxe/Editing:** Silke Botsch. **Son/Sound:** Anders Wasserfall. **Música/Music:** Thomas Mävers. **Voces/Voices:** Maximilian Brauer, Steve Hudson, Hanns Zischler, Michael Morris, Claudia Michelsen, Nicolaia Marston, Martin Schneider, Trevor Rolling, Arne Fuhrmann, Paul Bendelow. **Arte/Art:** Dennis Hannig. **Animación/Animation:** Lydia Günther, Lisa Neubauer, Caroline Hamann Gabriel Möhring Matthias Daenschel, Jule Körperich, Karin Demuth, Kirill Abdrakhmanov, Caterina Wölfle, Donata Schmidt-Werthern Thurit, Antonia Kremer, Maria Szeliga. **Producción/Production:** Katrin Rothe, Werner Schweizer, Peter Roloff. **Productora/Production Company:** Katrin Rothe Filmproduktion, Dschoint Ventschr Filmproduktion AG, Maxim Film.

1917. A ira aumenta nas rúas da capital rusa. En febreiro, o tsar é derrocado. En outubro, os bolxeviques alcanzan o poder. Que papel desempeñaron artistas como Maxim Gorky e Vladimir Mayakovsky durante ese período? Cinco deles cobran vida en forma de siluetas recortadas e relatan como viviron ese período convulso participando en salóns, comités e disturbios rueiros.

1917. Anger is brewing in the streets of the Russian capital. In February, the Tsar is toppled. In October, the Bolsheviks were in power. What role was played by artists such as Maxim Gorky and Vladimir Mayakovsky during that period? Five of them are brought to life in the form of paper cut-out silhouettes and recount how they lived through that turbulent period, participating in salons, committees, and street riots.

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Anney IAFF 2017, Feature Films Out of Competition  
Bucheon IAFF (Korea) 2017  
FICX (Gijón) 2017  
Russian Filmweek London 2017, Golden Unicorn Award  
Meknes AFF (Morocco) 2018  
Cairo International Animation Forum 2018