

PRESS KIT

RELEASE DATE: 2. OCTOBER 2014

A FILM FROM **SABINE GISIGER**
FEATURING **IRVIN D. YALOM**
PSYCHOTHERAPIST, WRITER & PROFESSOR EMERITUS OF PSYCHIATRY

Yalom's CURE

*A Guide to
Happiness*

DAS KOLLEKTIV FÜR AUDIOVISUELLE WERKE GMBH PRESENTS A FILM BY **SABINE GISIGER**
FEATURING **IRVIN D. YALOM** (PSYCHOTHERAPIST, WRITER, PROFESSOR EMERITUS OF PSYCHIATRY)
HEAD OF DRAMA **PHILIP DELAQUIS** CHIEF EDITOR **BARBARA WEBER** EDITOR **ANDREAS WINTERSTEIN**
CINEMATOGRAPHY **HELENA VAGNIÈRES** MUSIC & SOUNDDSIGN **BALZ BACHMANN - PETER BRÄKER**
SOUND RECORDIST **SAUL ROUDA** SOUND EDITING & MIXING **BASIS BERLIN / ANSGAR FRERICH**
ADDITIONAL CAMERA **MATTHIAS GÜNTER - TIM METZGER** ARTWORK **MATTHIAS GÜNTER** POSTPRODUCTION **STUDIO CINE PLUS**
IN CO-PRODUCTION WITH **SCHWEIZER RADIO UND FERNSEHEN / URS AUGSTBURGER - SRG SSR / SVEN WÄLTI**
MARIANNE JEGER - ROMAN VON SURY - RUTH WALDBURGER, VEGA FILM AG
WRITTEN AND DIRECTED BY **SABINE GISIGER** PRODUCED BY **PHILIP DELAQUIS** WORLDSALES **AUTLOOK FILMSALES**
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INTERNATIONAL STANDARD AUDIOVISUAL NUMBER ISAN 0000-0003-A2CC-0000-N-0000-0000-5
WWW.YALOMSCORE.COM

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FÜR AUDIOVISUELLE WERKE

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und Fernsehen

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FILM COOP

Synopsis

DAS KOLLEKTIV FÜR AUDIOVISUELLE WERKE GMBH

Presents a Film by SABINE GISIGER

Featuring IRVIN D. YALOM (Psychotherapist, Writer, Professor Emeritus of Psychiatry)

Head of Drama PHILIP DELAQUIS Chief Editor BARBARA WEBER

Editor ANDREAS WINTERSTEIN Cinematography HELENA VAGNIÈRES

Music & Sounddesign BALZ BACHMANN, PETER BRÄKER

Sound Recordist SAUL ROUDA Sound Editing & Mixing BASIS BERLIN / ANSGAR FRERICH

Additional Camera MATTHIAS GÜNTER · TIM METZGER Artwork MATTHIAS GÜNTER

Postproduction STUDIO CINE PLUS

in Co-Production with SCHWEIZER RADIO UND FERNSEHEN / URS AUGSTBURGER · SRG

SSR / SVEN WÄLTI · MARIANNE JEGER · ROMAN VON SURY

RUTH WALDBURGER, VEGA FILM AG

Written and Directed by SABINE GISIGER Produced by PHILIP DELAQUIS

Worldsales AUTLOOK FILMSALES

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International Standard Audiovisual Number ISAN 0000-0003-A2CC-0000-N-0000-0000-5

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Bestselling author, popular scholar and existentialist Irvin D. Yalom is one of the most influential living psychotherapists. This cinematic feature is more than a classic biography. Together with Dr. Yalom we travel in a existential journey through the many layers of the human mind while he shares his fundamental insights and wisdom. Dr. Yalom's books sold millions of copies worldwide and critics describe him as: mind-bending, stunning, inspiring, haunting, life-changing.

DAS
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FILM COOP1

Director's comments



The death of my father 13 years ago was a wake-up call for me. It was then that I realised that I too have only one life, that this life will have an end, and that I should make the most of it. Only: how often are we our own worst enemy, especially when it comes to relationships and love. How many times do we compulsively repeat the same patterns, how often do we react in a way that we do not even understand ourselves.

How often do we torment ourselves with conflicting thoughts and emotions. How often do we act contrary to our own best and that of others. I found it to be a great challenge to live in the present - a life not determined by the injuries of the past nor the fears of the future. Analytic psychotherapy and reading Yalom's books helped me on the journey to myself. My introduction to Yalom's world was "Love's ex-

ecutioner and other tales of psychotherapy".

In the prologue, Yalom describes a group exercise, in which he asks men and women who are "by no means desperate or needy, but successful, well-functioning people" to ask each other one single question: "What do you want?"

I shall quote the passage in more detail, because it contains the essence of his therapeutic experience: "The group members called out to those who are forever lost - dead or absent parents, spouses, children and friends:

"I want to see you again." "I want your love." "I want to know that you are proud of me." "I want you to know how much I love you and how sorry I am I never told you." "I want you back - I am so lonely." "I want the childhood I never had." "I want to be healthy - to be young again." "I want my life to mean something."

"I want to accomplish something. I want to matter, to be important, to be remembered." So much wanting. So much longing. And so much pain, so close to the surface, only minutes deep. Destiny pain. Existence pain. Pain that is always there, whirring continuously just beneath the membrane of life. Pain that is all too easily accessible."

Ultimately, Yalom says that it is a question of social conditions, personal character and financial means that determine whether someone enters into therapy. The suffering in life, however, is universal. We all repeatedly face the question of who are we, the question of what actually drives and motivates us, the question of what is the meaning of it all.

With "YALOM'S CURE", I wanted to make a film that effects on the viewers in the same cathartic way as the reading of Irvin Yalom's books effected on me - a film that inspires the audience to think about themselves and their own existence.

- Sabine Gisiger

Irvin D. Yalom

Irvin D. Yalom grew up in the 1930s as the son of Jewish-Russian immigrants from what is today known as Belarus. His parents ran a grocery store and later a liquor store in Washington DC, in the midst of a black neighbourhood.

Irvin's father, Benjamin, and his mother, Ruth, kept their store open long hours. The section of town was unsafe for outdoor play, and Irvin would regularly cycle to the Washington Public Library where he immersed himself in both fiction and nonfiction, coming to the conclusion that writing a good novel was the best thing a person could do in life.

Irvin's family was part of a close-knit Jewish circle from their home village of Cielcz, and his parents did not mingle with any of the other communities. "I was an outsider who wanted to join the new world culture," says Yalom.

Irvin was 15 and Marilyn Koenick 14 when they met at school. One thing they had in common was their deep love of books. "At 16, I already bet a friend that I would marry her," says Yalom. Irvin attended George Washington University and lived at home studying feverishly in order to gain admission to Medical School. At that time Medical Schools set a limit of 5% of

each class for Jewish students. Irvin spent one year at George Washington Medical School before transferring to Boston University Medical School.

In the meantime, Marilyn was studying at Wellesley College in Massachusetts and at the Sorbonne in Paris. When she graduated in 1954, the two of them married, and in 1956 they moved with their first child to New York, where Irvin interned at Mount Sinai Hospital and where they had their second child. In 1960, Irvin Yalom went to Baltimore where he did his psychiatric residency at John Hopkins, and Marilyn completed a doctorate in comparative literature, in addition to bearing a third child.

During his training, he found the two prevailing ideas of reference--psychoanalysis and biological psychology--to be inadequate. Instead, he began his philosophic education and studied the life-philosopher views on how we should live, and then began his own investigations into the field of existential psychotherapy. At the same time he had considerable exposure to interpersonal theory and used that in his ground-breaking work on group psychotherapy.

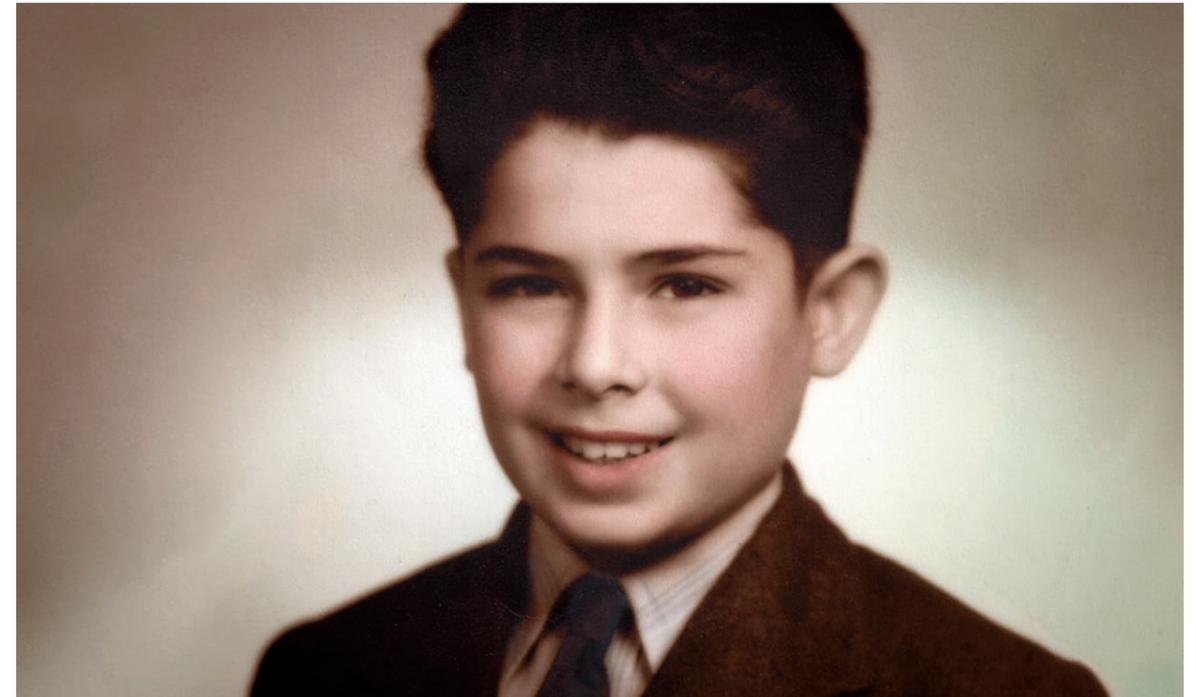
Between 1960 and 1962, Irvin served his re-

*"The more we know ourselves,
the better lives we can live.
And when we get into trouble,
very often what happens is:
there are parts of ourselves,
that we don't know very well."*

- Quote from "Yalom's Cure" - Theatrical Feature

“I do not like to work with patients who are in love. Perhaps it’s because of envy. I too crave enchantment. Perhaps it is because love and psychotherapy are fundamentally incompatible. The good therapist fights darkness and seeks illumination, while romantic love is sustained by mystery and crumbles upon inspection. I hate to be love’s executioner.”

– Zitat aus YALOM'S CURE



quired military duty as a captain and psychiatrist at the army hospital in Hawaii. Marilyn taught at the University of Hawaii. Subsequently, Irvin was recruited by Stanford University, and began his long career in the department of psychiatry. They had a fourth child in 1969.

At the age of forty, Irvin published his highly influential textbook, *The Theory and practice of group therapy*, now in its 5th edition and translated into a dozen languages.

Then he turned to his existential quest, and began to work closely with dying patients, namely women with metastasized breast cancer. Some of the patients, as the result of their encounter with mortality, learned how to live their life more fully. He never forgot a patient seen ear-

ly in his career who said: “What a pity that I had to wait till now, when I am riddled with cancer, to learn how to live.”

Working with cancer patients illuminated existential concerns and led to his second textbook, *Existential Psychotherapy*, also a classic. It has just been republished in numerous languages. The dedication on the first page reads “To Marilyn. For every reason”.

Existential Psychotherapy is not a separate ideological, psychotherapeutic school of thought for Yalom. Rather, he wants to increase all therapists’ sensibilities to existential issues. In Yalom’s opinion, the inner conflicts that torment us are not only attributable to the struggle with our unruly passions and our internalised traumatic memo-

ries, but are also always due to our confrontation with the basic conditions of existence, including death, search for meaning in life, isolation, and freedom.

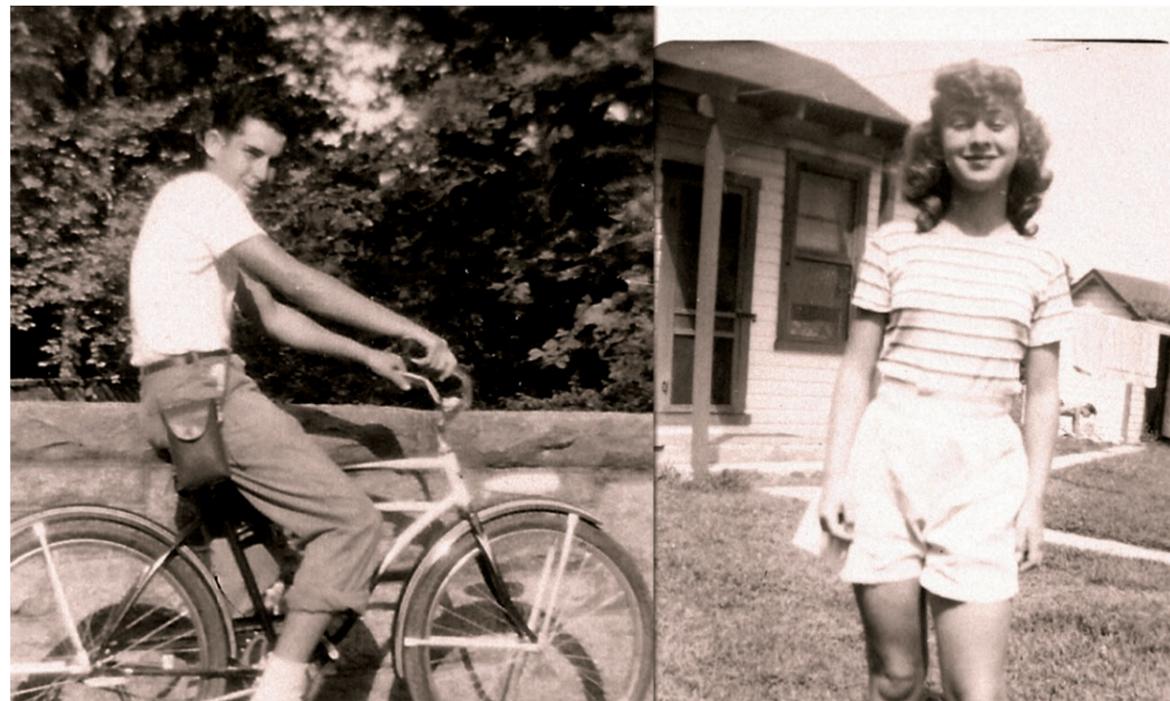
Though existential issues are present for all of us, many patients have immediate pressing issues that deal with relationships. Many are unable to develop rich, nurturing, enduring bonds necessary for fully realized lives. "What heals", says Yalom, "is ultimately the relationship." In his work, he therefore seeks an empathic, caring, deep connection with his patients.

After the textbooks, he turned to another mode of teaching through stories and novels. Love's Executioner, his first collection of stories, became a New York Times best seller and has been

translated into 30 languages.

He then summoned full courage to realise a dream that he had harboured since boyhood: to write a novel. With "When Nietzsche Wept" he created an instant world bestseller, with 5 million sales and crowned by the city of Vienna as the book of the year. This was followed by "Lying on the Couch," "The Schopenhauer Cure," and "The Spinoza Problem". In 2015, there will be a new volume of tales of psychotherapy stories titled Creatures of a Day, which will be released in German translation in a few months.

Other books include "Momma and the Meaning of Life," a collection of psychotherapy tales, and the arresting "Staring at the Sun: Overcoming the Terror of Death."



“Love is not just a passion spark between two people, there’s infinitive difference between falling in love and standing in love. The idea is that you stand in love, not fall in love, trying to live in such a way as to always bringing something more to live in the other.”

– Quote from “Yalom’s Cure” - Theatrical Feature

“Therapists need to form an authentic, genuine relationship with the patient. I think that the model that the therapist set for a patient, the intimacy, connection, that gets put into the patient’s mind. He uses that as a reference point, for how he relates to other intimate relationships in his life.”

– Quote from “Yalom’s Cure” - Theatrical Feature



In his novels and stories, which he calls “teaching narratives,” he combines psychotherapeutic experience, philosophy, and historical research with enthralling, profound stories. The message is always the same: It is worth trying to know yourself and trying to break old patterns.

Irvin and Marilyn celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary in June 2014. They have survived difficult times in their marriage and careers, yet continued to love and respect each other. Marilyn Yalom pursued her own academic path, first as a professor of French in the California State College system, then as a senior scholar at the Clayman Institute for Gender Research at Stanford University, a research center with a feminist orientation. The following are some of her works that have been translated into

numerous languages: Blood Sisters: The French Revolution in Women’s Memory, A History of the Breast, A History of the Wife, Birth of the Chess Queen, and recently: How the French Invented Love. She is currently writing a book about female friendships.

Their children and grandchildren, who all still live in California, play an important role in Irvin and Marilyn’s life. Eve Yalom, their daughter, works as a gynaecologist in Berkeley, Reid Yalom is a photographer and winemaker in Napa Valley, Victor Yalom works as a psychologist in San Francisco and runs an Internet enterprise for videos that deal with psychotherapy, while the youngest son, Ben Yalom, a theatre director, founded and manages the ensemble theatre company “Foolsfury” in San Francisco.



Website links:

www.yalom.com

www.myalom.com

www.healthgrades.com/physician/dr-eve-yalom-ygjj4

www.yalomphoto.com

www.psychotherapy.net

www.foolsfury.org

“When parents die, we always feel vulnerable. Because we’re dealing not only with loss, but also with confronting your own death. One aspect of becoming an orphan, Is there’s now no parent between us and the grave.”

– Quote from “Yalom’s Cure” - Theatrical Feature

Irvin D. Yalom's Work

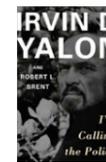


American bestselling author, popular scholar and existentialist Irvin D. Yalom M.D. is one of the most influential living psychotherapists. Dr. Yalom's books sold millions of copies worldwide and critics describe him as: „mind-bending“, „inspiring“, „haunting“, „life-changing“. He is the author of the bestsellers *The Schopenhauer Cure*, *Lying on the Couch*, and *Love's Executioner*, as well as the author of several classic textbooks and teaching novels on psychotherapy. *When Nietzsche Wept* was a bestseller in Germany (1 Million copies), Israel, Greece, Turkey, The Netherlands, Argentina, and Brazil with millions of copies sold worldwide. His new book with stories from psychotherapy will be out in winter 2014 in english and in spring 2015 in german.

Teaching Novels and stories



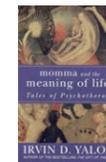
"The Spinoza Problem"
2012



"I'm Calling the Police with Robert L. Brent"
2011



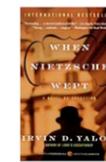
"The Schopenhauer Cure"
2005



"Momma and the Meaning of Life"
1999



"Lying On the Couch"
1996



"When Nietzsche Wept"
1992



"Love's Executioner"
1989

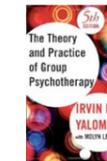
Nonfiction / Textbooks



"Staring At the Sun"
2008



"The Gift of Therapy"
2005



"The Theory and Practice of Psychotherapy"
2005



"Existential Psychotherapy"
1980



"Every Day Gets a Little Closer"
1974

Director Sabine Gisiger



Sabine Gisiger was born in 1959 in Zurich; she studied history in Zurich and Pisa, and graduated in 1988. She wrote her final dissertation on the history of the housemaid. In 1989 she trained as a TV journalist with Swiss television and then worked for many years as a reporter at home and abroad.

Sabine Gisiger has been making documentaries as a freelance director since 1990.

In 2000, she caused a stir with her documentary entitled **DO IT**, which she directed together with Marcel Zwingli. It was an international sensation and won the film award in 2001 for

the best Swiss documentary. She had further success with her films **GAMBIT** in 2005 and **GURU - Bhagwan, His Secretary & His Bodyguard** (together with Beat Häner) in 2010, which were both nominated for the Swiss Film Award.

She has been teaching as lecturer on documentary films since 2002 at the ZHDK Zurich (Master Class), and at the Lucerne School of Art & Design.

Sabine Gisiger is been a member of the Federal Film Commission since 2012.

Filmography

-
- 2014 **YALOM'S CURE** (cinema documentary)
-
- 2014 **FRIEDRICH DÜRRENMATT - IM LABYRINTH**
(fictional cinematic autobiography of Friedrich Dürrenmatt,
TV documentary SRF / ARTE, in progress)
-
- 2011 **LA VOCE IN BELLEZZA** (TV documentary, SF / ARTE 52 min.)
-
- 2010 **GURU – BHAGWAN, HIS SECRETARY & HIS BODYGUARD**
(cinema documentary, 102 min., with Beat Häner)
-
- 2007 **YA SHARR MOUT** (TV documentary, 70 min.)
-
- 2005 **GAMBIT** (cinema documentary, 107 min.)
-
- 2003 **HOMELAND** (TV documentary, 52 min.)
-
- 2000 **DO IT** (cinema documentary 97 min., with Marcel Zwingli)
-
- 1996 **LEBEN IM HIP HOP** (TV documentary, 25 min., NZZ format)
-
- 1995 **MOTOR NASCH** (cinema documentary, 90 min., with Marcel Zwingli)
-
- 1990 **DIE LETZTE JAGD** (TV documentary, 50 min., with A. Hösli, SF DRS)
-

Credits & Crew

77min, HD, Colour, Switzerland, 2014

Written & Directed by
SABINE GISIGER

Produced by
PHILIP DELAQUIS

Camera by
HELENA VAGNIÈRES

Additional Camera by
MATTHIAS GÜNTER
TIM METZGER

Sound Recordist
SAUL ROUDA

Underwater Filming by
STEFAN ZUBER

Edited by
BARBARA WEBER
ANDREAS WINTERSTEIN

Music Composed by
BALZ BACHMANN

Sounddesign by
PETER BRÄKER

With
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MARILYN YALOM
SUSAN K. HOERGER
LARRY HATLETT
EVE YALOM
LILY CARSTENS
ALANA CARSTENS
BEN YALOM
REID YALOM
DESMOND YALOM
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Artworks
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DR. ADRIANO VIGANO

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0000-0003-A2CC-0000-N-0000-0000-5



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