



factual pro gramming

on ZDF

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Factual Programming on ZDF

2024

ZDF has an enviable reputation as one of the most important providers of factual programming in Europe. In the highly competitive German TV market, ZDF runs numerous regular documentary strands including weekly broadcasts of documentaries in two prominent prime-time slots, with high market shares of 12 – 15 %. Topics such as expeditions to unknown worlds, legends and mysteries in the history of mankind, spectacles of nature, the evolution of man and the turning points of 20th-century history have been shown to attract large audiences.

Planet of Treasures, Adventure Freedom, The Six Continents Revealed reflects the intensity of audience appreciation for this programme format. For ZDF, visual quality is a prerequisite for the success of a documentary. Today's top documentaries are highly-dramatised narratives which convey important themes in gripping style, making full use of the medium's potential. The narrative element is, therefore, a key factor in the success of the genre. However, the outlay necessary to do justice to these requirements is not insignificant: intensive research and careful preparation of the material is essential.

The dramatic component (structure and editing) attains top feature-film levels, while the composition, in terms of picture and music, matches that found in the best theatrical productions.



Africa from Above | 10 x 50'
or 3 x 50'

ZDF Department of **History & Science**

The Department of History and Science is one of ZDF's most important departments for factual programming. It broadcasts documentaries on religion, history, nature, medicine and science.

Terra X

Slot: Sunday 7:30 p.m. | 42 x 45'

60 % commissions,
10 % ZDF in-house productions,
30 % coproductions and acquisitions every year.

Head of department: Friederike Haedecke
Contact for international acquisitions and coproductions:
Johannes Geiger

ZDF's successful Terra X series, with a viewer average of approx. 4 million and approx. 14 % market share, focuses on ancient history, mythology, scientific discovery, geology and wildlife. With the emphasis on entertainment with a strong scientific foundation, Terra X has evolved to become a recognised brand within ZDF, highly regarded by viewers of all ages and across the social spectrum. It therefore comes as no surprise that each of these lavishly produced scientific adventures attracts several million viewers. A great number of the Terra X productions are coproductions with international partners and producers, including ARTE, BBC, NHK and others.

Examples

Planet of Treasures | 6 x 45'
plus a further 6 episodes from summer 2023

While there were seven wonders of the ancient world, UNESCO counts 1,121 treasures of humanity. A good half of them are threatened by natural disasters, war, urbanisation or decay. In "Planet of Treasures", presenter Christopher Clark presents these fascinating places around the globe: his path leads from the Great Pyramid of Giza in Egypt to the Serengeti National Park in Tanzania, from the "Palace of the Winds" in Jaipur, India, to the Jordanian desert, from the lagoon city of Venice to the Mexican city of Teotihuacan along with many other impressive cultural and natural monuments. Planet of Treasures, an image-rich documentary series produced in cooperation with UNESCO.



Planet of Treasures | 6 x 45'

Adventure Freedom | 6 x 45'

plus a further 3 episodes from summer 2024

Simply get out. Leave the rat race behind and explore life in a distant region on four wheels. Most of us have felt the desire to discover the breath-taking beauty of our planet off the beaten track at some time or another. The longing for adventure and freedom is as old as modern civilisation itself. However, most people stop short of turning this dream of a temporary time-out into reality. Job, family, financial obligations all speak against it.

And yet: there are those who seize the moment and embark on this adventure. They take the plunge into the unknown and set off on an expedition to the most beautiful, exciting or inhospitable corners of the earth. Off-road vehicles, converted buses, sailing boats or motorbikes are their means of transport of choice. These adventurers transverse the Arctic Circle, travel across the largest deserts on the planet, over rugged mountain ranges or through tropical rainforests.

The Six Continents Revealed | 6 x 45' – Africa, Asia, Europe, Australia and Oceania, North America, South America

They are the building blocks of our world. They represent the amazing diversity of nature and culture on our planet. Continents shape our life as we know it today. The story of the continents starts long before the arrival of men. The milestones of their geology, climate, flora and fauna, however, have also fundamentally influenced our path and the evolution of the many faces of human cultures. Each episode – using breath-taking footage and visual effects – travels back to the birth hour of a continent. Geology, weather, climate, ocean currents, the migration of the species and human settlement are the milestones of the epic journey each continent takes. The series' backbone are the surprising links. The six-part series "Our Continents" reveals a rich treasure trove of remarkable findings that connect history, science and everyday culture of the world.

The Big Questions – with Harald Lesch | 2 x 45'

In the new “Terra X” series “The Big Questions”, Professor Harald Lesch addresses those questions that each of us have asked ourselves at least once in our lives. Big questions that have preoccupied people since the dawn of time across all epochs and all cultures. Does God exist? What is the meaning of life? Are we alone in the universe? Why do good and evil exist? Do we have a free will? Science has already found rational answers to many things that have long seemed mysterious, but does it also help when it comes to the existential questions of life? With the desire for answers and the courage to fail, Harald Lesch takes us on a fascinating journey through our history of research and ideas.

The series kicks off with two episodes centring on the questions “Does God exist?” and “What is the meaning of life?”. The desire for orientation, the search for meaning and spirituality is omnipresent today. But even in the past, great thinkers and scientists have racked their brains over this. In the seclusion of a monastery, Harald Lesch finds surprising answers.

As an astrophysicist and philosopher with the unique gift of narrating even complex topics in a comprehensible and passionate way, Harald Lesch guides the audience through the programmes in a competent yet true-to-life manner. With a visually opulent and experience-oriented narrative style, he reveals surprising correlations between natural science and philosophy, everyday experience and expert knowledge.



The Big Questions – with
Harald Lesch | 2 x 45'

37°

Slot: Tuesday 10:15 p.m. | 40 x 30'

80 % commissions,
10 % ZDF in-house productions,
10 % coproductions and acquisitions every year.

Head of department: Jürgen Erbacher (Church and Life Catholic)
and Reinold Hartmann (Church and Life Protestant)
Contact for international acquisitions and coproductions:
Jürgen Erbacher and Reinold Hartmann

Two departments produce items for this slot: History and Society, Church and Life (Protestant), and Church and Life (Catholic).

Contents

The themes covered in the 37° series are situated at the intersection between culture, religion and society. The chief purpose is not to cover specialist areas or contemporary events, but instead to establish an authentic proximity to people's everyday lives, feelings and situations. The themes explored here include human destiny, crises, and decisions with far-reaching consequences. For example, the series highlights the people fighting for ecological or humanitarian causes, examines the psychology of criminals and of those who pursue them, and pays closer attention to the lives of people with illnesses and disabilities. Further, it might look at the various unusual or mundane things people may do with their time, or how people can become famous in our modern world.

Examples

Every Effort Is Too Much – Diagnosis: Chronic Fatigue Syndrome | 29'

Suddenly, you seem to have is completely sapped lost all vital energy, your body is completely sapped. Pauline, Martin and Barbara have ME / CFS, like 17 million people worldwide. Their life, a single struggle. Usually, the chronic multi-system disease occurs following a viral infection from which sufferers fail to recover. Those affected have sleep disturbances and permanent flu-like symptoms, plus a pronounced stress intolerance and cognitive disorders. “37°” follows three people who suffer from ME / CFS (myalgic encephalomyelitis / chronic fatigue syndrome) and are affected to varying degrees by this multi-system disease. Three people who are in so much pain that almost every day they ask themselves the question: Is this still a life? Viewers experience what motivates them to fight on and stay alive, what hopes and what fears they have.

Avant Nous le Déluge – An Island Fights Climate Change | 29'

The North Frisian island of Pellworm is threatened with extinction. “37°” accompanies residents of the island and adjoining Hallig Süderoog who are fighting to preserve their home. Rising sea levels and more frequent heavy rain events could overwhelm the island’s drainage system. What is happening in North Friesland is an example of the challenges brought about by climate change worldwide. 22-year-old Sophie wants to take over her parents’ organic farm on Pellworm. Together with environmental activists, she successfully brings a complaint against the German government before the Federal Constitutional Court because, in her view, the Climate Protection Act does not go far enough. Ernst August is campaigning for the dikes to be raised so that the islands are protected against rising sea levels. Crab fisherman and fisheries master Holger and his wife Nele are active in coastal protection.

Your Heart in Me | 29'

Around 8,500 seriously ill patients from Germany are currently on the waiting list for a donor organ. They are hoping for a kidney, a heart or a lung, for example. What does it mean when you know that only a donor organ can save your life? "37°" has accompanied people whose only chance of survival is linked to the life-saving call: "We have an organ for you."

In 2016, former flight attendant Dirk received an artificial heart implant. A protracted bout of flu and pneumonia had severely damaged his heart. "At some point I could no longer walk 200 metres," says the father of three. He was transferred to the heart centre in Berlin and listed "HU" (high urgency). Only a donor heart will be able to offer him relief. But the waiting time for a heart in Germany can be up to a year. A gruelling time begins for him and his family. Like the vast majority on the waiting list, Anita is hoping for a new kidney. In 2019, the 24-year-old was diagnosed with a rare hereditary disease. Anita has been on the transplant waiting list since 2021, and the average waiting time for a kidney is eight to ten years. One possible alternative could be a living transplant from family members.

Alcohol in the Womb | 29'

One in four women drinks alcohol during pregnancy, even if it is only a glass of champagne. But there is no time and no amount that is safe for an unborn child. The resulting damage runs through the entire life of those affected and is known in professional circles as FASD (foetal alcohol spectrum disorder). "37°" accompanies three people affected.

In Germany alone, more than 10,000 children are born with FASD every year. The number of unreported cases is high, because alcohol during pregnancy is a taboo subject. A volcano is bubbling inside Nathan (4). He needs care around the clock. Already in kindergarten he throws tables and chairs, turns night into day. Melissa (22) becomes depressed at primary school age, later drinks alcohol and smokes pot. Now aged 22 she is currently undergoing vocational training to become a woodwork specialist and hopes to find a job in a carpentry workshop. Mylene's (29) life was also marked by depression and sleep disorders. Now she lives in the "Sonnenhof" in Berlin, the

oldest counselling centre for people in Germany with alcohol-related conditions. Together with a social worker, she is building new structured daily routines. She seldom leaves the house. Unknown routes and other people overwhelm her. Nevertheless, she makes it her mission to tell her story to school classes. “37°” accompanies affected people in different phases of their lives: adults who have been diagnosed late and finally know the reasons for their failure. Young people who struggle with their invisible disability. And children who, thanks to an early diagnosis, receive support and are given a real chance.

37°Leben

Slot: Sunday 9.00 a.m | 50 x 30'

80 % commissions,
20 % in-house productions

Head of department: Jürgen Erbacher (Church and Life Catholic)
and Reinold Hartmann (Church and Life Protestant)
Contact for international acquisitions and coproductions:
Jürgen Erbacher and Reinold Hartmann

Two departments produce items for this slot: History and Society, Church and Life (Protestant), and Church and Life (Catholic).

Contents

“37° Leben” (37° Life) is a reportage format. It addresses existential vital issues facing a young target group (24 – 35 years), giving consideration to questions related to religion and ethics with the aim to provide orientation and stimulate reflection. It is an original sound format and is based on modern streaming platforms. It is optimised for the media library and is intended to appeal to the young target group across all platforms. The topics focus on personal orientation and social issues, touching on issues such as social commitment, identity issues, faith / religion, love / partnership, parenting / family, time out / foreign worlds.

Examples

Ultra-Orthodox? No, Thank You! | 27'

Two million Jews worldwide live in so-called ultra-Orthodox communities. In their daily lives, they have to abide by numerous rules. Mobile phones are forbidden, as are computers and the Internet. Modernity is not welcome. One special tradition applies: the young members of the community should start families and have many children. Marriages are therefore arranged early – a man or a woman has little influence on the choice of partner. But what happens to the people who leave these ultra-Orthodox communities? Where and how do they find a new life? “37° Leben” accompanies Jewish dropouts who embark on a new way of life in Dresden.

The Maternal Happiness Lie | 27'

Being a mother is considered the highest form of happiness in our society. It is celebrated in the media and described as the ultimate goal when planning a family. But is it always a source of happiness? What happens when a child is born and the woman regrets becoming a mother? Regretting becoming a mother is breaking a taboo. “37° Life” shows from the perspective of two mothers their ambivalent relationship to their own motherhood.

Men Alone at Home | 27'

Being a stay-at-home dad is still the exception. But a few men still brave it: “37° Leben” accompanied two fathers who have taken the plunge. Until a year ago, Daniel Dölker was a department manager before he started taking care of the children and household full-time. Daniel’s wife Julia fulfilled her dream of having her own physiotherapy practice. Gregor Haake worked as a journalist. In the meantime, he has been a full-time father and family manager, as he calls himself, for eight years. Daniel sometimes misses the challenges of his job, but accepts the challenge of being a househusband and enjoys watching his children grow up. The reportage accompanies the two full-time dads as they care for their children. Through Daniel Dölker and Gregor Haake, viewers experience how the role reversal challenges old role models and personal priorities.

Second-Hand Craftspeople | 27'

Recycling used materials instead of using them for a short time and quickly disposing of them – this is what motivates second-hand craftspeople to find new pathways to a circular economy and sustainable product design. The film gives an insight into the work and life of second-hand craftspeople. Three people show how used materials are brought back into the loop and given a second life cycle.

Anne-Sophie Müller is a founding member of the Leipzig-based start-up “TRASH GALORE” and, together with others, rescues materials left behind after events and organises distribution campaigns. The material is distributed through a second-hand DIY store. Thomas Peterberns from Dresden makes new design pieces from ordinary plastic waste. Steven works exclusively with used wood as a woodworker for restoring old wood furniture.

Various Factual Programmes for Religious Holidays

Slot: Easter, Whitsun and Christmas | 45'

Head of department: Jürgen Erbacher (Church and Life Catholic)
and Reinold Hartmann (Church and Life Protestant)
Contact for international acquisitions and coproductions:
Jürgen Erbacher and Reinold Hartmann

Well-produced documentaries on biblical and archaeological themes.

Examples

Church and Life Protestant

10 facts about Christianity with Petra Gerster | 45'; 2017
The Luther Tribunal, docudrama | 89'; 2017
A glimpse of eternity? – Death and beyond | 45'; 2020

Church and Life Catholic

Woman, Power, Church | 45'; 2021
The Ten Commandments – The Decalogue today | 45'; 2021
Living with passion – The Passion Plays in Oberammergau | 45'; 2022

ZDF Department of **Science & Technology**

This department is responsible for scientific and natural science content on ZDF. For the “Terra X” series, the department produces six episodes a year in the “Fascination Earth” series, and two episodes a year in the “The Big Questions” series presented by Professor Harald Lesch. Moreover, the department creates 12 episodes a year for the scientific format “Lesch’s Cosmos” with Professor Harald Lesch and produces weekly videos for the “Terra X – Lesch & Co” YouTube channel.

Lesch's Cosmos

Slot: Tuesday, 10:45 p.m. | 12 x 28'

30 – 50 % commissions,
50 – 70 % ZDF in-house productions

Head of department: Tobias Schultes
Contact for international acquisitions and coproductions:
Tobias Schultes and Hanna Kotarba

Contents

The science show with Professor Harald Lesch (12 x 28'). Topics of current, potentially current and future relevance from the fields of natural science and technology are presented in an understandable and appealing way from a scientific perspective. Visually powerful films and sophisticated animations provide insights into complex correlations – also for non-specialists – and offer orientation in an increasingly complex world. Presenter Harald Lesch, Professor of Astrophysics at Munich's Ludwig Maximilian University and associate lecturer for Natural Philosophy at the Munich School of Philosophy, builds bridges between classical disciplines and illustrates how scientific, philosophical and psychological aspects of the topics are interrelated

Examples

Crypto, Bitcoin & Co. – Revolution or Speculation? | 28'

Those who invest in cryptocurrencies can become rich with minimal effort – or so the theory goes. Cryptocurrency is supposed to give us more power over our assets, without the influence of banks. Even saving is supposed to be worthwhile again. What is behind the promises? How does the technology work? Prof. Harald Lesch goes in search of answers in the crypto-cosmos.

At the Frankfurt School of Finance and Management, he meets Prof. Philipp Sandner. Sandner is researching what influence cryptocurrencies and blockchain will have on our future financial system. Is digitally generated money the natural next step in an increasingly digitalising society? Bitcoin mining centres are springing up in Norway. They serve to verify and secure bitcoin transactions. Based on 100 % renewable energy. Is environmentally friendly mining, the creation of digital money, possible? Or just the exception in a fundamentally climate-damaging industry?

Prof. Harald Lesch follows the paths of old and new money and finds out what influence cryptocurrencies could have on our lives and how the technology works. Are Bitcoin and Co. the future of our money? Or is cash the only true standard?

Asteroids – Defence Mission in Space | 28'

Millions of asteroids are drifting through our solar system. Can we protect ourselves from an impact on Earth? Millions of asteroids are drifting through our solar system. The next impact is only a matter of time. But there are ideas for protecting us.

Around 65 million years ago, an asteroid impact led to a catastrophe: up to 75 per cent of the species that existed at that time, including most dinosaurs, became extinct. Even today, asteroids collide with the Earth time and again. Most recently on 15 February 2013 near the Russian city of Chelyabinsk. Impact craters all over the world testify to the fact that an asteroid could be on course to impact the Earth at any time. With the help of telescopes, researchers scan the sky in search of potentially dangerous asteroids. Around 1.1 million are currently known, and new ones are discovered every day. Fortunately, most of them do not pose a threat to the Earth.

Researchers are pinning their hopes on the DART space probe, which has been on its mission in space since autumn 2021. The probe of the US space agency NASA reached its destination at the end of September 2022: the double asteroid Didymos with its moon Dimorphos. Its mission: to crash



into Dimorphos and thus steer it off course. A dress rehearsal for Day X, when a dangerous asteroid could set course for Earth.

Harald Lesch shows what danger the millions of asteroids in our solar system actually represent – and how we could perhaps protect ourselves from a global killer.

Species Extinction – So what? | 28'

We are at the beginning of the biggest wave of extinction since the end of the dinosaurs – with far-reaching consequences for us all. Prof. Harald Lesch takes a look at the Earth's ecosystems and goes in search of solutions. The extinction of individual species is part of evolution. But experts assume that the worldwide extinction of species is currently progressing up to a hundred times faster than in the last ten million years. The fatal consequences often only become apparent when it is too late.

One example can be found in China's history books. In 1956, to save the grain harvest, the Chinese government ordered the mass culling of sparrows that damaged part of the grain crop. In the following years, around two billion sparrows were killed across the country. This set off a devastating chain reaction, because sparrows not only feed on grain, but also on locusts. As a result, the locust population exploded and decimated the crop more than ever before.

All over the world, complex natural networks have already been fatally damaged – also in Germany. Since the 1970s, species extinction has been on the agenda of international conferences time and again – and yet it has continued to gather momentum. Only now does the world seem to be slowly waking up. At the most recent conference on species protection in Montreal, the ambitious target was set of 30 per cent of the oceans and land protected by 2030.

It is not yet too late to do something about the worldwide extinction of species. Harald Lesch shows how scientific knowledge and a new mindset concerning the rights of nature can help.

ZDF Department of **Contemporary History**

The programmes produced by ZDF's Contemporary History division cover a spectrum of eras and events from the 20th century. Each of these films focuses less on historical processes, and more on personalising and bringing people in touch with history. The films depict human beings and their fates; they present the people who made history as well as what history has done to people – through biographical portraits, investigative documentary films, series, and docudramas.

Tuesday Documentary

Slot: Tuesday 8:15 p.m. | 10 x 45'

All programmes are ZDF in-house productions and commissions.

Head of department: Stefan Brauburger

Contact for international acquisitions and coproductions:

Stefan Mausbach

Hitler's Power | 3 x 45'

Based on recent research findings, the three-part “Hitler’s Power” puts previous assessments to the test and provides answers to questions that still haunt us: How could a “nobody” amass such a degree of power within the space of a few years? What made people unconditionally join the “Volksgemeinschaft” propagated by Hitler? Why did they continue to follow the dictator in the war of extermination even when it became self-destructive? How was it possible that the worst crime against humanity, the Holocaust, was committed on German soil?

Historical film footage, photos, documents, personal testimonies and analyses by renowned experts present the system of the “Führer’s state”, focusing on the relationship between ruler and people. Graphic novels portray key moments behind the scenes and illustrate political turning points.

A Day in GDR | 3 x 45'

The documentary three-parter tells GDR history from a special personal perspective that opens up surprising perspectives – for Germans from East and West. We look at three historical moments with different thematic references. They can be pinpointed to a specific date. However, the aim is not to reconstruct the respective day in meticulous detail. Rather, starting from the concrete situation, the filmmakers also want to look back and forward, reflecting on social, economic and political everyday life in the GDR, which is still part of the collective memory and affects people’s lives even today.

The three personal stories serve as a narrative thread, they lead into the world of the People-Owned Enterprises, into the Politburo as the centre of power of the SED state and to the inner-German border, which was seen as a manifestation of German division, but which also united people in East and West in the hope that the border barricades would one day be dismantled again.

Covid Century – The Pandemic Preparedness Dilemma | 90'

The coronavirus claimed millions of lives and brought the world to a temporary standstill. Was it really inevitable that the pandemic would take on such proportions?

The film highlights key moments in the first ten weeks after the outbreak of the new disease. They were crucial to the global spread of the pandemic. Jeremy Farrar, one of the world's leading researchers, says: "We could have stopped the pandemic."

After all, the blueprints for dealing with a pandemic had been in the drawers for years. US President George W. Bush had warned of the dangers of global pandemics as early as 2005 – and had crisis plans drawn up. Important basic research was initiated at the time. And indeed, scientists were already sounding the alarm in the first weeks of the SARS-CoV-2 outbreak in early 2020. Political decision-makers around the world could still have changed the course of history then with targeted and rapid reactions: with the outbreak in Wuhan, a race against time began.

Laut.stark.gleich.berechtigt – Vocal and Equal: Women's Hour | 3 x 45'

What have women in Germany since the 1950s accomplished and fought for? What obstacles do they still face today? And what does it take to achieve gender equality?

Today, Germany's women can become chancellors, football world champions or astronauts. They can marry women, develop vaccines against the



Covid Century–The Pandemic
Preparedness Dilemma | 90'

coronavirus and successfully run companies. They could have done all this in the past, too – if they had been allowed to. But women are still fighting for recognition, participation and financial equality.

It is time to take stock of what Germany's women have accomplished and fought for in the last decades, what obstacles they still face today and what it takes to achieve gender equality.

The three episodes are structured chronologically, but focus on topics that transcend time, such as responsibility for careers, children or contraception. Female experts also have their say and celebrities report on their personal experiences.

Ordinary Men – The “Forgotten Holocaust” | 45'

A good 75 years after the end of the main proceedings of the Nuremberg trial, the documentary takes a look at another trial that made history.

The Einsatzgruppen trial in Nuremberg is considered the “largest murder trial in history” against members of four death squads from the Security Police and SD (the security service of the SS).

Six million Jews were murdered during the Second World War. Four million died in the death camps, but two million people were killed in systematic mass shootings. The perpetrators came face to face with their victims. They shot men, women, children – day after day, obediently and assiduously, as if it were all in a day's work. Tens of thousands of Germans belonged to the mobile commandos of the Einsatzgruppen (task forces) and police battalions. Who were these men, how could they commit such murders?

Benjamin Ferencz, now one hundred and one years old, plays a central role in the film. The top American lawyer wrote world history, was chief prosecutor at the Nuremberg trials against leading members of the so-called “Einsatzgruppen”. The film is based on a current in-depth interview with the law professor.

Terra X History

Slot: Sunday 11:30 p.m. | 47 x 45'

In-house productions, commissions, coproductions and acquisitions.

Head of department: Michael Renz

Contact for international acquisitions and coproductions:

Michael Renz

Examples

Every Day Life in Hell – German Men at War | 45'

They were fathers, brothers, sons – and went to the Second World War as soldiers of the German Wehrmacht. The film tells how ordinary men experienced everyday life between life and death.

The experience of war shaped the lives of millions of German men. Some talked about it, many kept silent. This “experience generation” is no longer with us – but diaries and letters offer insights into their everyday war life, their thoughts and feelings. The frank testimonies and descriptions of three men, written directly in letters and diaries, offer unbiased insights into their wartime experiences from 1939 to 1945. Renowned historians such as Felix Römer and Sönke Neitzel explore the mentality of the wartime generation and analyse how German men coped with “everyday life in hell”.

In Moscows's Sights: The History of Ukraine | 45'

Was “modern Ukraine created entirely by Russia”, as Putin claims? “Terra X History” provides the historical background to the current invasion by Russian troops. The tsars had already rigorously cracked down on any manifestation of a separate Ukrainian identity. The language was banned, all efforts towards more independence were suppressed. It was not until the Russian Revolution that Ukraine set out on the path to independence.

War in Europe! – The Major Conflicts since 1945 | 45'

Russia's invasion of Ukraine is a cause of consternation – especially in Europe. Many considered their continent to be an “oasis of peace”. But how peaceful has it really been here since 1945? Even after the end of the Second World War, our continent has seen a whole series of wars and conflicts. Nationalism, racism and the quest for supremacy have led to a number of bloody conflicts. “Terra X History” goes in search of clues and takes a look at conflicts including the popular uprisings in the 1950s and 1960s in the GDR, Hungary and Czechoslovakia, the bloody civil war of the IRA and the war in Yugoslavia – and places them in their respective historical contexts. In a series of interviews with experts, the film analyses why, after the terrible experiences of the two world wars, wars continued to break out on European soil even after 1945.

Paparazzi – The Most Brazen Photographers in History | 45'

Many celebrities hate them – gossip magazines thrive on them: paparazzi. All over the world, they hunt down public figures, whether Hollywood stars or politicians. No one is safe from them.

For over 100 years, brazen photographers have been snapping unique moments. Many of them have triggered scandals and are unforgotten. “Terra X History” pieces together the puzzle and tells the story of famous photos and their image hunters.

Sisi's Heirs | 45'

Sisi, the headstrong Empress Elisabeth of Austria, is already a legend in her own lifetime: eternally young and eternally beautiful. In contrast, the lives of her four children are anything but fairytale-like. The real Empress Elisabeth is the exact opposite of how the “Sissi” films from the 1950s portray her. In reality, she put her own interests first throughout her life. Much to the chagrin of her children.

Fake News – Seven Powerful Propaganda Lies | 45'

Did Germany's President Lübke really plan concentration camps? Were RAF terrorists murdered in prison? "Terra X History" investigates the great fake news stories of history. Including the "Lisa case". The alleged kidnapping of a Russian girl in Germany triggered a diplomatic crisis. The "Protocols of the Wise Men of Zion", which have alleged the existence of a "Jewish world conspiracy" for over 100 years, are fake news. Or the so-called Horseshoe Plan, which described the alleged expulsion of Kosovo Albanians by Serbia and even justified a NATO military deployment. Even Brexit only succeeded because many Britons were happy to buy the story of an overpowering and over-costly EU. Is it all just political deception – deliberate false reports, designed to pull the wool over people's eyes? "Terra X History" investigates what is really true and what is fake.

Stalingrad. The Battle that Never Ends. | 45'

On 2 February 1943, the 6th army surrenders at Stalingrad. It is one of the great turning points of the Second World War. The long shadow of Stalingrad reaches into the present. The memory of the battle, with its heavy losses, shaped an entire generation on both the German and Russian sides. How did dying on the Volga become a myth after the end of the Second World War? Renowned historians explain the battle. Original sources allow the events to be relived. In this way, the documentary shows a multi-perspective overall picture of a world-historical event – from the lead-up to the course of the battle and the aftermath right up to the present day.

ZDF Department of **Current Affairs**

ZDF's Current Affairs department is committed to delivering exciting and controversial as well as entertaining documentaries. The more our lives become dominated by the Internet, the more our sense of reality, of how the world works, becomes that which is presented by social media. The Current Affairs department provides distinct insights into the world we live in – delivering analytical context in an increasingly complex world, while not shying away from popular genres such as consumer interest and royal affairs.

ZDFzeit

Slot: Tuesday 8:15 p.m. | 40 x 45'

80 % commissions,
15 % ZDF in-house productions,
5 % acquisitions per year.

Head of department: Caroline Reiher

Contact for international acquisitions and coproductions:
Caroline Reiher

Since 2012, “ZDFzeit” – the only prime time documentary series on German television – has produced hundreds of documentaries and covered a variety of domestic, international and historical issues including extremism, elections, inequality, tourism, healthy food, climate change or Auschwitz.

Examples

Powerful People | 15 x 45'

An ongoing series of high-end biographies exploring the life, achievements and controversies surrounding some of the most famous figures of our time, such as Emmanuel Macron, Vladimir Putin, Pope Francis, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, Mikhail Gorbachev and Angela Merkel.

Food Reports – With Nelson Müller | 5 x 45'

Where does our food come from? How is it produced? Are food standards upheld by manufacturers? And is organic food always better for us? The Food Reports with Nelson Müller give us a look into Germany's food industry and its international suppliers. On the menu in 2021: Food Report: Milk; Food Report: Wheat; Food Report: Pork; Food Report: Sugar; Food Report: Fat; Food Report: Proteins.

Tricks on the Food Industry | 44'

Product developer Sebastian Lege reveals the tricks of the food industry in more than 15 episodes. He uncovers hidden sugars in dishes sold to children. He reveals the secret of everlasting cakes. And he condemns unhealthy ingredients in highly processed foods. Always close to the supermarket, close to the consumer, confrontational with the industry and still highly entertaining. The tricks of the food industry achieve well above-average ratings – especially among young target groups.

Qatar Confidential – How a Nation Bought Football | 44'

Just a few days ahead of the World Cup kick-off in Qatar, ZDF World Cup moderator Jochen Breyer travelled to the host country. How did this desert nation manage to win the bid for the World Cup – even though the tournament was scheduled to be held during their blazing hot summer season? This film attempts to uncover the truth behind Qatar's successful coup.

Die Spur

Slot: Wednesdays 10:45 p.m. | 30' – 45'

90 % ZDF in-house productions and commissions,
10 % coproductions and acquisitions every year.

Head of department: Markus Wenniges

Contact for international acquisitions and coproductions:

Markus Wenniges

Die Spur is the name of the weekly documentary format, broadcast on Wednesdays at 10:45 p.m. – right after the Auslandsjournal.

Die Spur succeeds the former ZDFzoom as a weekly documentary format examining current social and political issues. Investigative research points at problematic developments and scandals. Journalists report on ground, accompanied by forensic analysis of data and visual investigations as a key element of storytelling.

Examples

Bunkers, Sirens, Supplies | 30'

How does the state protect us in the event of a crisis? The fear of war and crisis is back. Since Russia attacked Ukraine, food shortages and power outages have become real threat scenarios due to cyber attacks. The research shows that state civil defense and disaster control are not in good shape. Resources were cut down, bunkers were used for other purposes and sirens were dismantled. In discussions with experts and authorities, it becomes clear that the wishful thinking that there should never be another war is outdated. Germany urgently needs to make improvements in order to be able to survive a crisis or even a disaster with as little damage as possible to people's lives and health.

The Billion Dollar Business with Properties | 29'

Why housing is becoming unaffordable? It is one of the most pressing issues of our time: affordable housing. Many people want to buy or build real estate – but this is often unaffordable, especially in the cities. The square meter prices have risen rapidly in recent years – also because corporations sometimes earn millions with undeveloped properties in the best locations. The reporters reconstruct the fatal consequences of speculation, how land prices rise and thus the prices for housing. Her research shows that not only corporations are responsible for this, but also cities and municipalities, which made it possible for so much land to get into the hands of companies and investors in the first place.



ZDF Department of **Environmental Affairs**

This ZDF documentary series on environmental and sustainability issues covers a wide range of subjects relating to our planet, including conservation, biodiversity, development, energy, the green economy, climate change, and more. Viewing figures usually range from 800,000 to 1.6 million.

planet e.

Slot: Sunday 3:45 p.m. | approx. 36 x 30'

The majority of these programmes are ZDF in-house productions and acquisitions, and these programmes are also repeated on the digital channel, ZDFinfo. The majority of these programmes are custom productions.

Head of department: Cathérine Kipp

Contact for international acquisitions and coproductions:
Cathérine Kipp

Examples

The Sea: Food Source of the Future | 30'

Famine, overfishing of the oceans, environmentally harmful meat production – humanity is faced with the task of feeding a growing world population sustainably. Does the solution lie in the sea?

Researchers and young start-ups are focusing on food sources that have hardly been tapped so far: algae, jellyfish or even vegetables grown in underwater greenhouses are set to land on our plates in the future. The sea: protein source of the future?

Harvesting algae on the Norwegian island of Froya. What Maren Sather and her colleagues pull out of the water by the tonne is still unfamiliar to most Europeans as a source of food, but it offers numerous advantages. The dark green seaweed grows faster than any land plant, needs neither fresh water nor pesticides – and binds a lot of CO₂. From the nursery, where the sensitive seed is developed, to processing – everything takes place under one roof at the Norwegian seaweed farm for which Maren Sather works.

The dried seaweed is also exported to Germany. In Berlin, Deniz Ficicioğlu and Jacob von Manteuffel are working with their start-up company to boost demand for products made from seaweed. For example, they are experimenting with seaweed salads and vegan tuna substitutes made from

seaweed proteins, adapting them to European tastes so that more people will actually want to eat them. A number of supermarket chains have already included the high-protein food in their assortment on a trial basis.

The Leibniz Centre for Tropical Marine Research (ZMT) in Bremen is also looking for recipes for the “superfood of the future”. Marine biologist Dr Holger Kühnhold champions the jellyfish as the sustainable food of tomorrow. The cnidarians that traditionally have a bad reputation are among the few winners of the climate crisis. But are they tasty and healthy to eat? Dr Holger Kühnhold wants is conducting laboratory experiments to find out.

Italian Luca Gamberini is taking a completely different approach with his “Nemo’s Garden”. Off the coast of Liguria, he is growing herbs and vegetables in underwater greenhouses at a depth of eight metres. The amazing concept is primarily intended for regions of the world where heat and drought make classic farming difficult. From the perspective of professional diver Luca Gamberini, his invention has many advantages: heat waves, insect infestations and storms cannot endanger the harvest. Can his model help to solve the global food problem?



The Sea: Food Source of
the Future | 30'

Drought on the Rhine – The Consequences of the Water Shortage | 30'

Historic drought and low water levels on the River Rhine. What does this mean for Germany's most important waterway? planet e. shows the dramatic consequences for the environment, the economy and people.

The Rhine is the vital artery of Germany's inland waterway network. Around 80 per cent of all shipping freight is transported on this river. Low water levels pose a threat to industrial companies and vineyards, among others.

July 2022 – seldom has the Rhine had so little water so early in the year. Within just a few weeks, the water levels fall to historic lows. Freight shippers have to drastically reduce their loads, because if the vessel runs aground, it can end in disaster. Inland skipper Ralf Kiepe transports containers packed with a wide variety of goods from Rotterdam to Mannheim on his "MS Karl-Hein". At low water, this is an arduous business. Bottlenecks, logjams and a dangerously narrow and shallow shipping channel make manoeuvring difficult. Less cargo, longer travel times – an expensive business for the companies waiting for the containers on the "MS Karl-Hein".

Too little water also on the steep banks of the Rhine: in Oberwesel on the Middle Rhine, young winemakers Maximilian Lambrich and his sister Julia are struggling with the consequences of the extreme drought. To save their wine harvest, they water the young vines and even prune them back to ensure that the remaining vines survive. The winemaking family wonder what the future holds for viticulture if drought years become more frequent due to climate change.

Artificial irrigation is not an alternative for forestry manager Sebastian Schmitz and his colleague Alena Schmidt in the Koblenz forest. They are eagerly waiting for rain. The consequences of months of drought: a permanent, high risk of forest fires. But the foresters' worries don't stop there. Some of the traditional tree species are proving unsuitable for a forest in times of climate change.

planet e. shows the consequences of drought and water shortage for the environment, the economy and people. It takes a look into our future.



Drought on the Rhine – The
Consequences of the Water
Shortage | 30'

Blood Farms – Horses Suffering for Our Schnitzel | 30'

A hormone from the blood of pregnant mares makes pork production more efficient. Horses in South America and Iceland have to suffer so that Germans can eat cheap schnitzel.

The images are shocking: mares being beaten into stalls and having their blood drawn. Filmed on so-called blood farms in Argentina, Uruguay and Iceland. The mares have to suffer in order to keep the price of pork low in Germany.

Taken by the Swiss animal welfare organisation Animal Welfare Foundation the pictures document the torture of the mares. Their blood contains the hormone PMSG, which is used in piglet production. Obtained from South America and Iceland, it is processed in Germany and marketed in the form of hormone preparations. Prof. Stephanie Krämer, an animal welfare expert at the University of Giessen, has seen the shocking images from Argentina and Uruguay. She fears that the mares' poor condition is deliberate: "Basically, it's about working as efficiently as possible. And we have field reports that show the more emaciated the mares are, in other words, the worse their general condition is, including their nutritional status, the higher the PMSG level."

And yet the hormone is not absolutely necessary in order to produce pork economically. In the organic sector, its use is as a rule prohibited. But even those who farm pigs conventionally could work differently. Prof. Axel Wehrend conducts research on the reproduction of farm animals at the University of Giessen. "We looked for commercial farms that do without PMSG. And it turned out that many farms do just as well without PMSG as with PMSG."

More and more suppliers of PMSG preparations are now using PMSG from Iceland. But conditions there are hardly better than in South America – as new images from the Animal Welfare Foundation also show. Nadine Henke is a veterinarian and keeps sows herself – without PMSG. She sees a problem in the system of how farm animal medicines are marketed. The drugs find their way into the pigsties directly via vets, with many livestock breeders unaware of how the preparation is obtained. And as consumers, we have very little chance of discovering what is actually behind the pork we buy.

ZDF Department of **Das kleine Fernsehspiel**

As broadcasters of innovative films and young artists' work, "Das kleine Fernsehspiel" offers a weekly slot on Mondays around midnight. The department helps authors, directors, editors, actors and producers to make their first one to three films.

Das kleine Fernsehspiel

Slot: Monday 0:00 midnight | 40' – 120'

open slot; approx. 50 % commissions and 50 % coproductions and acquisitions every year, mostly with German production companies.

Head of department: Burkhard Althoff
Contact for international coproductions:
Burkhard Althoff

“Das kleine Fernsehspiel” commissions 26 new productions every year, ranging from fiction, documentaries and essays to transmedia programmes or hybrid forms and experimental pieces as well as documentary series and fictional mini-series. Recent coproductions include the feature documentary “Behind the Headlines”, the fictional graduation feature film “On Mothers and Daughters” or the documentary trilogy “Einzeltäter” on murders committed by far-right assassins in Munch, Halle and Hanau.

The department also runs a small production lab called Quantum, which creates pilot programmes and short-form mini-series for new TV formats, such as “Normaloland”, “Clashing Differences” or “Lu von Loser”.

Documentary profile

This department promotes ten outstanding personal and creative documentaries about everyday life, society and politics in Germany each year. In the case of international productions, it seeks filmmakers who can present interesting visual styles and offer insights into their particular country of origin.

Examples

Displaced – Deported, Dispelled, Driven Out | 88'

In “Displaced – Deported, Dispelled, Driven Out”, director Sharon Ryba-Kahn reconstructs her own family history and at the same time grapples with her own personal relationship to Germany.

Through the eyes of the third generation after the Shoah, Munich-born filmmaker Sharon Ryba-Kahn looks at herself, her family and her German environment. Probing into her family history leads Sharon to confront her own life and to pose the question to her non-Jewish environment of how to deal with the past. The search slowly reveals the gap between the two worlds. In this film Sharon Ryba-Kahn articulates what she has long only thought and felt. At the same time, she involves her German, non-Jewish friends in the conversations and realises that the desire to let bygones be bygones is above all the privilege of the perpetrators.

Finitely Infinite – The Dream of Eternal Life | 91'

The documentary film “Finitely Infinite -The Dream of Eternal Life” explores the question of whether we have to accept birth, illness and death as the inevitable, natural course of our lives and meets those visionaries who already want to take our evolution into their own hands.

People everywhere dream of overcoming death, of becoming immortal. French author Frédéric Beigbeder has also made such a promise to his young daughter. But how can this be achieved? Director Stephan Bergmann has tracked down the pioneers of transhumanism in the USA. They are willing to be frozen, to be prepared with transplanted machines, to be injected with altered genes or to digitise their personalities. Between delusion and reality, a possible future unfolds.



Displaced – Deported,
Dispelled, Driven Out
88'

Solastalgia | 68'

This hybrid documentary by Marina Hufnagel deals with climate activism and the “Fridays For Future” generation.

For the fictional protagonist Edda (24) it is incomprehensible why more is not being done against climate change. She studies ecology and supports the “Fridays for Future” environmental movement with great enthusiasm. But after years of protesting, she feels increasingly powerless in the face of policymaking. She moves to the North Sea island of Pellworm on a six-month internship. Here, Edda meets the real protagonist of the film Sophie (22), who has grown up on the island and hopes one day to take over her father’s farm. But the effects of climate change have long been felt on Pellworm, too – it’s either too hot or it rains too much. In some places, the island is one metre below sea level. That’s why Sophie has filed a constitutional complaint in Karlsruhe against the federal climate protection law that was passed. Sophie is optimistic: she believes her constitutional complaint will be upheld and that ways will be found to save the island.

ZDF Department of **Sports**

The reports and documentaries produced by the ZDF sports department cover a broad spectrum and go beyond classic results reporting. From emotional portraits to accompanying an entire competition – also beyond the end of a season. The programmes aim to make every facet of sport tangible, in victory and defeat, as well as in its relevance for fans and society.

Sports

Slot: Sunday, 5:10 p.m., Sportstudio Reportage & sportstudio.de

Head of department: Yorck Polus

Contact for international acquisitions and coproductions:

Thomas Fuhrmann and Fabian Farwick

sportstudio reportage extra, 31.01.21 | 43'

It has finally been a dream-come-true story. For the first time, a German sailor gets to the starting line of the most challenging sailing race in the world. Single-handedly, non-stop around the world. The rest of the sports world had been stopped in its tracks by the pandemic lockdowns. So the whole world was able to follow the race.

Boris Herrmann ventured where we weren't allowed to go. ZDFsportstudio reportage decided to cover the race in 11 episodes, every Sunday on air, and after the finishing line was crossed, we summarised the epic race as a documentary.

Fascinating pictures from the Southern Ocean, dramatic incidents far away from civilisation, unbelievable rescue actions, heroic efforts to handle the boat in storms and huge waves. And a skipper, Boris Herrmann, who shared all his experiences and his emotions with the rest of the world, which was locked down at home.

Finishing the Vendée Globe in fifth place, he wrote a new chapter of sailing history in Germany.



sportstudio reportage extra:
Vendée Globe – in 80 Tagen
um die Welt | 43'

3sat

3sat, the European satellite programme that broadcasts in German, is a co-venture between four public broadcasting companies from Germany (ZDF and ARD), Austria (ORF) and Switzerland (SRF). Mainly concentrating on cultural programming, 3sat presents only the best productions supplied by the four partners. Most of these films, fiction as well as documentaries, are first featured by one of the four 3sat partner channels.

Documentary film time

Slot: Monday 10:30 p.m. | 45 x 75' – 100' / 12 premieres

90 % coproductions mostly with German, Swiss and Austrian production companies, 10 % acquisition.

Head of department: Katya Mader

Contact for international acquisitions and coproductions:
Katya Mader

Although it presents all kinds of documentary formats, 3sat gives priority to outstanding documentaries made by directors and producers living in Germany, Austria and Switzerland. This slot features personal, creative documentaries in the German language on any subject.

Documentary profile

The majority of documentaries shown on 3sat are supplied by the channels mentioned above. However, about 10 % of the documentaries shown on 3sat are acquisitions. Documentaries produced or acquired by 3sat tend to focus on original themes that are not usually seen on other TV channels. In prime-time documentaries on culture and society, 3sat looks at things from new perspectives and provides unusual insights.



Examples

The Indomitable | 102'

The Indomitable (Die Unbeugsamen) tells the story of women in the Bonn Republic who literally had to fight like real pioneers for their participation in the democratic decision-making processes against success-obsessed and officially drunk men. Undaunted, ambitious and with infinite patience, they followed their path and defied prejudice and sexual discrimination. Politicians from back then have their say today. Her memories are funny and bitter at the same time, absurd and at times terrifyingly topical. The documentary filmmaker and journalist Torsten Körner (“Angela Merkel – The Unexpected”) has succeeded in creating an emotionally moving chronicle of West German politics from the 1950s to reunification, intertwined with partially unseen archive cuttings. The images he has found unfold a force that allows cinema to be rediscovered as a place of political self-assurance. An insightful contemporary document that makes an unmistakable contribution to the current discussion.

Zuhur’s Daughters | 88'

After escaping the war in Syria, a family learns to negotiate their new lives in Germany. But when the siblings begin to explore their transgender identities within their newfound freedom, their parents push back hard as they cling to strict religious and cultural ideologies.

Aware – Glimpses of Consciousness | 102'

What is consciousness? Is it in all living beings? What happens when we die? And why do we seem to be hardwired for mystical experience? In these times of existential crisis, there has been an explosion of research into consciousness – and scientists are confronting the Big Questions. AWARE follows brilliant researchers, approaching the mystery from radically different perspectives, from within and without: through high-tech brain research and Eastern meditation, by scientifically exploring inner space through psychedelic substances and by investigating the consciousness of plants.

Current affairs on Wednesday

Slot: Wednesday 8:15 p.m. | approx. 10 first runs x 45

Head of department: Wolfgang Aull

Contact for international acquisitions and coproductions:

Wolfgang Aull

During the prime-time slot on Wednesday at 8:15 p.m. / 9:00 p.m., 3sat broadcasts high-quality documentaries on current affairs on society, politics and history. The programmes take on current issues and new themes, offering viewers a fresh perspective on the world. The objective is to explore the intricacies of the subjects covered and place these within a broader cultural context. The aim is to inform and inspire audiences through drama.

Examples

The Dementia Challenge – New Approaches to Care | 45'

Caring for elderly people with dementia is a growing social problem. How can those affected – sufferers and relatives alike – be helped to lead a fulfilling life? In light of rising case numbers in all German-speaking countries, innovative strategies are needed. These should be designed both to protect the self-determination of those challenged by dementia and offer support and relief to caregivers and relatives. The documentary “Problemfall Demenz – Neue Wege in der Pflege” presents alternative projects that show how this can succeed.

Turning Point – The War and the Pandemic | 45'

After two years, the coronavirus still hasn't gone away, but now one crisis has been joined by another: the war in Ukraine. There's no denying that the pandemic is still headline news. But the war has made it less important – and before that less terrifying. We have learned to live with the pandemic, Covid is part of the new normal. The focus in politics is shifting to a new possible threat, which asks: Are we on the brink of a world war? Are we equipped to deal with these new challenges? How will they change our lives – and us? And: Have we learned from the pandemic for the next crisis? The film "Zeitenwende – der Krieg und die Pandemie" explores these and other questions.

Show of Force for the Climate – Ways Out of the Crisis | 45'

The Ukraine war made it imperative to end our dependence on Russian gas. Since it broke out, social support for the German government's plan to step up the use of renewable energy sources has been growing.

New ideas and models for decentralised energy supply are emerging across the country and are encroaching on the business sectors served by the major energy companies. What chances do they have to develop? How great is the fear of change posed by the energy transition?

WissenHoch2

Science on Thursday

Slot: Thursday 8:15 p.m. | approx. 25 first runs x 45'

70 % commissions,
30 % coproductions and acquisitions every year.

Head of department: Catrin Powell
Contact for international acquisitions and coproductions:
Katharina Finger

The prime-time 45' documentary slot shows science at its best. The range of themes is broad, from outer space to the workings of our brain cells. The aim of the programme is to inspire a wide audience to take interest in the latest scientific findings, be they about food conservation or the use of robots in modern warfare. Even though they cover only 'serious' science, the approach of the documentaries is not didactic or dull, and instead they explore surprisingly new ways of showing and explaining difficult issues. The science documentary slot on Thursdays is followed by a 60' talk show slot which picks up the topic of the documentary and explores it in further depth. The science documentary is therefore looking for topics that are still strongly relevant in our modern society.

Examples

mRNA – Hype or Hope? | 45'

What potential does mRNA technology really have? What are the risks? What have scientists learned from the coronavirus pandemic? Is mRNA technology the new wonder weapon of medicine – or just a load of hype?



mRNA – Hype or Hope?
45'

Life in Space – The Discovery of Exoplanets | 45'

NASA firmly expects that a planet with oxygen in its atmosphere will soon be found – a direct indicator of life in space! Around 5,000 exoplanets are already known, with more being discovered every day. Life may be possible on them.

18+

Slot: 6 premieres per year | 30' – 45'

Head of department: Katya Mader

Contact for international acquisitions and coproductions:

Katya Mader

The 18+ slot shows documentary series.

Contents

Various subjects: personal, creative documentary films

Example

Ab 18! – Following Valeria | 33'

At the beginning of the Russian attack on Ukraine, Valeria becomes the face of the young war generation through sarcastically humorous TikTok videos. Valeria's story not only shows how a young generation, which primarily looks at reality through the lens of their smartphones, perceives the war and its consequences, but also tells how the initial interest in the events of the war and solidarity with the refugees are diminishing.



Ab 18! – Following Valeria
33'

more

3sat Culture

Slot: Saturday 7:20 p.m. | 37'

Head of department : Anne Reidt

Contact for international acquisitions and coproductions:

Margarete Janikowski

Culture is an important component of processes and debates within society – something which is borne out by the cultural documentaries (37') broadcast by 3sat on Saturdays at 7:20 p.m. They take a discursive approach and illuminate important topics in a feuilleton-style. The documentaries are in-house or commissioned productions.

In 2022 and 2023 we focused several times on the topic of Ukraine. We accompanied the Ukrainian photographer Yuri Kozin on his return to his destroyed homeland (OT: “Zurück in die Ukraine – Die Rückkehr des Fotografen Juri Kosin” Back to Ukraine – The return of photographer Yuri Kozin), took a closer look at what Ukrainian identity actually is (OT: “Kreative im Krieg – Die Verteidigung der ukrainischen Identität” Creatives at war – Defending Ukrainian identity) and experienced artists at war in vivid reports (OT “Kunstfront – Ukrainische Kulturschaffende im Ausnahmezustand Art front – Ukrainian cultural creatives in a state of emergency”). We reported on the struggle of courageous Iranian women (OT: “Frau. Leben. Freiheit? Warum die Frauen im Iran so stark sind” Woman. Life. Freedom? Why women in Iraq are so strong) and continue to follow the traces and investigations in the trial about the spectacular heist in the Dresden Green Vault (OT: “Museumsdiebe auf Beutezug. Der Dresdner Juwelenraub und seine Folgen” Museum thieves on the rampage. The Dresden jewellery heist and its aftermath). The extensive and controversially discussed topic of the restitution of works of art is reflected in the latest production OT: “Einmal Raubkunst und zurück – Restitution im Fadenkreuz der Weltpolitik” Looted artworks returned – Restitution in the crossfire of world politics.

ARTE

ARTE, the French-German cultural channel, is a joint venture between the French broadcaster ARTE France, the German public broadcasters ZDF and ARD and ARTE GEIE, with headquarters in Strasbourg. ZDF supplies approximately 1,358 hours of programming to ARTE every year as part of its participation agreement, of which 29 % are new productions – coproductions involving ZDF – and premiering on TV in both Germany and France via ARTE. Documentaries represent about 40 % of ARTE’s total programming, or approximately 3,350 hours annually. In 2022, the entire ARTE programme consisted of approximately 46 % coproductions, around 19 % acquisitions and about 20 % commissioned productions.

ARTE Discovery

Slot: Monday to Friday, 4:30 p.m. | 43'

Head of department: Michael Gries

Contact for international acquisitions and coproductions:

Ann-Christin Hornberger and Petra Boden

The early evening slot held by ARTE Découverte hosts documentary series which are among the best national and international coproductions around in terms of content, quality and technical expertise. These are aimed at a family audience. ARTE Découverte is a regular showcase for the best series relating to travel, nature, wildlife and science. The purpose is to draw viewers into these diverse and highly attractive worlds.

Re:/ARTE Regards

Slot: Monday to Friday, 7:40 p.m. | 32'

Head of department: Christoph Caron

Contact for international acquisitions and coproductions:

Frederic Ulferts and Martin Ehrmann

In just half an hour, “Re:” tells stories of people who represent a single aspect of a wider European issue. Zooming into the micro level, these stories make it easier to grasp the issues that are moving Europe. Each episode forms a closed narrative arc and interacts closely with the reality of these people’s everyday lives. The aim is to address the themes that are shaping Europe with calm objectivity, through concrete examples, to further the understanding of issues and explore solutions.



ARTE Regards “Re: Flat-Sharing with a Centenarian”

“La Lucarne” – Auteur Documentaries

Slot: Monday late evening, no fixed length

Head of department: Rebecca Gross

Contact for international acquisitions and coproductions:

Kathrin Brinkmann

A late-night documentary programme featuring films that surprise both visually and in terms of content. The auteur films shown in this slot should have a distinct personal style; personal, poetic, offbeat, brazen and edgy films that may also cross documentary boundaries, films that are generally only screened at festivals. ARTE shows films by authors who present the world in original and surprising ways.

Tuesday's Theme

Slot: Tuesdays at prime time | 90' or 2 x 52', 52'

Head of department: Christoph Caron

Contact for international acquisitions and coproductions:

Susanne Mertens and Türkan Schirmer

Thema du mardi is the network's weekly cover story and concentrates particularly on investigative features and scientific documentaries. The programme examines current affairs from a European and global perspective, and provides the information viewers need to form their own opinions. It covers anticipated, yet under-reported social, political, economic and environmental issues that are shaping the world we live in. The key focus is on topics that concern and affect viewers in both countries.



Tuesday's Theme "The Night
the Flood Came – Protocol
of a Climate Catastrophe"

History

Slot: Tuesday, prime time or late evening | 52', 2 x 52', 3 x 52', exceptionally 90'

Head of department: Christoph Caron

Contact for international acquisitions and coproductions:

Miriam Carbe and Martin Ehrmann

Histoire depicts the history of the 19th and 20th centuries, including contemporary 21st century history, and analyses major topics in political, economic and social history. By placing the highlights in a historical context, it gives viewers the elements necessary for a better understanding of today's world. The use of cinematic archives and reports by contemporary witnesses and historians is combined with photos, documents, reenactments, computer animations and excerpts from feature and television films.

Geopolitics

Slot: Tuesday, late evening | 52', exceptionally 90'

Head of department: Christoph Caron

Contact for international acquisitions and coproductions:

Frederic Ulferts and Miriam Carbe

This slot compiles and analyses political, geopolitical, socio-political and economic questions and phenomena across Germany, France, Europe and the world. The objective is to provide viewers with a deeper understanding of the broader contexts and interconnecting influences that shape current affairs. The main focus is on under-reported topics affecting the world today and those which raise major political, economic and social questions. The slot is open to both classic documentaries and new documentary formats.



Geopolitics “Theatre of Violence”

Society

Slot: Tuesday, late evening | 52'

Head of department: Christoph Caron

Contact for international acquisitions and coproductions:

Türkan Schirmer

This slot is dedicated to topics and questions from the everyday lives of the audience. The focus is on people whose personal stories point beyond themselves and relate to social conditions. Stories from the everyday lives of viewers, preferably in Germany, France and Europe are told from an individual perspective, while having relevance for society as a whole. Sociological, political and economic analyses are no more than mere observations. The slot differs from Theme and Geopolitics through the exclusion of sociological, political, economic analyses and investigative documentaries.

Big Format Documentary

Slot: Wednesday, prime time or late evening | 90'

Head of department: Rebecca Gross

Contact for international acquisitions and coproductions:

Sabine Bubeck-Paaz and Susanne Mertens

This time slot is the network's documentary highlight on Wednesday evenings. These documentaries present strong stories on a wide variety of topics and are characterised by unusual structure and distinctive cinematography. Directors present topics from around the world, ensuring fascination and emotional stimulation by offering a different perspective on people and their circumstances.

Cultural Documentary

Slot: Wednesday late evening | 52'

Head of department: Rebecca Gross

Contact for international acquisitions and coproductions:

Rebecca Gross

Documentaire culturel is intended to arouse curiosity and invite reflection. In view of the programming slot, it connects depth of content with a high entertainment value. The slot is devoted to contemporary and classical cultural work, ideas, art, literature and cinematic culture from Europe and around the world. It broaches the issues of cultural aspects, currents and trends from all areas of cultural life. It also deals with current references to cultural heritage. The cultural documentary also picks up complex topics, as long as the approach to the topic remains accessible – on the level of both content and cinematic realisation.



Cultural Documentary "The Art in War"

Thursday Documentary Prime time

Slot: Thursday, prime time | 43' or 52'

Head of department: Michael Gries

Contact for international acquisitions and coproductions:

Petra Boden

The documentaries in the Thursday prime time slot stand in clear contrast to the films in the “History” (Tuesday) and “Adventure” (Saturday) slots.

The issues covered are characterised by a high degree of topical relevance and popularity. The aim is to highlight significant historical events, changes, developments and their impact, to create a contextual link to the present with a view to the protagonists and the respective spirit of the time. The topics come from the annals of recent history, the ‘collective memory’, popular science and viewers’ own life experiences.

Pop Culture Documentary

Slot: Friday late evening | 52'

Head of department: Rebecca Gross

Contact for international acquisitions and coproductions:

Rebecca Gross

The Pop Culture slot is devoted to the protagonists of popular and mass culture from the 1960s to the present day. Music, cinema, fashion, comics, bestsellers, youth culture and Internet culture all have their place here. Themes relating to the avant-garde or subcultures are only picked up if they are a phenomenon of mass culture. This is a highly informative and entertaining slot. It is emotional and provocative, and identifies with its viewers. The documentaries analyse, provide context and decode mainstream phenomena. There is an element of surprise, with new aspects revealed and unexpected angles adopted. When tackling subcultures, the documentaries arouse curiosity in an unfamiliar issue by pursuing a narrative that is as catchy and comprehensible as possible. The slot definitely welcomes portraits of figures in pop culture and character-driven films, with a preference for stand-alones.

The Human Adventure

Slot: Saturday, prime time | 2 x 52'

Head of department: Michael Gries

Contact for international acquisitions and coproductions:

Dr. Peter Allenbacher

L'Aventure humaine is designed for a broad family audience and uses re-enactments to tell the stories of past human civilisations, their history, development, achievements, lifestyles and belief systems. Key players, periods and events in history may all figure in the stories, alongside the scientific, technical and artistic discoveries that were milestones in the history of mankind on our planet up to the 19th century. Films shown in the slot are based around a strong dramatic structure, onto which the required elements of observation and information are grafted. The programme features character-driven stories that excite the curiosity and expectations of viewers from the start. An inventive and spectacular visual approach backs up a fluent, well-paced storyline, with sustained dramatic tension throughout. The content is backed up by the expertise and restraint of acknowledged experts, who provide the indispensable guarantee of the programme's integrity and conformance to historical and scientific standards.

Far Away places

Slot: Saturday, 7:30 p.m. | 43' or 53'

Head of department: Michael Gries

Contact for international acquisitions and coproductions:

Linde Dehner and Ann-Christin Hornberger

The Far Away Places slot offers an authentic and unbiased view of lifestyles, traditions, religions and daily life around the globe. This series allows viewers to get closer to foreign cultures and societies, often non-European, along with their specific and often seemingly exotic traditions, values and beliefs. These documentaries focus on getting to know people and the social environments that shape them.

Science

Slot: Saturday, 9:45 p.m. | 52'

Head of department: Michael Gries

Contact for international acquisitions and coproductions:

Marita Hübinger and Linde Dehner

This is a time slot for documentaries that give a dynamic view of scientific subjects. They are designed to arouse curiosity and are in tune with the daily reality of viewers, allowing them to offer the kind of scientific awareness which we need to understand the world around us today. The films are aimed at a broad public with a general interest, rather than at a niche of experts.

The documentaries will be firmly in touch with current developments, showing scientists at work both in the laboratory and in the field. They will explain the most recent discoveries and research projects, placing them in context with reference to their social and ethical implications, as well as to possible negative and positive consequences. They will range across every aspect of humankind, our universe, the progress achieved thanks to newly acquired knowledge and major technological innovations. The slot may also be suitable for science-based investigations into current problems affecting the general public (health and safety issues, etc.). The subject matter may come from all fields of science. On the other hand, it will be important to avoid tackling difficult areas of science in a purely theoretical fashion. The humanities also represent an unsuitable subject area.

The narration will be mainly neutral in tone, though it may occasionally be tinged with humour; the style should never be over-dramatic or enticing. The visual style must be clear and attractive, using graphics, archive material and excerpts from films to assist in clarifying more complex content. Storylines will be followed in relation to a clearly stated and identifiable theme. Guests and interviewees will be acknowledged experts, vouching for the scientific credibility of the content. At the same time, they must be capable communicators, able to explain complex items in a comprehensible way.

The directing style is ambitious, in keeping with the demands of international standards in the field. Given that the chief priority is to inform, not just to achieve an effect, re-enactment sequences will only be used where strictly necessary. Author films and reportage are not suitable for this time slot.



Science "Naked – Sex and Gender"

Sunday Cultural Documentary

Slot: Sunday, 5:30 p.m. | 52'

Head of department: Rebecca Gross

Contact for international acquisitions and coproductions:

Rebecca Gross

These documentaries allow viewers, even without previous knowledge, to discover for themselves great works of music or key cultural events and important figures from other cultural sectors. The time slot addresses contemporary and classical cultural achievement, as well as art and culture in Europe and around the world. It covers cultural facts, movements and trends from the areas of painting, music, performing arts, literature, cinema, photography, architecture and design, and deals with current issues relating to cultural heritage. The slot has an introductory and accessible tone, suitable for all interested viewers. It aims to arouse viewers' curiosity.

Documania

Slot: Sunday, 10:00 p.m. | 52'

Head of department: Rebecca Gross

Contact for international acquisitions and coproductions:

Rebecca Gross

The Documania slot during the second phase of Sunday evening prime time targets a broad family audience with an assumed lower age limit of around 45 years. It centres on figures that are well known in both France and Germany and whose life or work is typical of a particular field (especially cinema or the fine arts) or a cultural or historical period from the mid-20th century onwards. While this person's life will always be situated within a broader context, the focus is on their personal story. Newly discovered facts and recent images may cast that story in a new light.

Terroir Cuisine

Slot: Sunday evening | 26'

Head of department: Michael Gries

Contact for international acquisitions and coproductions:

Ann-Christin Hornberger

With “Terroir Cuisine”, ARTE, the European cultural channel, goes back to the roots of the European art of cooking: to the individual regions where, to this day, produce from fields, pastures and fishing grounds is prepared and enjoyed.

“Terroir Cuisine” is conceived as a 30-minute, mono-themed documentary. It clearly sets itself apart from the usual cooking shows with their sterile studio atmosphere. “Terroir Cuisine” aims to allow audiences to experience with their senses what cuisine means to people in these regions. Whether farmers, restaurateurs, winegrowers or simple home cooks, the camera accompanies them as they harvest, buy, cook, enjoy and celebrate.

Musica

Slot: Sunday late evening | 52'

Head of department: Rebecca Gross

Contact for international acquisitions and coproductions:

Christopher Janssen and Rebecca Gross

Musica covers a broad spectrum of music. The documentary format acquaints viewers with a musician, choreographer or dancer. It might take the form of a portrait, observe someone at work or respond to a topical creative factor and how it relates to the musical or dance performance. The slot is also open to jazz and hybrid genres. Musica programmes introduce a non-specialist audience to the subject matter. Information about the subject needs to be clear and understandable.



Musica "Obsessed with
Light"

ZDFinfo

ZDFinfo, ZDF's digital channel for documentaries on history, politics and the knowledge society, demonstrates 24 hours a day its clear brand focus on knowledge dissemination. The concept includes bundling content and presenting it to audiences in long programme slots. In order to realise this, ZDFinfo cooperates with the partners in ZDF's programming family – with the editorial offices of ZDF's main channel, with ARTE, 3sat, phoenix und funk – thus getting the most out of existing synergies. ZDFinfo provides a broad range of information reporting in some 200 commissioned and coproductions, as well as the German premieres of 400 international documentaries a year.

With its documentary formats, ZDFinfo is the most successful information category in the ZDFmediathek in terms of viewing time. ZDFinfo also delivers on its premise and promise of “participatory television” on social media platforms.

History & Contemporary History

Contact for international acquisitions and coproductions:
Annette Harlfinger and Sonja Rode

Daily during prime time: series on 20th century history, history of the earth, history of mankind and historic crimes. Other popular eras are the Ancient World, the Middle Ages and Industrialisation.

The series focuses on key turning points, influential and charismatic figures as well as legends and mysteries.

There is a particular focus on German history. Here, ZDFinfo is positioning itself more strongly as the commissioner of productions such as “The Abyss – Rise and Fall of the Nazis”, a ten-part series on the rise of National Socialism, the Second World War and the Holocaust. For the first time, this series takes the international emergence of Antisemitism into account, starting in the year 1914 and ending in the year 1946.

ZDFinfo is a coproducer of the six-part series “The SS”, which details the history of one of Hitler’s most powerful institutions, a state within a state that attracted young and ambitious Germans.

In 2022, the focus was on the ten-part production “Myths – The Greatest Mysteries of Humanity” which follows the emergence of the most popular myths of history, their origins and importance today.

A highlight in 2023 is the four-part series “Chernobyl” that tells the prehistory and aftermath of the nuclear catastrophe in April 1986. The main focus of the series is on the detailed reconstruction of the events on 26th April, the night in which one of the reactors in Chernobyl explodes, told by the engineers and commented on by Nicolai Steinberg whose investigations led to the rehabilitation of said engineers who were blamed for the accident – and are still seen as the sole culprits by the Russian Federation until this day.

Science

Contact for international acquisitions and coproductions:
Annette Harlfinger and Sonja Rode

Series about great inventions and the people behind them, but also everyday technology, architecture, biology and psychology.

ZDFinfo's approach to science is focused on everyday knowledge rather than new findings and in-depth science.

Climate change and environmental issues are part of ZDFinfo's coproduction portfolio.

In 2022, ZDFinfo coproduced the 3-part-series "Surviving Hothouse Earth" that shows how the climate has changed the history of earth and what the future of climate change holds for mankind.



Chernobyl

Society

Contact for international acquisitions and coproductions:
Michael Scheuch and Wolfgang Aull

Here we concentrate on people, with observations from everyday life in Germany, life stories and destinies, help and tips.

The range of themes is as varied and colourful as life itself. Films are produced in collaboration with zdf.reportage on the everyday realities of life for ordinary workers and those ostracised from society, including the homeless and drug addicts. On Location: Germany, presenter Aminata visits the poor and the rich in different cities.

Paulina Krasa, one of the most successful podcasters in Germany, takes on spectacular true crime cases in “Schuld und Sühne”.

The series “Blood ties – Clans in Berlin” shows the daily life in Arab family clans in Berlin and the spectacular crimes that are repeatedly committed from within them.

Current Affairs

Contact for international acquisitions and coproductions:
Michael Scheuch and Wolfgang Aull

Documentaries about commercial considerations, social issues and global players.

Investigative reporting and vital information about market trends, product development and purchasing patterns. The team searches extensively for current political and economic documentaries and produces exploratory documentaries on current German policy issues. In elaborate documentaries, the team deals, for example, with the merger of Bayer and Monsanto and the Wirecard scandal.

In six episodes, “Conspiracies – the Truth of Others” looks at UFO hunters, Qanon, Geheom alliances and aliens on Earth. How dangerous can these narratives become to democracy – was the storming of the Capitol in Washington just the beginning?

The team also provides the background to politics and economy with the new series “#WTF – What the Fact”. The first episodes are about how Putin made Germany dependent on Russian gas and what is true about the story that the coronavirus came from a Chinese laboratory.

Overview Programmmes

Time Slots

ZDF Department of History and Science:

History + Society

Sun	7:30 p.m.	42 x 45'	Terra X
Tue	10:15 p.m.	40 x 30'	37°
Sun	9:00 p.m.	50 x 30'	37°Leben

Holiday programmes (45')

Easter, Whitsun and Christmas	History + Society
Easter, Whitsun and Christmas	Church and Life Protestant
Easter, Whitsun and Christmas	Church and Life Catholic

ZDF Department of Science and Technology

Tue	10:30 p.m.	12 x 28'	Lesch's Cosmos
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ZDF Department of Contemporary History

Tue	8:15 p.m.	10 x 45'	Tuesday Documentaries
Sun	11:30 p.m.	47 x 45'	Terra X History

ZDF Department of Current Affairs

Tue	8:15 p.m.	40 x 45'	ZDFzeit
Wed	10:45 p.m.	30' – 45'	Die Spur

ZDF Department of Environmental Affairs

Sun	3:45 p.m.	36 x 30'	planet e.
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ZDF Department of Das kleine Fernsehspiel

Mon	0:00 a.m.	40' – 120'	Das kleine Fernsehspiel
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ZDF Department of Sports

Sun	5:10 p.m.	43'	Sportstudio Reportage
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3sat

Mon	10:30 p.m.	45 x 75' – 100'	Documentary Film Time
Wed	8:15 p.m.	10 x 45'	Current Affairs on Wednesday
Thu	8:15 p.m.	25 x 45'	Science on Thursday (WissenHoch2)
Once a year		6 x 30' – 45'	18+
Sat	7:20 p.m.	37'	Culture

ARTE

Mon – Fr	4:30 p.m.	43'	Arte Discovery
Mon – Fr	7:40 p.m.	32'	Regards
Mon	late evening	no fixed length	Auteur Documentaries
Tue	prime time	90' / 2 x 52' / 52'	Tuesday's Theme
Tue	p.t./l.e.	52' / 2 x 52' / 3 x 52' / 90'	History
Tue	late evening	52' / 90'	Geopolitics
Tue	late evening	52'	Society
Wed	p.t./l.e.	90'	Big Format Docu
Wed	late evening	52'	Cultural Documentary
Thu	prime time	43' / 52'	Thursday Documentary Prime Time
Fr	late evening	52'	Pop Culture Documentary
Sat	prime time	2 x 52'	Human Adventure
Sat	7:30 p.m.	43' / 53'	Far away Places
Sat	9:45 p.m.	52'	Science
Sun	5:30 p.m.	52'	Sunday Cultural Documentary
Sun	10:00 p.m.	52'	Documania
Sun	evening	26'	Terroir Cuisine
Sun	late evening	52'	Musica

ZDF Studios

Who we are

ZDF Studios is a commercial subsidiary of ZDF, one of the largest TV broadcasters in Europe. Founded in 1993 and headquartered in Mainz, Germany, the ZDF Studios Group operates more than 30 direct and indirect subsidiaries and affiliates in Germany, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom spanning TV production, distribution and services.

The parent company, ZDF Studios, is responsible for global programme distribution, realisation of international co-productions, acquisition of licences and merchandising of successful programme brands under its own name, for ZDF and third parties. ZDF Studios has the largest German-language programme inventory in the world and a constantly growing range of international productions, consisting of series and mini-series, television films, documentaries and children's programmes.

The companies of the ZDF Studios Group cover the entire value chain from the development of scripted and unscripted TV content to production, marketing and monetizing, including TV and streaming licences as well as merchandising and online rights.

The positioning of ZDF Studios as an integrated media company enables the development of innovative, outstanding and high-quality programmes and makes the Group an attractive workplace for German and international talent to flourish in a very inspiring and creative environment.

ZDF Studios's team of programme buyers cover all significant film and television markets throughout the world and negotiate the financial terms for all ZDF programme purchases and coproductions. For many years now the ZDF Studios buyers' team has enjoyed an excellent relationship with national and international distributors. In addition to fulfilling its mandate as a service provider for ZDF, ZDF Studios also secures programme licenses for its own distribution purposes.

Furthermore, on behalf of ZDF, ZDF Studios also negotiates licensing and coproduction agreements for the broadcasters that ZDF is associated with. These include the German-French culture channel ARTE as well as 3sat, Phoenix, the Children's Channel "Kinderkanal" and ZDF's digital sector, which combines zdfneo, zdfinfo and zdfkultur.

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