



The Misandrists

BERLIN FILM FESTIVAL 2017



The Misandrists is a publicly funded underground art film. To the uninitiated, it seems almost unbelievable that such a movie may be released. Every visually stunning scene is an unexpected combination of cold, stilted Germanic acting and surprising dialogue laced with dark humour and self-deprecation: "Two cocks and a cop in the house. This is insupportable." It will make viewers laugh and choke in the same breath.

The story is about a feminist terrorist faction ("asymmetrical warfare", as they call it) posing as a school for troubled and abused young women. The aim of Big Mother (Susanne Sachsse in an outfit reminiscent of Lady GaGa) is to forcefully initiate a new female world order, and her chosen tool of propaganda is homemade lesbian porn. It may seem at first like a great excuse for director Bruce LaBruce to shoot some beautiful naked women having sex, but he cleverly shows the movement's female leaders manipulating and exploiting these camera-shy and reluctant young girls just as a man would.

With references to Isis (the Egyptian goddess of magic and fertility, of course), gender fluidity and communism, this flick is political to say the least. It is also heavily laden with symbolism and psychedelic erotica, losing all semblance of subtlety in LaBruce's use of apples, eggs, pink overlay and vagina murals.

The women are beautiful but terrifying and if anyone thinks they would enjoy pornographic art set in a lesbian convent, leave the room before *The Misandrists* goes all-out horror movie in an explicit scene where Big Mother performs a sex change operation *sans* anaesthetic on an unlucky male prisoner (Til Schindler). This man was taken in secretly by the rebellious "separatist amongst separatists", Isolde, played by Kita Updike who weaves adroitly between feminine fragility and cold dominance in line with her unusual and very poignant characteristic.

This erotic arthouse film may leave viewers confused as to what it's trying to tell them or make them feel. *The Misandrists* seems to address the aggressiveness of modern feminism while portraying true equality in the fact that women can be just as cruel, lustful and power-hungry as men; but it also questions whether equality is even possible in a corrupt, masculine world, which may be justifying such a female revolution.

The Misandrists does not have a UK release date yet.

For further information about the 67th Berlin Film Festival visit [here](#).

Read more reviews from the festival [here](#).



JENNIFER SANIN

14TH FEBRUARY 2017