



SNEAKER STORIES

Director: Katharina Weingartner

Camera: Wolfgang Lehner, Markus Wailand

Editing: Alexandra Löwy

Sound: Richard Fleming

Music: J-Zone, BUG Mafia, Stash, Formula 412, J-Live, Wee Bee Foolish,

Showdown, L.A. Ladies Affairs

Production: Markus Wailand / Pooldoks

95:00 min, 16:9, DigiBeta / Digital Cinema Master HD, 6 channel Digital Surround Sound
AUT/USA 2008

Pooldoks

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Synopsis:

"Sneaker Stories" follows street basketball players in Brooklyn, Vienna and Ghana through one hot summer, and reveals how their love of style, shoes and the game itself resonates within an international cycle of control and commodification.

On Sneaker Stories:

In *Sneaker Stories*, Katharina Weingartner's first feature length film, we meet Adrian, Karl and Aziz, three basketball players in Vienna, Brooklyn and Ghana, and watch as they struggle to find a place for themselves within an international cycle of control and commodification. In this trans-global documentary, the protagonists live somewhere between fantasies of sports fame and an inglorious everyday reality. Bewitched by the marketing images and advertisements which dazzle young athletes all over the world, they follow impossible dreams, and lose sight of their more realistic choices....

Weingartner began work on *Sneaker Stories* while she was finishing her first documentary, *too soon for sorry*, and discovered a startling confluence of statistics. Since the mid-nineteen eighties, Nike, the NBA and hip-hop artists have all seen their sales triple, even as incarceration rates of African-American and Latino men have also exploded. In 2006, Nike's marketing budget was bigger than the gross domestic product of Ghana. *Sneaker Stories* connects the dots, and traces a line from the nineteenth century African slave trade to American industrialization and racism, from the branding of black bodies and inner city poverty to our outsourcing, Nike-economy of today.

Sneaker Stories has no narrators, no interviews with scholars or famous basketball players, and no easy answers. Instead, Adrian, Karl and Aziz, three quietly poignant young men, speak for themselves, grapple with their dreams, and hustle through their unspectacular lives, all against a backdrop of coohunting and transnational profit. Scenes with rain clouds and a sort of unhurried poetry wash over us, and we come away with inescapable conclusions.