

29 Palms, CA

29 PALMS, CA is a feature film/art piece that explores and chronicles the dreams and fantasies of a group of individuals who live in a trailer community in the Californian desert.

The world depicted in the film is inspired by the photographs of German artist Stefanie Schneider in that it combines the notions of reality and fantasy and explores the resonance of both within a desert landscape and a transient culture. The characters depicted in the film (an actress, a singer, a DJ, a motel owner, a US Army soldier, a mystic princess, a recluse, a movie ticket seller, two hitchhikers, a doctor, and so on...) are to be played by both actors and non-actors. The story is constructed through the interpretation of real life communications (i.e. phone calls, emails, conversations) that take place as the individuals depicted in the story try to make sense of events that occur in real life. In this sense the story is, in part, a biography and social commentary, and the characters are the exaggerated alter egos of the individuals who play them.

The structure of the plot is fairly simple. An actress who works as a telemarketer is inspired by a singer who is new to town and is featured on the local radio station. The radio station runs a program for lonely hearts and a charismatic DJ

uses the show to reveal the hopes and dreams of the towns “hottest women”. One night a panicked German female caller captivates the community with a painful story about a sexy “Smoke Jumper” (a mysterious and super real alpha male). Everybody in town is listening to the program and nobody is quite sure what to say.

Life in general continues and we witness and explore the various interactions. The actress meets the singer and they become famous. The US Army soldier dies on his way to battle. The foreign princess discovers that the jewels she has come to sell are fake. The motel owner has an affair with the pool boys and so on. All the while the community is united by their loyalty to the “Lonely Hearts” radio show and through the disturbing revelations of the German woman and the details of her sordid affair. The stories she tells are explored through the imaginations of the listeners and through the memories of the teller. The smoke jumper becomes a pervasive figure who in some way effects the lives of all those who listen to the story. He seduces women, is linked to a local thievery, a rape and a possible death. The story comes to conclusion when this chaotic character quits town leaving in his wake a trail of destruction and despair. What is left is a void, a space for transformation as the wounded community rediscovers itself in its quest to make sense of what has happened.



Max hitches into town



