

## **Lust, Pain and Passion**

Between Passion play and Eroticism: the career of actress Marina Anna Eich

It sounded like wood in a chipper. A short sharp crack. But they were fingers that had got caught in the rotor blades of a lawnmower accidentally, this summer. Marina Anna Eich takes the brown bandage off her right middle finger: the first phalanx is missing - the ring and forefinger could be saved at the hospital in Murnau. She has beautiful, delicate hands. Eich plucks a bit at her bandage and says: "That's a part of me now." The one which isn't there any more.

Two weeks after the nasty accident she went to Cannes all the same, to the German reception at the Film Festival. She wore 3 thick white bandages then and had to tell what happened at home, on the lawn of her old farmhouse near Lake Ammersee. They called Marina Anna Eich "The finger" then.

### **Nude pictures – some ravishingly beautiful, others disturbing.**

She doesn't get as much attention in the film scene usually. Although the 33 year old actress has acted in more than a dozen films. Furthermore, she's a producer in the small film production company WTP International under rebel director Roland Reber. In addition to being Reber's PR Manager, she's also in charge of DVD production and marketing of the Label. She appeared as a model in the *Bravo*, also twice in *Penthouse*, she says, sweeping her fingers over her iPhone. With a flick of her fingers photographs appear, nudes. Some ravishingly beautiful, others disturbing. Marina naked as a witch with hat; lustfully riding a broom. Eich as lust incarnate; the head of a doll rests between her wide open legs. Pornography? "What is pornography even?" she says "It's sexuality, eroticism, nudity – something natural". Her films also all relate to it. To lust, passion and pain.

"The truth of lie" is the new movie with Marina Anna Eich, which is once again from the no-budget-production of Roland Reber. An author (Christoph Baumann) keeps two women – Marina Anna Eich and Julia Jaschke - imprisoned in a labyrinth. He tortures them in a bizarre way, trying to drive them towards a borderline experience.

The Movie has its premiere on October 28<sup>th</sup> at the Hof Film Festival which will open this Tuesday. And it's in line with Reber's film world which carries a symbolism reminiscent of an incense-laden Hindu temple. "It is a tough film" says Marina Anna Eich and sweeps a strand of blonde hair behind her ear. "Merciless and full of symbolism", she says. Her shining blue eyes look as if she was talking about a flower field in Oberammergau.

She grew up there, in the middle of the mountains. Her father still owns a wood carver's shop there, the next house one and a half kilometers away. As a girl Marina participated at the Oberammergau Passion Play. A Life, "a dream for every child" she says. Later she discovered her passion for dancing. Her ballet teacher in Oberammergau tells her about a distant city, Leipzig, where she could learn to dance properly. The 15 year old Marina went there. And danced. And suffered. Because the teacher talked down the girl from Bavaria. She had "mashed cabbage legs". Marina put her finger down her throat and soon weighed only 48 kilos. Somehow she managed to leave. She completed middle school along the way, went to Frankfurt at the Academy of Music and Performing Arts. And danced. But it wasn't easy. Increasingly, she was plagued by back pain. The orthopedist said if she doesn't stop dancing she could end up in a wheel chair by the age of thirty. The dream was over!

Marina went back home. But she continued along her way. "Everything works out, if only you want to", she says. "You have to believe in yourself". She graduated from high school in Garmisch, and also worked as a model. She traveled the world for a year, living in France, Canada, and Ecuador with host families, improved her French, and learnt Spanish. And then she discovered a new passion. Film. And a man: Roland Reber. The colossus of a man, who worked as a director, author and actor since the eighties had decided a few months back to declare war on the German film industry and to prove that one could survive in this shark tank without public film subsidy. His first film was "The Room": two persons should look after an empty house for six weeks. The only constraint - they shouldn't enter a specific room. For that Movie Roland Reber, Mira Gittner, Marcus Grüsser and Marina Anna Eich were awarded the 2001 Emerging Filmmaker Award in Hollywood, the Best Foreign Movie in Chicago, the best Movie in Thessaloniki and others. "The film industry said: you were just lucky", says Eich today. But the team were persistent. And with his mini crew, who not only acted in front of the camera but also shot and made the editing, Reber produced in a row "Pentamagica" (2003), "The Dark Side of our Inner Space" (2004), and then in 2005, "24/7 The Passion of Life". "My favorite

film”, says Eich. She plays the role of the naïve hotelier’s daughter Eve, who one day meets the Dominatrix “Lady Maria” (Mira Gittner). And she immerses into a parallel world, populated by slaves, humans turned into pigs, sadists and masochists. “We were skating on very thin ice” says Eich. For several months, the team researched swinger’s clubs, and the S&M scene. “We simply had no idea”. Gittner stood in a studio as a guest dominatrix, the shoots were done at a Munich club during their ongoing daily business. All over Germany “24/7” was screened in small as well as big cinemas. Every year on July 24<sup>th</sup>, the movie is screened not only in swinger’s clubs, in Munich it was shown at the Museum-Lichtspiele this summer. ARTE will broadcast the erotic drama on November 10<sup>th</sup> at night; it was also screened at the Five Lake Filmfestival in Starnberg 2 years ago. There were heated discussions between Roland Reber and the audience not only there. Porn, flat, awkward clichés, said some. Others were fascinated.

In any case: it provokes. The sex scenes aren’t fake, even if during the shooting they are “absolutely unerotic and just exhausting”. Eich sticks by her work: “I also have a bit of an exhibitionistic streak.” But what does it mean: it only means to display themselves, to present oneself: “As long as I can still do this...”

She went on. In 2009 Eich performed in Reber’s film “Angels with dirty wings”, along with Antje Mönning, who was known as TV-nun Jenny in the ARD series “Um Himmels Willen”. BILD scented a scandal: “The TV-star shot a sex film” the paper wrote – and: “Sex-nun lives in a commune with director”. In fact Antje Mönning, Mira Gittner and Marina Anna Eich live together with Reber in the country side. “We are like a family”, says Eich.

Somehow the young woman has reached her inner self. “One shouldn’t let others to lead them astray from their own path”, she says thoughtfully. She is a Jury member at international Film Festivals, and acquired much respect. In November, she flies to Goa to present the new work at the Film Festival, where she plays the main part. Marina Anna Eich performs a confident, self-assured woman. A challenge - she is more of the “hysteric, jittery kind”. Although she turned more calm since the accident with the lawnmower. She is satisfied with her life today - “and grateful”. One thing is very important to her, she says this sentence several times: Be yourself.