

The Chinese Lives of Uli Sigg



a film by **Michael Schindhelm**

www.ulisiggmovie.com

Synopsis

The Swiss Uli Sigg had an impact on China's shift in economic policy after the Mao era; he has also established the world's most significant collection of contemporary Chinese art. The majority of this collection will be transferred to Hong Kong's M+ museum, due to open in 2019.

A documentary about the entrepreneur, diplomat and art collector Uli Sigg in the tense and ongoing transformation of Chinese society from the late 1970s until today.

Long Synopsis

A Swiss from the county of Lucerne: Uli Sigg. As a teenager at the World Rowing Championships he discovered that you can be among the world's best, even when you come from a province in central Switzerland. Subsequently, Uli Sigg wanted to be one of the best. Not just at rowing.

In 1980 he became Vice President of the first joint venture between a Western corporation (Schindler Group) and communist-controlled China. He played an often curious, challenging and decisive role in introducing a market economy in China. He also encountered prominent Chinese politicians and underground artists.

In 1995, the Swiss Federal Counsellor Flavio Cotti appointed Sigg Swiss Ambassador to China, Mongolia and North Korea. In Chinese circles of government it was said that Switzerland had the best diplomat in Beijing. Several nations asked Sigg to mediate the conflicts over the new Panchen Lama.

Sigg hadn't forgotten how to row. Ambition pushed him forward.

His success as an entrepreneur, as an investor or as a diplomat weren't enough for him. In the mid-nineties Sigg discovered that no one had really taken an interest in new Chinese artists. Thus he became their most influential collector. Sigg acted as a mentor and mediator for creative luminaries such as Ai Weiwei, Zeng Fanzhi and Cao Fei. His collection became the largest and most diverse of its kind worldwide.

Sigg turned to art because he wanted to understand China. He promised the artists that he will keep many of the collected works only for a limited period of time. One day they must return to China. Once the country is open enough politically, these works will be publicly displayed.

The artists have given him some of their most important works. As of 2015 there are 2,200 pieces in the collection. Nowadays Sigg lives at Castle Mauensee, Switzerland, not far from his birthplace. Yet he remains a global player. He sits on the advisory board of China Development Bank along with Henry Kissinger and Tony Blair; he counsels the Tate, Art Basel or MoMA on questions concerning contemporary Chinese art.

Not to mention he has struck a great deal: 1,500 works of his collection will travel to Hong Kong in 2019 under the condition that M+, the Museum for Visual Culture, will be completed. With that, a significant part of the largest collection of contemporary Chinese art in the world will return to China.

Sigg has fulfilled his self-imposed mission.

He will continue to collect, mentor and support, however, especially for the next generation of artists. Creativity is the only inexhaustible resource, he says, as if he were talking about himself.

Every now and then he rows on the Mauensee. And sometimes genuinely wonders that you can actually be among the best in the world even when you come from a province in central Switzerland.

This film is a journey through the exceptional life of Uli Sigg and the modern history of China since Mao's death. In it we meet many creative personalities, including Ai Weiwei, Rita Sigg, Cao Fei, Jacques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron and Lang Lang. We visit karaoke bars in Tienzin, Castle Mauensee and the once largest, now abandoned steel factory in China. We experience parties thrown by Hong Kong billionaires and the construction site of the M+ Museum, artist ateliers in Beijing and the nighttime cookshops in Jinhua. A pig is slaughtered. An art fair takes place. An Olympic stadium is built. A Chinese president is greeted. A bridge is crossed.

Director's Note

Michael Schindhelm

The story of Marco Polo is never-ending. It lives on in countless retellings. Even today. Someone sets forth into the unknown. He returns and reports. Sometimes his stories are not believed.

No one believed Marco Polo, for instance. They called him a show-off. *Messer Milione*. Apparently because he claimed everything in China was a lot bigger.

Uli Sigg prevented the possibility of no one believing him by amassing the largest collection of contemporary Chinese art. 2,200 pieces of art speak for themselves. And for Uli Sigg, for his Chinese lives.

When I met Sigg during the filming of *Bird's Nest*, I immediately noticed that this man doesn't live just one life, but many. Simultaneously and consecutively. I could count at least three. He was living three exceptional lives.

In 1979 he belonged to those adventurers who wanted to convince communist-controlled China of the benefits of a market economy. He succeeded. For twelve long, hard, exciting and sometimes absurd years he directed the first joint venture in Beijing. In 1995 he was appointed Swiss ambassador to Beijing. Naturally he was more than just a typical career diplomat. After all, he knew President Jiang Zemin from his days at Schindler, and he was familiar with the underground art scene. Artists such as Fang Lijun or Wang Guangyi never saw Sigg as a collector who wanted to earn money. Ai Weiwei even negotiated a lower price for his own works. These people knew that the majority of contemporary Chinese art of this time would have been destroyed or lost forever if Sigg hadn't taken care of it.

For almost twenty years, Sigg has been commuting between his castle on the water near Lucerne and China. That is how we met in 2003. Herzog and de Meuron sought out his help in the preparation for the competition to build the Olympic Stadium in Beijing. *Without him*, Jacques and Pierre told me then, *we will never get this done*.

Back then Sigg was already the most influential man when it came to matters of contemporary Chinese art. He consulted on politics and economics.

However, this is not what made his exceptional lives so interesting. Ambition is one thing, but luck definitely helps, too. A luck that Sigg enjoys just as Marco Polo would have enjoyed it.

I would argue that, through a chain of coincidences and an array of personal motives, Sigg was able to witness from an intimate closeness the awakening of China during the Open Door policy. It awoke from its almost two-hundred-year coma. You could even suggest that Sigg played a part in awakening this giant.

When he visited the People's Republic of China for the first time, even less was known about the country than today about North Korea. The country and its people didn't even know that much about themselves. Sigg travelled, negotiated, managed, sweat, froze, learned and taught like almost no other Westerner before him. He encountered Chinese presidents and evasive RAF terrorists. Ai Weiwei told me: *Uli was always the maker.*

Contemporary historians view China's start into the 21st Century as the most momentous transformation of any society in world history. Not only was Sigg a part of this transformation, he also wanted to understand it. He realised that art may be the best way of achieving this, more so than all the diplomatic dinners, business deals, business trips or media reports put together.

Contemporary Chinese art, as we have seen it in Sigg's collection, is a unique witness of China's transformation. Of its reconstruction, of its destruction. It is a coincidental and yet curious metaphor that Sigg was involved in building lifts for Schindler. Personally he wanted to reach new heights, but through and with China.

To me Uli Sigg's Chinese lives are also a story about the modernisation of China. The artworks in his collection appear to tell stories about an unprecedented epoch filled with economic, social and ecological changes.

The film gives, next to Sigg and other Western experts and friends, Chinese artists of three generations and their works to have a voice. They don't speak so much about art. Instead, we let art and artists speak about society.

In the three years that I spent with Marcel Hoehn, Filip Zumbrunn, Feng Membo, Patrick Kull, and later Dieter Meier, Marina Wernli and many others who have worked on the film; that I spent with Uli Sigg, his wife Rita and the other protagonists, I have changed my outlook not only on China, but also on our time. On that which we call globalisation.

For this I am grateful to all participants, especially to Uli and Rita Sigg.

Uli Sigg

was born in Lucerne on 29 April 1946. He is a Swiss business journalist, entrepreneur, art collector, patron, castle owner, rower (he was Swiss champion in the eights discipline at the age of 22) and a former Swiss ambassador to Beijing (1995-1998) for the People's Republic of China, North Korea and Mongolia.

Uli Sigg studied law at the University of Zurich from 1968 to 1972 and graduated with a doctorate. Sigg is considered a great expert on China. He spent a large part of his life in

the country. Not only was he the founding president of the Switzerland-China Chamber of Economics, he also established CSE China Schindler China Elevators Co. for the Schindler Group; it was the first joint venture involving a Western industrial enterprise and a Chinese state company. Sigg worked for the Schindler Group from 1977 until the end of 1990. Sigg was appointed as the general commissioner for the Swiss pavilion at the World's Fair, the Expo 2010, in Shanghai by the Swiss Federal Council on 18 April 2007.

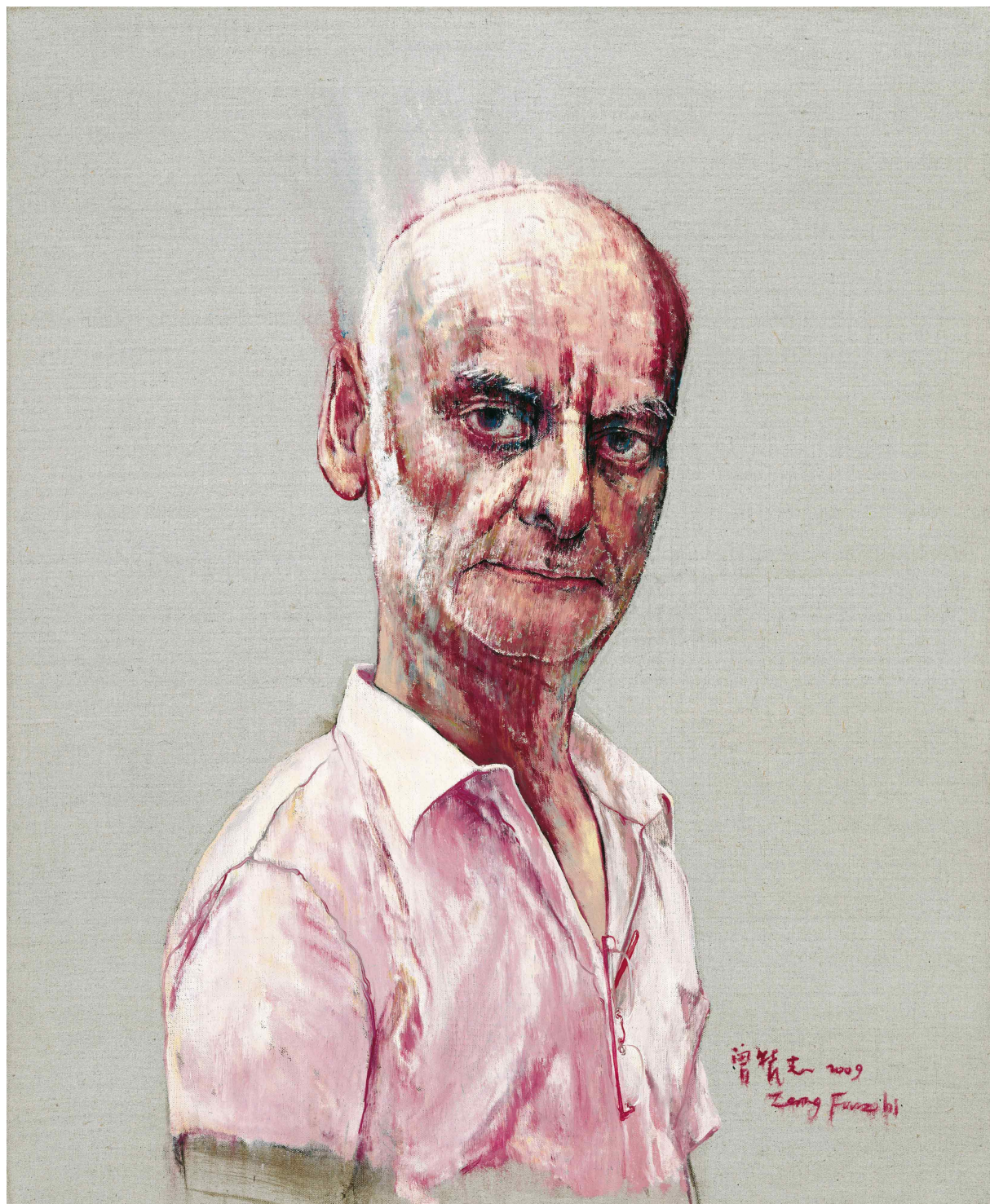
At the end of the nineties, Uli Sigg returned from China to Schloss Mauensee in Lucerne, Switzerland. Even today, Uli Sigg's close relationships motivate him to stay in China for several months every year.

Sigg has had and still has a seat on various administrative boards, including the Ringier Publishing company, CIBA and Vitra Design. He is also a member of the advisory board for the China Development Bank. Sigg advised the Herzog & de Meuron architects' office during the construction of the national stadium in Beijing. Sigg is also a member of the International Council of the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) in New York and is on the International Advisory Council of the Tate Gallery in London.

Uli Sigg is well-known as an art collector to a wide circle of people. He began to collect Chinese contemporary art in the 1990s. As a result, he accumulated the world's largest and most significant collection in this field within a few decades. Sigg personally knows many of the artists, whose works form part of the collection.

In 2012 Lars Nittve, former director of the "M+ museum, announced that Rita and Uli Sigg donated 1463 works of their collection to the M+ in Hong Kong, for a total amount of 163 Mio US Dollars. In return, the Hong Kongese government offered to buy 47 pieces of art for 22 Million US Dollars.

Thus Uli Sigg has fulfilled his promise of giving the collection back to China. The M+ museum is scheduled to open in 2019.



The Artists

Zeng Fanzhi

Zeng Fanzhi was born in Wuhan 1964 and is now based in Beijing. Zeng graduated in 1991 at the Hubei Academy of Fine Arts in Wuhan. Like many other artists of his generation, he was strongly influenced by the cultural revolution of his youth. Zeng is famous for his “Series of Mask” paintings, which he worked on from 1994 until 2000. The “Mask” series displays the tensions between the artist's dominant existential concerns and an ironic treatment of the pomposity and posturing inherent to his new contemporary urban life.

Zeng is currently one of China's most successful artists. In October 2013, he set a world auction record when one of his works was sold for 23 million US Dollars in Hong Kong.

Selected Exhibitions:

- From 1830 till now N°4, Louvre, Paris, 2014
- Zeng Fanzhi, Acquavella Gallery, New York, 2009
- Zeng Fanzhi - Paintings, ShanghART H-Space, Shanghai, 2006
- Mahjong, works from the Sigg Collection, Kunstmuseum Bern, 2005
- Behind the Mask, Hanart TZ Gallery, Hong Kong, 1995

Cao Fei

Cao Fei was born in 1978 in Guangzhou, in the south of China. She is the daughter of the sculptor Cao Chong'en. Cao graduated from the Guangzhou Academy of Fine Arts in 2001. She received a grant from the German foundation „Kulturstiftung des deutschen Bundes“ in 2005. One year later, she won the Chinese Contemporary Art Award (CCAA) for Best Young Artist.

Cao mixes social commentary, popular aesthetics, references to surrealism and documentary conventions in her films and installations. One of her well known works was realised in the virtual reality “Second Life”. The project was called “RMB City”. Cao represents a generation of young Chinese artists who use their art to reflect the rapid and chaotic changes of today's society since the Mao's death.

Selected Exhibitions:

- Cao Fei: Same Old, Brand New, Art Basel Hong Kong, International Commerce Centre, 2015
- No Lab in RMB City, Prospect.1 New Orleans, Contemporary Arts Center New Orleans, USA, 2008
- China Power Station: Part 1, Battersea Power Station, Serpentine Gallery, London, 2006
- Mahjong, works from the Sigg Collection, Kunstmuseum Bern, 2005

Cao Chong'en

Cao Chong'en was born in the Guangxi Province in 1933. He is the father of the artist Cao Fei. Cao has been a professor of drawing and sculpture at the Guangzhou Academy of Fine Arts for many years. As is the case with many Chinese sculptors of his age, he has done sculptures of historical figures in modern China, but only of those whom he thinks were important to China's recent political history, like Mao, Sun Yat Sen and Deng Xiao Ping. Many of his sculptures have been collected by museums, in China as well as in other countries. The Olympic Museum, for example, obtained the sculpture of Antonio Samaranch. Through the work of his daughter Cao Fei, Cao Chong'en became even more widely known. At the Moscow Biennale in 2015, Cao Fei presented a film about her father called „father“.

- Before 1980 mainly sculptures of representatives of the official China.
- Bruce Lee Statue in Hong Kong, 2005.

Feng Mengbo

Feng Mengbo was born in 1966 in Beijing. In 1992, he graduated from the Central Academy of Fine Arts Beijing. He still lives and works in Beijing. His oeuvre consists mainly of video material and computer games. For example, in 2002 he presented a version of the computer game "Quake III" at the Documenta in Kassel. In 2004 he received the Ars Electronica Culture Prize for his work „Ah_Q – A mirror of Death“. Another one of his acclaimed works is the video installation of the computer game „The Long March: Restart“. The Long March was a military retreat undertaken by the Red Army of the Communist Party of China from 1934-36. The Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) in New York bought it for their collection in 2010.

Selected Exhibitions:

- Wrong Code: Shan Shui, Hanart T Z Gallery, Hong Kong, 2007
- Mahjong, works from the Sigg Collection, Kunstmuseum Bern, 2005
- Documenta X, Kassel, 1997
- 45th Venice Biennale, Italy, 1993

Ai Weiwei

Ai Weiwei was born in Beijing in 1957. He is the son of Gao Ying and Ai Qing, a Chinese poet who was denounced under Mao's reign. They were subsequently exiled to Xinjiang in 1961, where they lived for 16 years. In 1979, Ai Weiwei was one of the founders of the early avantgarde art group called the "Stars Group" in Beijing. From 1981 to 1993, he lived in the United States, mostly in New York City. During this period, he was introduced to the works of Marcel Duchamp, Andy Warhol, and Jasper Johns, and began

creating conceptual art by altering readymade objects. In 1993, Ai returned to China after his father became ill.

Ai was commissioned as a design consultant, collaborating with the Swiss firm Herzog & de Meuron on the Beijing National Stadium for the 2008 Summer Olympics, also known as the "Bird's Nest." Ai Weiwei is mostly known for his critique of the Chinese government's stance on democracy and human rights.

On 3 April 2011, Ai was arrested at Beijing Capital International Airport just before boarding a flight to Hong Kong. On 22 June 2011, the Chinese authorities released Ai from jail after almost three months' detention on charges of tax evasion. In 2015, the Chinese government returned his passport and Ai Weiwei left China. Today he lives in Berlin with his son and his partner.

Selected Exhibitions:

- Ai Weiwei, Royal Academy of Arts, London, 2015
- The Unilever Series: Ai Weiwei, Tate Modern, London, 2010
- Documenta XII, Kassel, Deutschland, 2007
- Mahjong, works from the Sigg Collection, Kunstmuseum Bern, 2005
- d'APERTutto, La Biennale di Venezia, 48. Esposizione Internazionale d'Arte, Italien, 1999
- The First Star Exhibition, outside the National Art Museum of China, Beijing, China, 1979



Fang Lijun

Fang Lijun was born in Hebei in 1963. He lives and works in Beijing and his work is one of the leading examples of the Cynical Realist movement. Cynical realism rose to popularity when Chinese artists, who broke away from the collective mind-set that has existed since the Cultural Revolution, pursued individual expression within their society. Fang Lijun's works include paintings, woodcarvings and sculptures featuring bald-headed men with their mouths ripped wide open. This image became his trademark. Fang is one of the most famous Chinese artists in Western society and some even consider him to be one of the most influential artists working in China today.

Selected Exhibitions:

- From Symbols to Analysis, Xi'an Museum, Xi'an, China, 2011
- Mahjong, works from the Sigg Collection, Kunstmuseum Bern, 2005
- New Work / New Aquisitions, MoMa New York, USA, 2005
- Alors la Chine?, Centre Pompidou, Paris, 2003
- d'APERTutto, 48th Venice Biennale, Italien, 1999



Wang Guangyi

Wang Guangyi was born in the Heilongjiang Province in 1957. He graduated from the oil painting department of Zhejiang Academy of Fine Arts in 1984. Like many artists of his

generation, life during Mao's reign is very important in his work. Wang Guangyi is known for being a leader of the new art movement that erupted in China after 1989. Also notable are his series of paintings which use images of propaganda from the Cultural Revolution and popular Western brands like Coca Cola, Gucci etc., entitled "Great Criticism". This is Wang Guangyi's most famous cycle of works.

Selected Exhibitions:

- Wang Guangyi. The Interactive Mirror Image, Tank Loft. Chongqing Contemporary Art Center, China, 2011
- Cold War Aesthetics, Louise Blouin Institute, London, 2008
- Mahjong, works from the Sigg Collection, Kunstmuseum Bern, 2005
- Alors la Chine?, Centre Pompidou, Paris, 2003
- 45th International Art Exhibition Venice Biennale - Cardinal Points of the Arts, Venice, Italien, 1993

Shao Fan

Shao Fan was born in Beijing in 1964 to a renowned family of artists. In 1984 he graduated from the Beijing Arts and Crafts College. In his work, Shao Fan combines art and design and is considered to have a profound knowledge of Chinese culture. Next to traditional Chinese crafts, Shao Fan also creates objects out of deconstructed pieces of furniture. He received his first painting lesson during the Cultural Revolution from university art professors who were assigned to paint Mao Zedong propaganda. Shao Fan's work can be placed among the icons of contemporary Chinese art.

Selected Exhibitions:

- Secret Signs, calligraphy in Chinese Contemporary Art, works from the Collection Sigg, Deichtorhallen/Falkenberg Collection, Hamburg, 2014
- Face to Face - Shao Fan, Galerie Urs Meile, Lucerne, Switzerland 2014
- An Incurable Classicist, Contrasts Gallery, Shanghai, China, 2010
- Ink Art: Past as Present in Contemporary China, The Metropolitan Museum Of Art, New York, USA, 2013
- Chairs About Chairs, Central Academy of Fine Arts, Beijing, China, 1996

The Production

Production Company Filmography T&C Film AG

Features & Documentaries Cinema

- 2016 THE CHINESE LIVES OF ULI SIGG by Michael Schindhelm. CH. Documentary.
- 2014 DARK STAR – HR GIGER’S WORLD by Belinda Sallin. CH. Documentary.
- 2012 LULLABY RIDE by Christoph Schaub. CH/D.
Feature. With Alexandra Maria Lara, Sebastian Blomberg, Georg Friedrich, Carol Schuler.
- 2010 BAD BOY KUMMER by Miklós Gimes. CH/D. Documentary.
- 2010 DANIEL SCHMID – LE CHAT QUI PENSE by Benny Jaberg and Pascal Hofmann.
Documentary.
- 2009 GIULIA'S DISAPPEARANCE by Christoph Schaub.
Feature. With Corinna Harfouch, Bruno Ganz, Stefan Kurt, André Jung, Sunnyi Melles.
- 2008 HAPPY NEW YEAR by Christoph Schaub.
Feature. With Nils Althaus, Johanna Bantzer, Bruno Cathomas, Jörg Schneider, Joel Basman.
- 2008 BIRD’S NEST – HERZOG & DE MEURON IN CHINA by Christoph Schaub and Michael Schindhelm. Documentary.
- 2006 JEUNE HOMME by Christoph Schaub.
Feature. With Matthias Schoch, Alexandra Vandernoot, Didier Flamand, Hanspeter Müller-Drossaart.
- 2005 NÄKKÄLÄ by Peter Ramseier. Documentary.
- 2005 REMEMBERING by Bruno Moll. Documentary.
- 2004 MONTE GRANDE what is life? by Franz Reichle. Documentary.
- 2004 DIMITRI-CLOWN by Friedrich Kappeler. Documentary.
- 2002 MOTHER by Miklós Gimes. Documentary.
- 2001 SECRET LOVE by Christoph Schaub.
Feature. With Emmanuelle Laborit, Lars Otterstedt, Wolfram Berger, Renate Becker.

- 1999 BERESINA or THE LAST DAYS OF SWITZERLAND by Daniel Schmid. CH/D/A. Feature. With Elena Panova, Geraldine Chaplin, Martin Benrath, Ulrich Noethen, Stefan Kurt.
- 1999 SANTIAGO CALATRAVA'S TRAVELS by Christoph Schaub. Documentary.
- 1999 COINCIDENCE IN PARADISE by Matthias von Gunten. Documentary. CH/A.
- 1998 BRAIN CONCERT by Bruno Moll. Documentary.
- 1998 FULL MOON by Fredi M. Murer. CH/D/F. Feature. With Hanspeter Müller, Lilo Baur, Benedict Freitag, Mariebelle Kuhn.
- 1996 THE KNOWLEDGE OF HEALING by Franz Reichle. Documentary.
- 1995 THE WRITTEN FACE by Daniel Schmid. Documentary-fiction. CH/J.
- 1995 MEKONG by Bruno Moll. Feature. With Andrea Zogg, Enzo Scanzi
- 1992 MEN OF THE SEA by Bruno Moll. Documentary.
- 1992 OFF SEASON by Daniel Schmid. CH/D/F. Feature. With Sami Frey, Andrea Férréol, Maria M. Fellini, Dieter Meier, Arielle Dombasle.
- 1987 THE WAY THINGS GO by Peter Fischli and David Weiss. Short feature film.
- 1985 AFTER DARKNESS by Dominique Othenin-Girard and Sergio Guerraz. Feature. With John Hurt, Julian Sands, Victoria Abril.
- 1984 TOSCA'S KISS by Daniel Schmid. Documentary-fiction.
- 1983 THE RIGHT WAY by Peter Fischli and David Weiss. Short feature film.
- 1982 HECATE by Daniel Schmid. CH/F. Feature. With Lauren Hutton, Bernard Giraudeau.
- 1981 THE POINT OF LEAST RESISTANCE by Peter Fischli and David Weiss. Short feature film.
- 1981 CASSETTE LOVE AFFAIR by Rolf Lyssy. Feature. With Emil Steinberger, Franziska Oehme.
- 1978 THE SWISSMAKERS by Rolf Lyssy. Feature. With Emil Steinberger, Walo Lüönd. One million spectators only in Switzerland.

Coproductions Cinema

- 2011 THE GUANTANAMO TRAP by Thomas Wallner. D/CND/CH. Documentary.

- 2010 THE FLOWERS OF KIRKUK by Fariborz Kamkari. I/CH. Feature.
- 2010 IN MY FATHERS HOUSE ARE MANY MANSIONS by Hajo Schomerus. D/CH. Documentary.
- 2006 HEADSMAN by Simon Aeby. A/CH/HU/D/UK. Feature. With With Nikolaj Coster-Waldau, Peter McDonald, Anastasia Griffith, Steven Berkoff, Lee Ingleby.
- 2001 MOSTLY MARTHA by Sandra Nettelbeck. D/CH/A. Feature. With Martina Gedeck, Sergio Castellitto, Sibylle Canonica.
- 2001 THE MARBLE ROAD by Michael Trabitzsch. D/CH. Documentary.
- 1998 SECRET DEFENSE by Jacques Rivette. F/CH/I. Feature. With Sandrine Bonnaire, Jerzy Radziwilowicz, Grégoire Colin, Laure Marsac.
- 1997 THE TRUCE by Francesco Rosi. I/F/CH/D. Feature. With John Turturro, Massimo Ghini, Rade Serbedzija, Stefano Dionisi.
- 1996 THE CRY OF SILK by Yvon Marciano. F/CH/B. Feature. With Sergio Castellitto, Marie Trintignant, Anémone.
- 1993 BARNABO OF THE MOUNTAINS by Mario Brenta. I/CH/F. Feature. With Marco Pauletti, Duilio Fontana, Carlo Caserotti, Antonio Vecellio.

Marcel Hoehn - Producer

Marcel Hoehn founded T&C Film in Zurich in 1976 and remains its managing director and producer for cinema, TV and documentary films. They include The Swissmakers by Rolf Lyssy; Hecate, Beresina by Daniel Schmid; Jeune Homme, Julia's Disappearance by Christoph Schaub and cinema documentaries such as Il Bacio Di Tosca, The Written Face by D. Schmid; Bird's Nest by Ch. Schaub/Michael Schindhelm; The Knowledge of Healing by Franz Reichle; Mother by Miklòs Gimes. Many of the films are international coproductions screened at large festivals and sold worldwide. In 1999 he was awarded the Zurich Film Award and in 2011 he received the Swiss Film Award Quartz for his work.

<http://www.tcfilm.ch>

Michael Schindhelm – Director

Michael Schindhelm was born in 1960 in Eisenbach, Germany. He's a writer, filmmaker, performing arts expert and cultural advisor for international organisations. In 1979 he studied at the International University of Voronezh (USSR) and in 1984 graduated with a Master of Science in Quantum Chemistry (cum laude). From 1984 to 1986 he started his work as assistant professor for the "Zentralinstitut für physikalische Chemie" at the East Berlin Academy of Science.

Since 2012	Advisor to the Zurich University of the Arts (ZHdK).
2010	Collaborator and since 2013 member of the Board of Trustees of the German Food Initiative "Welthungerhilfe".
2010-2012	Co-founding director of the Strelka Institute in Moscow. At the same time he developed a proposal on culture and sports for the Innovation City of Skolkovo in Russia. Cultural adviser to the architectural firm OMA (Netherlands) in the development for a masterplan on the large-scale cultural project West Kowloon Cultural District, Hong Kong.
2007-2009	Founding Director to the Dubai Culture & Arts Authority (Dubai)
2005-2007	General Director of the newly founded "Stiftung Oper in Berlin", comprising three houses: Staatsoper Berlin, Deutsche Oper, Komische Oper.
1996-2006	Artistic and Managing Director at the Theatre Basel (Switzerland).
1994-1996	Director General and Artistic Director of the Theatre Altenburg Gera (Germany)
1992-1994	Artistic and Managing Director of the Theatre Gera (Germany).
1990-1992	Adviser of the Managing Director and some months later Drama Director of the Theatre Nordhausen/LOH-Orchester Sondershausen (Germany)

Documentaries:

2016	"The Chinese Lives of Uli Sigg" by Michael Schindhelm. Uli Sigg's life story as an entrepreneur, a diplomat and a collector of Chinese art.
2008	"Bird's Nest – Herzog & De Meuron in China" by Christoph Schaub and Michael Schindhelm. On the making of Beijing's Olympic Games Stadium.
2004	"Chants of the Steppes" by Michael Schindhelm. About music of nomads in the desert Gobi (Mongolia).

Publications:

2014	Lavapolis (English, Sternberg Press)
2014	Lavapolis (German, Matthes&Seitz)
2011	Dubai High (English, Arabian Publishing)
2009	Dubai Speed, (G, DTV)
2007	Mein Abenteuer Schweiz (G, Echtzeit)
2006	Die Herausforderung (G, DVA)
2004	Das Kamel auf der Startbahn (G, Merian)
2001	Zauber des Westens (G, DVA)
2000	Roberts Reise (G, DVA)

Opera Librettos:

2006	“Welten in Quecksilberlicht“ by Cong Su, (Berlin, 2006) about the Chinese poet Gu Cheng.
2001	“Schwarzerde“ by Klaus Huber (Basel, 2001) on the Russian poet Osip Mandelstam

Moreover:

2003	Host in the TV talk show “Der Salon” (Swiss TV SRF 1). He has translated works by Maxim Gorki, Pavel Chekhov, Nikolai Gogol and Ossip Mandelstam into German.
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Facts & Figures

Shooting Format:	HD
Format	DCP (24f/s)
Sound	Digital 5.1
Length	93 minutes
Original version	Swiss German, German, English, Mandarin
Subtitles	German, French, English, Mandarin
Shooting Schedule	Between January 2014 and October 2015
Shooting Locations	Mauensee, Basel, Hamburg, Berlin, Beijing, Guangzhou, Hong Kong
Completed	January 2016
Production company	T&C Film, Zurich
Director	Michael Schindhelm
Producer	Marcel Hoehn
Cinematography	Filip Zumbrunn
Sound	Dieter Meyer
Music and Sound Design	Feng Mengbo, Peter Bräker
Editor	Marina Wernli
Sound Mix	Renzo D'Alberto
Postproduction	Ueli Nüesch, Lab54a
Researches, Assistance	Patrick Kull
Production Manager	Sandra Gisler, Ma Yingli
Protagonists	Uli Sigg Ai Weiwei Cao Chong'en Cao Fei Pierre de Meuron Hans-Peter Fallegger Fang Lijun Feng Mengbo Marianne Heller

Hu Xiaoyuan
Jacques Herzog
Lang Lang
Anna Liu
Victoria Lu
Alexandra Munroe
Lars Nittve
Hans Ulrich Obrist
Qiu Xiaofei
Erwin Schurtenberger
Shao Fan
Rita Sigg
Marc Spiegler
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Xiao Li
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