

VOID

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Duration: 33min
Languages: German & English
Country of Production: Austria
Year of Production: 2012
Recording format: Red 4k
Screening format: DCP, HDCAM, 35mm
Sound: Dolby Digital 5.1



On a cold winter morning, three police officers make a momentous decision: They kidnap an African detainee, torture him, and decide to cover up their crime by murder. VOID is a tale about a spiral of violence, based on the true story of Gambian Bakary J.

In April 2006 the allegations of Gambian Bakary Jassey, a detainee awaiting deportation, were made public for the first time. His wife, an Austrian citizen, had found him seriously injured in detention, after which he then went missing for a few days. She secretly took a photo of her husband and took the case to the police. The doctor responsible for the report diagnosed severe injuries to the face and spine. Jassey had obviously been abused. The three WEGA officers responsible for deportation stated however that Jassey would have incurred the injuries while trying to escape. This assertion which was later exposed as a lie in the course of the subsequent court proceedings. So what had really happened?

The policemen took Jassey into detention in 2006, prompting his deportation back to Gambia. His wife was not informed of the procedure. That was also what Jassey told the flight attendant onboard the aircraft which was supposed to return him to Gambia via Brussels: Jassey was not there voluntarily, and his wife and children knew nothing of his deportation. The pilot then refused to take the detainee on his aircraft.

The three accused WEGA officers abducted Jassey to a vacant garage. There they beat him, threatened him with murder, and played out a mock execution before running over their victim with a police van. The officers were probably not expecting to ever be held accountable for their actions. They forgot, however, that a log of their whereabouts was created through their mobile telephone signals, thus refuting their claims of an attempted escape by Jassey. When the burden of proof became too strong, the three defendants confessed to having lied and eventually pleaded guilty. The court sentenced them to eight months on probation for "neglecting and torturing a ward of the state". According to the verdict, the act was attributable to "a generally comprehensible violent emotional impulse".

VOID is a film about four people in the grip of violence. The film has no explanation for the causes of the violence at hand, and in doing so, asks the audience to deal with the matter in greater depth - to transcend beyond generic black-and-white explanations. The leading roles are played by David Wurawa ("Frankfurt Coincidences") and Laurence Rupp ("Dead in 3 Days").



Profile of Stefan Lukacs (Writer & Director)

Stefan Lukacs was born in Vienna in 1982. He studied screenwriting and directing at the New York Film Academy in 2002. He then worked in various positions for ORF, ATV and GoTV.

In 2008 he co-founded NonPlus Film Productions with Georg Eggenfellner. He is a director and producer of advertising, cinema and TV documentaries as well as short films.