



# Before The Last Curtain Falls

A Feature Documentary by Thomas Wallner  
90 min

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*In association with arte & Telenet*  
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*The documentary "Before the Last Curtain Falls" tells the story of great love, bitter disappointments and self-doubts – but most of all of courage. The courage to take risks, try something new and become yourself, no matter what age.*

The film dives deeply into the exceptional and heart-warming stories of a group of transsexuals and drag queens in their sixties and seventies, who summon up their bravery to take the stage once again – perhaps for the last time. Belgium's pre-imminent choreographer Alain Platel and "wizard" stage director Frank Van Laecke collaborate to turn the cast member's lives into movement. What was supposed to be a limited run in some selected theatres unexpectedly became a huge international success, playing over 200 shows in 25 countries. For two years the protagonists have been touring five continents, performing a spectacular dance, theatre and music show called "Gardenia".

Now the show is coming to a close and the artists are coming home to a time of introspection, a re-evaluation of choices made, of lives lived and possible futures. The cast has been through it all.

They've gone from rock bottom, to clawing themselves to the top only to fall again. They have worked as performers and prostitutes, been shunned and embraced, undergone sex changes and experienced every shade of love, loss, humiliation and joy imaginable in their long and complicated lives.

The film peels away their many layers of protection, illusion and self-delusion to create a raw but ultimately warm human portrait of a group of people in the last chapter of their lives, who seemingly effortlessly navigate the twilight zone between genders. For the cast, who thought that their best days lay behind them, "Gardenia" has become the highlight of their lives.

Both tender and lascivious, the stories unfold with all of the glamour, courage, tragedy and turbulence of lives lived as gender and sexual rebels. Director Thomas Wallner creates a profoundly human portrait of our persistent longing for love.

gebrueder**beetz**  
FILMPRODUKTION

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