MARIA VON HELAND

WRITER · DIRECTOR · SERIES CREATOR

Based in Berlin · Swedish, English, German, French
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BIOGRAPHY — LONG

Maria von Heland was born in Sweden and trained as a filmmaker in the United States, at the California Institute of the Arts, where she studied under Alexander Mackendrick. She has been based in Berlin for most of her working life and works in Swedish, English, German and French.

Her early shorts carried her work across the festival circuit — from Biarritz to São Paulo, Bombay to Valenciennes. *Chainsmoker* and *Real Men Eat Meat*, the latter shot in Mongolia, won prizes including the Friedrich Wilhelm Murnau Award and the Grand Prix du Court Métrage. Her first feature as writer-director, *Big Girls Don't Cry* (2002), brought the screen debuts of Anna Maria Mühe and Karoline Herfurth.

As a screenwriter she has written *England!*, *The Rainbowmaker*, *Hilde* and *Hector and the Search for Happiness*. In Sweden she wrote and directed *Sök* and the television drama *Den som viskar*, with Pernilla August. For German television she has made fairy-tale films, primetime crime and drama, and co-created the twenty-six-episode series *Heirs of the Night* with Diederik van Rooijen, filmed across six countries. From 2008 to 2018 she was Artistic Director and Writer of the European Film Awards.

In 2021 she founded Tindra Film in Berlin with Johnny West. *Sunshine Eyes*, written and directed during the Berlin lockdown, won at Séries Mania. She recently directed *Slava the Dog* for ARD and NDR, and is currently in production on *Alea Aquarius*, co-produced by Red Balloon, Maze Pictures, ZDF, ZDF Studios and Umedia.

APPROX. 260 WORDS