



Autumn Gold

A documentary by **Jan Tenhaven**

funded by NRW Filmstiftung, Medienboard Berlin-Brandenburg
FFA, DFFF & ÖFI
in coproduction with Navigator Film, arte, WDR, NDR

94 min

The film tells the life-affirming stories of five senior athletes across the world who all have one goal – to take part in the track and field World Masters Championships. The biggest challenge is their age as all athletes are between 80 and 100 years old – a race against time and personal degeneration.

People in most Western countries are getting older and older – but also much fitter. As sport clubs are losing members among the young ones, old people flock to the stadiums and compete in national and international championships. The numbers are growing rapidly. However, nobody seems to take notice. There is hardly any serious media coverage of these races. And if, they are mostly featured as freak shows. Funny wrinkled people running in circles. Do the fit ones really fit?

The film gives five veteran athletes a voice. It shows their extraordinary race against time and age as they jump, run and throw the discus.

In their long lives, they have fought many personal crises and losses, they have survived wars and other tragedies, some of them have won the battle against terminal diseases. Now they are united in one common goal: to take part in the World Masters Championships in Finland this summer. No matter what it takes. If they only do not die before.

So yes, this film is about very old people. Loneliness, stiff necks and death are an issue. But the general tone is positive and life-affirming. Life will end soon - so what? Achieving a gold medal means just winning a single battle. But the clock is still ticking. As everybody is quite aware of that biological fact, there is a good portion of humour.

