



A FILM BY CHRISTOPHER BUCHHOLZ AND SANDRA HACKER

*Horst Buchholz*  
*...my Papa*

*presskit*

## *Horst Buchholz ...mein Papa*

**Documentary, 90 min, 35mm, Germany 2005**

### **Horst Buchholz – Actor and Legendary Berlin Native.**

This unconventional film portrait by Christopher Buchholz and Sandra Hacker takes us inside the life of a family that revolved for many years around the endearing but difficult international screen star.

Horst Buchholz was a native Berliner who grew up in modest circumstances and rose to become an international star.

Four years ago, son Christopher began to film conversations with his father, feeling his way slowly towards a dialogue: Buchholz père was a man full of contradictions but, above all, a man who didn't like to talk about himself.

The result was a game of cat-and-mouse between a father slowly giving up on life and a son who refuses to accept that.

Horst Buchholz died suddenly in March 2003. Christopher Buchholz continued to follow the traces of his father, turning to his mother, Myriam Buchholz Bru, and his sister Béatrice to unravel more of the story.

What emerges is at once a sincere documentary and a tragicomic film portrait providing unusual insight into the life of a world-class star and his family.

A Co-production by SAY CHEESE PRODUCTIONS, SWR and RBB, in cooperation with ARTE.

Made with the support of Medienboard Berlin Brandenburg.

### **FESTIVALS 2005 / 2006**

Berlin International Film Festival / Panorama  
Kiew International Documentary Film Festival: Contact  
DOK.FEST Munich (Opening Night Movie)  
Pesaro International Film Festival  
Festival des deutschen Films, Mannheim-Heidelberg  
Rome, Isola del Cinema  
Special Event at Montecatini Short-Film Festival  
Split Film Festival  
Cinemis, Hungaria  
Viennale, Vienna International Film Festival  
Valladolid International Film Festival  
Mostra Internacional de Cinema Sao Paulo  
Sevilla International Film Festival  
AFI International Film Festival Los Angeles  
German-Films in London and Dublin  
Kinofest Lünen, Germany  
San Francisco, Berlin & Beyond Film Festival

### *3\_Cast and Crew*

**With**

Horst Buchholz  
Myriam Buchholz Bru  
Simran Kaur Khalsa  
Christopher Buchholz  
Heidi Dietrich

**Written and Directed by**

Christopher Buchholz  
Sandra Hacker

**Editor**

Jean-Marc Lesguillons

**Music Composed by**

Arnaud Jacquin

**Camera**

Christopher Buchholz  
Olivier Distel  
Sandra Hacker  
Arthur Boisnard

**Sound Recording**

Balthasar Jucker  
Christopher Buchholz

**Editorial Consultant**

Tamara Trampe

**Assistant Editor**

Sandra Hacker

**Sound Design**

Karl Atteln  
Ansgar Frerich BVFT

**Sound Engineer**

Florian Beck BVFT

**Color Correction**

Moritz Peters

**Program Editors / SWR**

Martina Zöllner  
Kurt Schneider

**Program Editors / RBB**

Rolf Bergmann  
Reinhard Griebner

**Medienboard Berlin Brandenburg**

Prof. Klaus Keil  
Kirsten Niehuus  
Antje Stamer  
Christian Berg

**Line Producer**

Steffi Ackermann

**Produced by**

Sandra Hacker  
Christopher Buchholz

A co-production by Say Cheese Productions, SWR and RBB.  
In cooperation with Arte.  
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*Clips from the following films  
were used*

**Life is beautiful**

Italy, 1997. Directed by Roberto Benigni  
Miramax Films

**Marianne of My Youth,**

Germany/France, 1954. Directed by Julien Duvivier  
Transit Film GmbH

**Resurrection**

Germany/Italy, 1958. Directed by Rolf Hansen  
Transit Film GmbH

**Brighter Than the Moon**

Austria, 2000. Directed by Virgil Widrich  
Virgil Widrich Film- und Multimediaproduktions GmbH

**Ankle Bone**

France, 1968. Directed by Guy Casaril  
Les Films du Jeudi und Françoise Casaril

**[Teenage] Wolfpack**

Germany, 1956. Directed by Georg Tressler  
Kirch Media

**Wet Asphalt**

Germany, 1958. Directed by Frank Wisbar  
Kirch Media

**Monpti**

Germany, 1957. Directed by Helmut Käutner  
Kirch Media

**Confessions of Felix Krull**

Germany 1957. Directed by Kurt Hoffmann  
Kirch Media

**Newsreel Archive**

Deutsche Wochenschau

**8mm films**

Private Archive of Myriam Bru

## Horst Buchholz

\* Dec. 3, 1933

† March 3, 2003

Horst Buchholz was born and grew up in Berlin. After World War II, with his father interned in a prisoner-of-war camp, Horst had to become the family breadwinner at an early age.

Buchholz was 13 when he landed his first stage part – as an extra. After the success of his first speaking role on stage, in Erich Kästner's "Emil and the Detectives", he began working as a dubbing and voice-over artist, including for his school radio station. He had appeared on almost all of Berlin's stages by 1959, when he was tapped for the title role in "Chéri" on Broadway. Buchholz remained passionate about the stage, and many theatrical roles followed, in Berlin, Vienna and other cities.

Between 1952 and 2003, Horst Buchholz appeared in more than 50 theatrical films and countless television productions. Among them:

1954, **Marianne, meine Jugendliebe** (Marianne of My Youth), dir: Julien Duvivier, West Germany/FR

1955, **Sky Without Stars**, dir: Helmut Käutner  
[Federal Film Prize 1956], W. Ger.

1956, **King in Shadow**, dir: Harald Braun, W. Ger., **Teenage Wolfpack**, dir: Georg Tressler, W. Ger.

1957, **Confessions of Felix Krull**, dir: Kurt Hoffmann, W. Ger., **Monpti**, dir: Helmut Käutner, W. Ger.

1958, **Tiger Bay**, dir: Lee Thompson, GB

1960, **The Magnificent Seven**, dir: John Sturges, USA

1960, **Fanny**, dir: Joshua Logan, USA

1961, **One, Two, Three**, dir: Billy Wilder, USA

1964, **That Man in Istanbul**, dir: Antonio Isasi-Isasmendi], Sp/It/Fr, **Marco the Magnificent**, dir: Denys de la Patelliere & Noel Howard, Fr/It

1972, **The Great Waltz**, dir: Andrew L. Stone, USA

1978, **From Hell to Victory**, dir: Umberto Lenzi, It/Fr/Sp, **Avalanche Express**, dir: Mark Robson, USA

1980, **Berlin Tunnel 21** [TV], dir: Richard Michaels, USA/W. Ger.

1982, **Sahara**, dir: Andrew V. McLaglen, USA

1983, **Wenn ich mich fürchte** (Fear of Falling), dir: Christian Rischert  
[Federal Film Prize 1984], Ger

1987, **And the Violins Stopped Playing**, dir: Alexander Ramati, USA/Poland

1991, **Aces**, dir: John Glenn, USA

1992, **Faraway, So Close!**, dir: Wim Wenders, Ger  
[Jury Prize, Cannes 1993]

1994, **Fantaghiro**, dir: Lamberto Bava, It, **Der Clan der Anna Voss** (The Clan of Anna Voss, mini-series), dir: Herbert Ballmann, Ger

1995, **Julien da Costa, Attorney at Law** (series), dir: Nicola Ribowski, Fr

1996, **The Firebird**, dir: Vaclav Vorlicek, Slovakia, **Die Geisterstunde** (The Witching Hour), dir: Rainer Matsutani/Sebastian Nieman, Ger

1997, **Life is Beautiful**, dir: Roberto Benigni, It, **Der kleine Unterschied** (The Little Differences), dir: Thomas Bohn, Ger, **Dunckel**, dir: Lars Kraume, Ger

1998, **The Fourth Horseman**, dir: Brian Trenchert Smith, Can

1999, **Kidnapped in Rio**, dir: Jörg Grünler, Ger

2000, **The Enemy**, dir: Tom Kinninmont, USA/Lux

Horst Buchholz received numerous awards and prizes during his lifetime. He was married to French actress and talent agent, Myriam Bru, from 1958 until his death. They have two children, Christopher and Béatrice.

” Papa died in March 2003. He was 69 – much too young. During the last years of his life, he was tired and had a feeling of living in a state of “déjà-vu”.

My father was not someone who enjoyed talking about himself. And although many a star of his generation has written an autobiography, he never felt inclined to write his memoirs. In order to encourage him to talk about his life, I decided to interview him. I wanted to better understand him, and to get him to confront the contradictions within himself.

Over a two-year period, I used a DV camera to record many hours of conversation, during which my father opened up like he never had before. It was usually just the two of us. Sometimes, his sister Heidi was also there, or his wife Myriam, my mother.

Over the course of filming, it became clear that these moments could form the core of a poignant film. When my father died, I decided to finish what we had begun together by making this documentary.

I made this film portrait neither as a reckoning between father and son, nor as an homage to an international star. My intent is for the audience to understand the highs and lows in the life of this man. I wanted to show what it was like to become a star at such a young age, be adored by the whole world, but then never again be able to achieve those heights. I wanted to show what it was like to be the considered an “eternal young man” and then to suddenly be old. To show how he was his own worst enemy, making bad decisions, getting depressed and escaping into alcohol; how he lost interest in life, which he had once embraced with such passion. But I also wanted to show that he never became bitter, thank God, and that in his heart and soul, he always remained a child who loved to laugh and cry.

In the early 1960s, my father gave my mother a super-8 camera, marking the beginning of a great passion. For the next 20 years, she spent many hours capturing their life together on celluloid. My mother filmed our family history wherever she was, and wherever she went with my father. The resulting footage shows a carefree childhood and family life, from my first acne to my father's mid-life crisis. It is time-lapse imagery of growing up; magic moments from the past that my mother has made available to the public for the first time in this documentary.

## Interview

with Sandra Hacker and Christopher Buchholz

### What prompted the decision to make this film?

*Christopher Buchholz:* My father was not a person who liked to talk about himself. For years I suggested that he work on an autobiography when he wasn't in front of the cameras. He always said he would, but never did. I finally said to him "you must tell your story; it has to be told. I'll ask you questions". We began filming those sessions in 2001. That raw material became the basis for the documentary.

*Sandra Hacker:* The sense of mourning that ultimately became an important part of the film's narrative was not planned, of course. But the film was always conceived as a son's personal portrait of his father.

### Did your father know you planned to make a documentary about him with the material?

*CB:* My father knew and approved.

*SH:* I had a chance to meet him too before he died. He was pleased about the idea. He had fun doing it.

*CB:* I realized that he really enjoyed that kind of attention. It was flattering and it was good for him. You can feel that in the film. Even when he's trying to deny it, he was enjoying it – he was in the spotlight and the camera was running! He addresses the audience several times. I think he'd approve of the film, wherever he might be up there.

### What gave you two the idea of working together?

*SH:* It was pure chance. About three-and-a-half years ago, Christopher told me he was working on a film about his father; that he had begun to interview his father. I thought it was a very exciting and brave idea to make a film about one's own father. But it's also dangerous, because you have no distance at all. I asked Christopher if I could help on the project.

*CB:* At the beginning, I felt I had to be very cautious. I wanted the film to turn out the way I had imagined it and not allow myself to be swayed by other people's ideas. I had directed short films before, but never a documentary. But I also knew I wouldn't be able to make this personal a film by myself. I needed somebody to help me. I had seen some of Sandra's films and liked her work a lot. Then, when I began to sense Sandra's feelings towards the material, I felt secure.

### Your father was an actor, you're an actor. Was your desire to make this film linked to a desire to get some kind of recipe for success, as in "how to become an international star"?

*CB:* No, absolutely not. As strange as it sounds, in essence, we're a perfectly normal family – just like a shoemaker's family. When Horst

was working, I didn't necessarily see his films. I was interested, but not interested enough. We didn't grow up in cult worship of a star father. I learned later that my father was an actor, and at that point it wasn't that important.

### Were there spontaneous offers of support for the production?

*SH:* You'd think there would be with the name "Horst Buchholz", wouldn't you? But there weren't. I think it had a lot to do with prejudice. Those prejudices range from 'yeah right, the son's making a film about his famous father' to 'is he going to air dirty laundry?' to 'is he trying to reap some benefit from his father's death?'. On top of that, there was the generalized fear of too much subjectivity. Those are all prejudices you could break down, but only if you're asked openly about it.

*CB:* It was very difficult. But it made me realize how stubborn I am and how I enjoy fighting for something [laughs]. [Broadcaster] SWR said yes right away, and [Berlin's subsidy organization] Medienboard gave us money. The wonderful thing about Medienboard is that we could go there and pitch our project. You have the chance to win over somebody's heart and get people excited about a project. Other subsidy committees just read a treatment, which makes it much harder with a complicated project like this. Then there were people who simply got onboard and without whom the film would never have been made.

### What's it like when two directors work together? Did you have disagreements?

*SH:* I don't remember many. But, of course, there are going to be battles. And Christopher was approaching it from a completely different angle. It can sometimes be difficult to distinguish between what's important and right for the film and what might be stemming from purely personal motives. So we talked about that a lot.

### How was the collaboration in the editing room?

*CB:* I really liked the documentary *Der Madendoktor* [Dr. Maggot] that Sandra had cut with Jean-Marc Lesguillons. I met Jean-Marc through Sandra, two years ago during the 2003 film festival, before Horst's death. Jean-Marc was the first person who asked me all the right questions. I knew he was a good editor, but after that, I also knew I could trust him. I stayed in the background during the editing. Sandra and Jean-Marc edited the film together. That's the area in which it was important that I wasn't making the movie alone – that there was someone there who I trusted to distill the essence of the material.

### Why?

*CB:* Because you don't have any distance. And because you think eve-

## *8 \_ Interview*

rything is equally important. But you have to make choices. And you have to see it all from an independent, fresh point of view in order to shape the film. That's something those two were better able to do on their own.

### **What criteria did you use in selected the film clips included in the documentary?**

*CB:* That was very interesting. I was barely familiar with the movies that my mother acted in. As a child, I found it embarrassing somehow, because most of them were melodramas and it was all too kitschy for me. Then, for our movie, I watched her films again and I think she really was a good actor. For instance, in "Resurrection". It was also very moving to see what my own parents looked like when they were just meeting and falling in love. There were some films my father made that I had never seen either. I discovered them in doing this project. One of those, for instance, was "Wet Asphalt", which has a fabulous scene, a really powerful moment, that we used in our film.

*SH:* We screened about 80 films and TV productions, of the about 90 that Horst appeared in. We first made spontaneous selections, according to what we thought was interesting. We asked ourselves which scenes conveyed something about him, which aspects were most interesting? In the final analysis, the film clips serve a double purpose. On the one hand, they serve to document Horst's career – there are clips from both his first and his last big theatrical films in our movie. And on the other hand, they function kind of like fun-house mirrors of Horst within the documentary narrative.

### **Were there moments when you thought you simply couldn't go on with the film?**

*SH:* Christopher told me at one point that he'd be happy when the film was finished. He said he found it extremely hard to keep holding on to the mourning process. It was an absurd situation, continually seeing and hearing his father in the editing room. He would have liked to let go of him. Hopefully, he'll be able to do that soon.

### **Do you have any idea how the film might be received?**

*CB:* I hope everyone can find a piece of himself or herself in the film. Basically, I wanted to make a film about families.

*SH:* I think getting to know Christopher's mother, Myriam, is like a gift to anyone who sees the film. Just watching Myriam and listening to her, you see what an amazing woman she is. She has so much humor. The way she talks about difficult moments in life with a smile. We can learn a lot from her.

*CB:* In that sense, I'd say the film is more of an homage to my mother than to my father, I feel.

–



## Christopher Buchholz

Regisseur / Produzent

Christopher Buchholz was born on February 4, 1962 in Los Angeles and was educated in the U.S., England and France. After graduation, he decided to become an actor, winning a best actor prize in Italy for his first film role as the Pope's assassin Ali Agca in "The Plot to Kill the Pope". He has since worked with directors such as Michelangelo Antonioni, Peter Yates, Claire Denis, Pierre Schoendoerffer, Virgil Widrich and Alessandro Colizzi. He has also directed for the stage, and made short films including "Amours de Russie", "Happy Birthday" and "Bad Boys' Garden".

## Filmographie (Auswahl)

### AS DIRECTOR UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED

2005, **Horst Buchholz ...my Papa** feature documentary (co-director)  
2002, **Bad Boys' Garden**, short  
2000, **Happy Birthday**, short  
1994, **Amours de Russie**, 52 min, film  
1993, **The Bear** and **The Marriage Proposal** by A. Chekhov (stage)

### AS ACTOR UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED

2005, **Les Rois Maudits** (director: Josée Dayan)  
... King Edward the Second  
  
2004, **Milady** (director: Josée Dayan) A2, Faria Film  
... Lord Buckingham  
  
2003, **Stauffenberg** (director: Dr. Jo Baier), TeamWorX, Berlin  
... Berthold Stauffenberg  
  
2002, **Fino a farti male** (director: Alessandro Colizzi), Daedalus-Film, Rome ... Marc  
  
2002, **Luther** (director: Eric Till), NFP (BRD) ... Von der Eck  
  
2002, **Der Seerosenteich** (director: Johannes Fabrick), ARD  
... Remo Winter  
  
2001, **Eros, segment: The Dangerous Thread of Things**  
(director: Michelangelo Antonioni), Solaris Film, Italy  
... Christopher  
  
2000, **L'Impéro** (director: Lamberto Bava), Media?, Italy ... Kovac

1999, **Les aliénés** (director: Yvan Gauthier), Palm Production, France  
... Damien

### Prix Ciné - Cinémas - Festival de Sarlat 2000

1999, **Brighter Than the Moon** (director: Virgil Widrich), Virgil Widrich Film, Austria ... Paolo

1998, **Branchie** (director: Francesco Martinotti), Italy ... Olivier

1997, **Abiamo solo fatto l'amore** (director: Fulvio Ottaviano)  
... Tony Guano

1994, **Cresceranno i carciofi a Mimongo** (director: Fulvio Ottaviano)  
... the director

1991, **Dien Bien Phu** (director: Pierre Schoendoerffer)  
... Captain Morvan

1990, **No Fear, No Die** / (director: Claire Denis) ... Michel

DISTINCTION DE L'ANNEE EUROPEENNE DU CINEMA ET DE LA TELEVISION  
in 1989

1986, **The House on Carroll Street** / (director: Peter Yates) as Christopher Rhode ... Stefan

1983, **The Plot to Kill the Pope / Das Attentat / Attentato al Papa**  
(director: Giuseppe Fina) as Christopher Rhode ... Ali Agca

### Prize for best actor at the Florence Film Festival

## *Sandra Hacker*

Director/Producer

After studying art history, psychology and German literature at the University of Augsburg, Sandra Hacker attended Baden-Württemberg's Film Academy, where she majored in documentary film studies, received a scholarship to the Film Academy Mentors Club, and graduated in 2000. Next up was a Nipkow fellowship for European film and media professionals. Sandra Hacker has been working as a screenwriter, director and film editor since 1998. She and Christopher Buchholz co-founded the production company, SAY CHEESE PRODUCTIONS, in 2003.

2000 Germany

### **Laughter is my Lady**

Documentary, 43 min, DV and super 8, color and b/w. A film about street performers in NYC.

1998 Germany / France

### **Le complice du photographe (The Photographer's Accomplice - Pierre Gassmann)**

Documentary, 23 min, super 16, color and b/w. A portrait of the founder of the first professional photographic laboratory.

Selected in 2003 for the permanent collection of the Maison Européenne de la Photographie, Paris.

## *Selected Filmography*

### **AS WRITER / DIRECTOR UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED**

2005 Germany

### **Horst Buchholz ...mein Papa (Horst Buchholz...my Papa)**

Documentary, 90 min, 35 mm

2003 Germany

### **Ma vie (My Life)**

Documentary, 42 min, DV and DigiBeta. For ZDF / ARTE. A portrait of Edzard Reuter.

2002 Germany

### **Virtuelle Welten (Virtual Reality)**

Documentary, 30 min, Betacam. For ZDF / 3sat. Filmic essay on virtual reality.

2001 Germany/GR

### **Kefallonia (Cephalonia)**

Documentary, 45 min, DigiBeta. For SWR. Portrait of the Greek island Cephalonia.

2001 Germany

### **Der Madendoktor (Dr. Maggot)**

Documentary, 60 min and 45 min versions, super 16. Co-Production by Film Academy BW, Schaefer Film Production, SWR and WDR. Supported by Medien- und Film Funds Baden-Württemberg. A portrait of a forensic biologist and of a fly.

Nominated for the editing award of the German Camera Prizes.

Winner of the Cologne Media Awards in the category camera 2004.

## Jean-Marc Lesguillons

Editor

### Biography

2001 - present

**LECTURER**, IFS International Film School, Cologne

#### FREELANCE FILM EDITOR

1982 - present

"Auf Leben + Tod" (TV series) 330', Magazine shows, documentaries, MOW, theatrical features. Among them:

"Tatort" / "Drei Geschichten für H. Weiss" / "Die Gladiatoren" / "Antarctica Project" / "Playboy" / "Geschwister" / "Visionär oder Manager" / "Von einem der auszog..." / "Die Versteckte Stadt" / "Der Untergrund" / "Schnee von Gestern" / "Alaska Syndrom" / "Telephonterror" / "Pubertät" / 3 x "Flaherty: Revisited" / "Und vor mir die Sterne E" / "Kismet" / "Serientäter" / "Automat Kalaschnikow" / "Der Madendoktor" / "Das Seelenlazarett" / "Jäger" / „War'n Sie schon mal in mich verliebt“ / „Horst Buchholz...mein Papa“ etc.

Ca. 150 productions to date, with run times between 30' and 120'

#### STAFF EDITOR, WDR (BROADCASTER)

1976 - 1982

Magazine pieces, documentaries, MOW. Among them:

"Die Vorstadtkrokodile" / "Es begann bei Tiffany" / "Die Geschichte eines Hauses" / "Magische Städte"

Ca. 45 Productions with run times between 45' and 100'

#### FREELANCE EDITOR

1969 - 1975, broadcasters WDR, ZDF, NDR, RB as well as various film productions.

Ca. 50 magazine pieces and Documentaries with run times between 30' und 90'

#### ASSISTANT CAMERA AND ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

1967 - 1968 in France, Germany, England, Ireland

1970 - 1975 in Scotland, Iceland, Italy, Greece, Egypt, Cyprus, Israel, Jordan, Canada, Portugal, Norway etc.

#### ASSISTANT EDITOR

1965 - 1967, in France and Germany, working with directors such as J. Schaaf, Podskalsky, R. Quignon, F. Heyde, J-C. Albicocco etc.

#### TRAINING

1962 - 1963 practical course at the lab "Société Général de Travaux Cinématographiques" (working primarily with 35 mm, theatrical films), Joinville (Seine), followed by

1963 - 1965 Studio and editing room work with editors and directors such as R. Vadim, P. Dally, H. Verneuil, A. Ridel, A. Varda, R. Enrico, E. Luntz, G. Oury.

#### SCREENWRITING & DIRECTING WORKSHOPS

1997, Agnieszka Holland (6 days)

1990, Syd Field (14 days)

#### FILMOGRAPHY (AS WRITER/DIRECTOR)

1965, **Morgen werde ich 20**, Production: RB, b/w, 35 mm, 10'

1967, **La faim dans le monde**, Production: Pathé-Cinéma, b/w, 35 mm, 15'

1967, **Pigalle**, Production: Pathé-Cinéma, b/w, 35 mm, 15'

1972, **Laß mein Volk zieh'n**, Production: NDR, b/w & color, 16 mm, 70'

1985, **Urkunde**, also producer, color, 16 mm, 40'

1990, with Dieter Bongartz & Wolfram Seeger: **Wasserland**, Production: WDR III, color, 16 mm, 45', 1990

#### AS SCREENWRITER

1996, **Adieu Zitadelle** with Dieter Bongartz

2000, **Baby Blues**

**Nominated as best editor for the German Camera Prize 2002 (for "Der Madendoktor" / Dr. Maggot)**

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