

BIO-FILMOGRAPHY of DENISE GILLIAND

Director



Denise Gilliard, born in 1964 in Switzerland, grew up in a socially very engaged environment of left activists. Aged 16, she left for Mexico where she discovered cinema working as a model on various advertisement productions.

In 1985 she graduated in film directing from the « Istituto di Scienze Cinematografiche » in Florence, Italy.



Back in Switzerland, she writes, directs and supervises commissioned films. In 1989 she became aware of the deep sufferings that exclusion may cause thanks to an audiovisual campaign for AIDS prevention. It marks the beginning of her social involvement: to give a voice to those without one, to give humanity and dignity back to people that have been rejected by society.

Her first full length film « Mon père, cet ange maudit » was released in 1994 when she was 30. Her book « Gangsterino » published in 2002 told also the story of this gangster who is given a life sentence and became a painter in prison. When she worked on « Mon père, cet ange maudit », « Femmes du No Future » and « Les bas-fonds » — nominated for the Swiss Cinema Award —, she realized that art can be a powerful recovery tool.

She created on 23th of October 1999 the non-profit association « Rebond'art » and became the chairperson. The aim is to support cultural projects organized in collaboration with poor or resourceless people.

In 2007, to deepen this approach, she added another project to the previous ones. She dedicated herself to the organisation of a filmworkshop in prison. In the same year she took charge of « Œil Ouvert » where she produced and directed her 8th documentary feature film « Article 43 » that won two awards.

At the same time, Denise Gilliard turned to fiction. She develops with PCT cinéma télévision « La violence du double » a psychodrama about schizophrenia and twins. Her films are broadcast on different television channels, in cinemas and also often used by associations in debates on social issues. In addition to her social involvement and directing, she started in 2001 to explore the world of invisible and immaterial — maybe also because she gave birth twice. She directed two films on this topic: « NDE Aux frontières de la mort » in 2002 and « Mediums, between worlds » in 2011.





Documentary films



2011. « Mediums. Between worlds »
Documentary. 66 and 52 minutes

Prove life in the hereafter? A medium takes up the challenge.
A brilliant exploration into the world of mediums.

2008. « Article 43 »
Documentary. 90 minutes

Prisoners become filmmakers to make a film. Creativity and encounters against a backdrop of prison and cinematographic constraints.

Special Jury Mention « Regard sur le crime » Festival Visions du réel 2008.
Young Jury Prize. 4th festival du film d'éducation, Evreux

2006. « L'école qui fait aimer l'école »
Documentary. 67 minutes

To change the world: another kind of school...

2002. « Aux frontières de la mort. N.D.E. »
Documentary. 52 minutes

They looked death in the face and came back transformed

2000. « Tempo »
Video art for the collective exhibition « Humeurs@00 ». 5 minutes

The metamorphosis of a pregnant woman's body

2000. « Les bas-fonds »
Documentary. 75 minutes. 35 mm

From despair to dignity regained: the homeless of Paris become actors

Nominated for Swiss Film Prize 2001

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1998. « Heidi forever »
Documentary. 50 minutes

How the little Swiss girl from a children's book became a global legend

1997. « Alain comme les autres, les chiffonniers Emmaüs »
Documentary fiction. 85 minutes.

Communities open to all those "beaten and bruised by life" (l'Abbé Pierre)

1996. « Femmes du No Future »
Documentary. 53 minutes

They were punks; how did they survive self-destruction?

1994. « Mon père, cet ange maudit »
Documentary. 55 minutes

She went off in search of her real father – a gangster serving life

Publications

2011. « Mediums, between worlds»

As a complement to the film. An exploration of the world of mediums.
With Alain Maillard, Editions Favre.

2002. « Gangsterino »

Fictional biography of the gangster and self-taught painter Angelo Donadoni.
With Alain Maillard, published by Editions Factual in 2002 and by Publi-Libris in 2006.
