

# GEBRÜDER BEETZ FILMPRODUKTION

Are we scum? The dignity of work/  
presstext

*Hansa town Wismar at the german Baltic coast. Since centuries ships are made here. Today almost every third family lives direct or implicit on shipbuilding. The Wadan wharf is one of the modernest wharfst in the world and the toast of the town. In 12 months 3100 of the 4000 employees will be jobless. Chronicles of a crisis.*

With these emphatic phrases the narrative arc is set at the beginning of the film. Director Dieter Schumann accompanies Roland „Knolle“ Lindner, Chrisitan Ratsack and Roland Dreier , three shipbuilder, during a year, in which the modern wadan wharf drifts into insolvency caused by the Great depression and thousand of employees become jobless.

The loss of the employment has a bigger importance for the concerned workers than just the loss of their income.

„For the job of a shipbuilder, you have to be born to.“, says Roland Lindner, better known as „Knolle“: Shipbuilder is a profession you can be proud of, is committed over generations and deals with dignity and quality and influences the identity of the coastal area. „It’s like a family business“ , notes apprentice Christian Ratsack. His father already worked as a shipbuilder, just like his grandfather.

Finally, 3100 shipbuilders will loose their job. The residual 900 are offered limited labor contracts for a pittance.

Roland Dreier, one of our three protagonists is the first one who is rehired. Weeks later Roland „Knolle“ Lindner gets a joboffer, too – for strongly degraded conditions.

They recommence their jobs with mixed feelings, while Christian Ratsack stays unemployed and told by job center, that „there is no future as a ship builder“. „It’s like in the jungle. Who stands still, lost.“ says the liquidator cynically.

The loss of employment hits the society, divides humans into winners and losers, into employess and unemployees. And into people, who can’t live on work despite having it, just like one of the contract workers of the wharf, who is rehired for 700-800 euros per month. „Knolle“ puts the frustration of the welders in a nutshell: „Are we scum?“ The men notice hurtfully: Harder like the work itself, is to loose it.

Director Dieter Schumann, who was himself afloat in early times, succeeds an unusual closeness and intimacy with the workers by creating a personal connection. He is on a par with the welders and illustrates the personal shocks of abstract crisis sensible.

Cameraman Rainer M.Schulz was honored with the german cameraprice 2011. The jury praised his „authentic camerawork, which creats closeness without being intrusive.“ Günther Wallraff noticed in his laudatory speech: „This fim is really close, it is a realistic portait but still full of poetry.“

A very emphatic, personal image of a worldwide crisis.