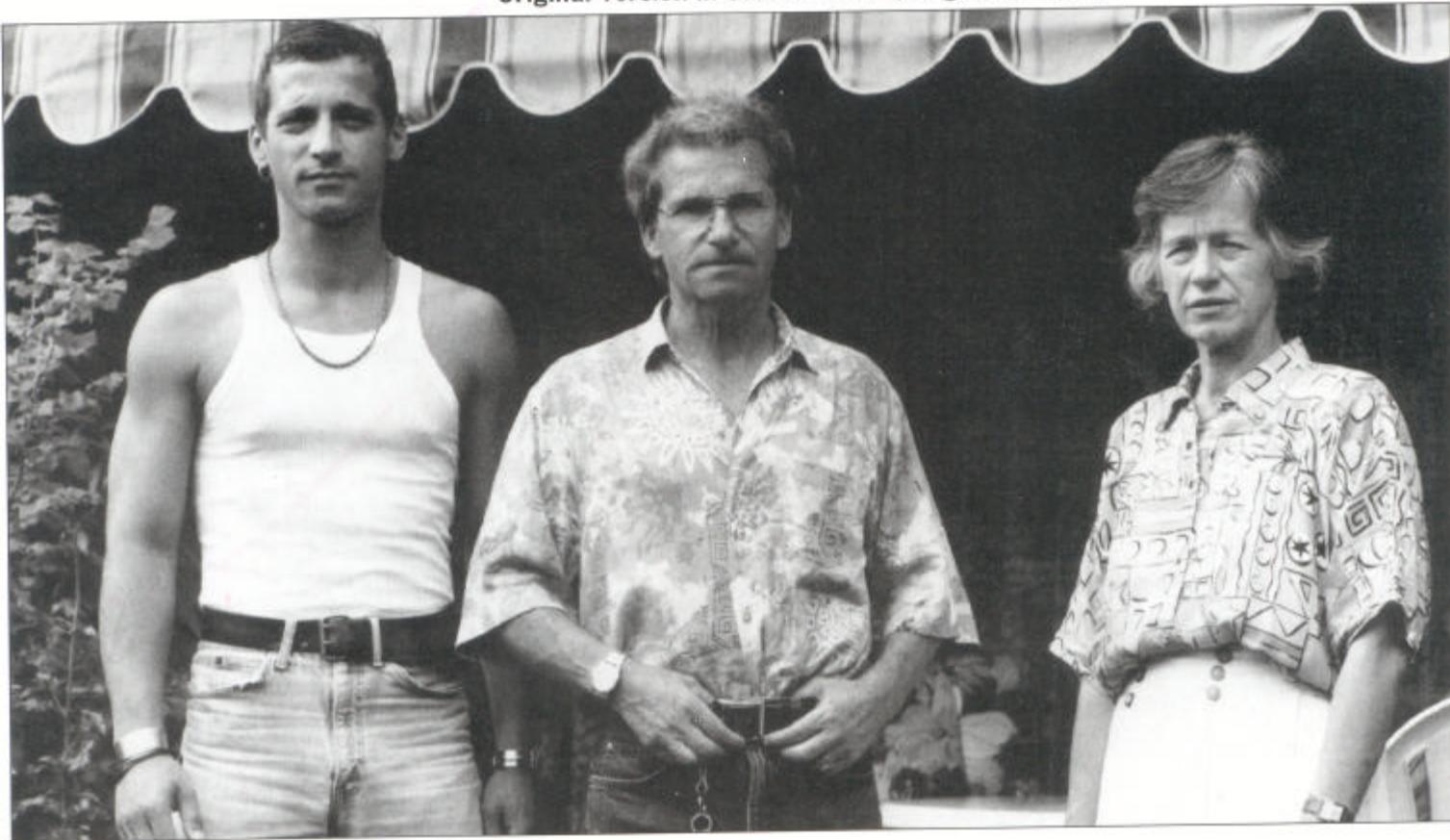


better and better

A film by Alfredo Knuchel and Norbert Wiedmer
16 mm, colour, 80 minutes
Original Version in Swiss-German; English subtitles



At the age of 61, Armin B still has the illusions of future happiness and prosperity he had back in the 1950s - even though for him, fate has decided otherwise. After numerous attempts at making a success of his life, Armin finds himself jobless. For two years he is entitled to unemployment benefit, and when his right to the benefit runs out, the future looks bleak. He decides to convert the cellar of his house into a workshop for making blue prints. His wife, Marlies, and their 30 year-old son Markus give him help and support. But once again, success eludes Armin. The business is more a source of stress than of income. A small legacy spares the family from applying for social help, but only just, and the financial situation remains precarious. The frantic pursuit of success, the eternal dilemma between adaptation and escape, have left their mark. Armin is tired and has had enough. Marlies tries to find the security and human warmth which are missing in her life by joining a religious community. Markus, who began taking drugs eight years previously, makes his first serious attempt to give them up. His elder brother, Thomas, died of an overdose in 1987. We spent one-and-a-half years filming the ups and downs of Armin and his family.

Why them? Because they personify the deep insecurity within our society, which on the surface still looks smooth and intact. And because their story is one which concerns us all.

Credits:

Author, director: Alfredo Knuchel
Co-director,
Camera: Norbert Wiedmer
Video Camera: Peter Guyer
Editing: Regina Bärtschi
Sound: Ivan Seifert, Alain Roulet
Music: Erik Satie

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Alfredo Knuchel

Born 1938 in Berne. Grew up in Canton Ticino and Basel. Self-taught. 1954-69, travelled extensively, spending long periods abroad. 1970-86, reporter and editor, then head of Italian programmes at Swiss Radio International. 1985-86, cinema course at the Fine Arts School in Berne. 1987-91, director of Swiss Film Centre. Since then, freelance journalist, festival consultant and film-maker. „besser und besser“ is his first full-length movie.

Norbert Wiedmer

Born 1953 in Berne. 1973-75, student. 1975-77, studied in Paris. 1977-80, documentary film department of the Film and Television Academy in Munich. 1980-82, assistant at the academy. Since then, freelance film-maker giving courses at the academy. Has directed or co-directed nine documentary films since 1979.