



**OHNE MICH** Germany 1992

**Plot description of Ohne Mich:**

An exploration of the revival of Nazi sentiment in Germany is the theme of the five short films gathered together in this anthology. In the first film, titled "Ohne Mich" (Without Me), the lead character, an aspiring documentary filmmaker named Dani Levy, tries to get some attention for his film about skinheads versus Turkish immigrants. However, as a Jewish lad in today's Germany, his fears for the future prompt him to move to the moon. The second film captures the spirit of triumphalism in the celebrations of the reuniting of Germany, and it titled "Short Circuit." It takes the wiring difficulties of Helmut Kohl's Leipzig speech as being prophetic of difficulties to come. The third film is a surrealistic consideration of the captivity of a documentary maker by a Hitler-loving couple, entitled "Sacred Cows." The penultimate film is titled "A Place, A Suicide," and shows the suicidal reaction of a newly crippled man to the taunt by a group of boys that "Hitler would have had you gassed." The final film is a documentary featuring interviews with punk rockers who were savagely beaten by Nazi-influenced skinheads, entitled "Victims, Witnesses." ~ Clarke Fountain, All Movie Guide

**Full Synopsis of New Germany:**

"New Germany" is a five-episode, five-director trip through a nightmare. Though segments are uneven in technical work and highly diverse in style, seen together they create one scary portrait of contemporary Germany. The unifying theme is the revival of Nazi violence. Though as heavy as bratwurst, it's a powerful, if not a pretty, picture, and accessible to TV auds everywhere.

Dani Levy wields an effective cudgel of self-irony in "Without Me," directing himself as "a little Jew with short legs" (his girlfriend's description) who lives in squalor while he attends film school (Wim Wenders cameos as a prof who falls asleep during screenings.) Levy's docu on skinheads fire-bombing Turkish houses goes unappreciated. Meanwhile, his mounting paranoia about his own safety leads him to literally move to the moon.

"Short Circuit" skillfully uses archival footage from Helmut Kohl's triumphal visit to Leipzig at the time the two Germanies reunited. By cutting this repertory material into a fanciful account of what was going on behind the scenes, director Gerd Kroske shows a heroic little man systematically sabotaging the wiring to interrupt Kohl's speech twice before he's caught. The effect is a comical presage of the problems to come.

Less clever and more overtly fictional is Uwe Janson's "Sacred Cows." He imagines a famed documaker kidnapped by a Hitler-loving couple who force him to film them while they do nasty things like mutilate his foot. The episode's bizarre tone of black comedy leaves the viewer scratching his head.

Two docu segments are the most powerful, because their ghastly non-fiction is the hardest to write off. Both suffer from heavy-handed treatment and are stuffed with repetition. Maris Pfeiffer's "A Place, a Suicide" is a sad elegy to Gunter Schirmer, a happy, bearlike man who struggled to pick up his life after losing a leg in a car accident. After some boys spit on him in his wheelchair, shouting that Hitler would have had him gassed, he kills himself. In Philip Groning's "Victims, Witnesses," an unseen interviewer talks to a young factory hand and his buddy, both punk rockers, who were attacked and nearly killed by neo-Nazi skinheads.

Technically, episodes vary from wobbly 8mm blown up to 35mm to the more refined lensing and staging of Janson's "Sacred Cows."

**Director:** Dani Levy(segment "Ohne Mich"), Philip Gröning (segment "Opfer Zeugen"), Uwe Janson (segment "Heilige Kühe"), Gerd Kroske (segment "Kurzschuß"), Maris Pfeiffer (segment "Ein Ort, ein Selbstmord")

**Neues Deutschland**

a k a New Germany

**Awards:**

**Director's Award of the Munich Film Festival for Dani Levy**

**Format:** 16 mm color & b/w

**Running time:** 100 min

**Running time Ohne Mich:** 21 Min

**Genre:** short film, episodic film

**Release Date:** June 29<sup>th</sup>, 1993, Munich, Filmfest. Reviewed at Alpe Adria Cinema festival, Trieste, Italy, Jan. 21, 1994. (Also in Rotterdam fest.)

**TV Airdate:** WDR 1994

**Cast:**

Joachim Król

Dani Levy (Simon Rosenthal)

Maria Schrader (Girlfriend)

**Nina Franoszek (Martial Arts Coach)**

Wim Wenders

Eva Krutina

Georg Tryphon

**Director:** Dani Levy

**Writer:** Dani Levy

**Cinematographer:**

Carl-F. Koschnick

**Production:** A Colon

Filmproduktion/WDR Cologne with Fool

Filmproduktion/Neue Sentimental

Film/Dokfilm Babelsberg/Philip Groning

Filmproduktion co-production.

**Producer:** Micha Terjung, Gerhard Schmidt