



КАФКА

SUPERFILM

„This is the best dramatization of the life of the great Kafka that it's possible to imagine, perfectly cast, stunningly acted, and weaving the work into the life with extraordinary skill. It does a great service to one of the true giants of 20th century literature.“

Salman Rushdie

Kafka is simply brilliant. Finely dramatised elements of Franz Kafka's writing are fused with the author's own profound insight into this tortured genius. What results is a drama of enormous emotional and intellectual power. The writing flows like honey.

Gorgeous, mesmerising scenes throughout and, at the end, a heart-rending theatrical climax which leaves the viewer deeply moved by the strange and beautiful echoes of Kehlmann and Schalko's triumphant collaboration.

Ian McEwan



A SERIES 6X45'

It's been 100 years since Franz Kafka's death (July 3, 1883–June 3, 1924), and the time has come for an entertaining and humorous serial approach to his life and character. None could be better suited for this undertaking than the internationally renowned, best-selling author Daniel Kehlmann and the exceptional writer-director David Schalko. Reiner Stach, who is widely known as the author of the definitive Kafka biography, is consulting on the project.

We are convinced that this package offers ideal prerequisites for the creation of an entertaining, unusual, and internationally successful series.



Guter Robert, ich vermutete Sie noch immer in B., erst
 aus einem Brief von Max erfuhr ich das, Sie schon in
 Prag sind, auch von 4 Übergrüppungen schrieb er, die
 von Ihnen erschienen sind und von denen ich nicht
 wusste. Auch schrieben Sie mir keine mehr zur
 Durchsicht; wer hat mir die Arbeit weggenommen?
 Wanzel war ja hier und hat ein wenig von
 Ihnen erzählt; was war das für eine Prüfung, die
 Sie ihr gegenüber Wanzel abgab? Sie bestanden
 erträglich. Bei Midia war ich nicht, aber habe
 ich fast immer Temperaturerhöhung, bei solchen
 Gelegenheiten geht dann immer der "andere Schüler",
 er war enttäuscht von Midia. Von mir ist wenig zu
 erzählen, ein etwas schattenhaftes Leben, was nicht
 gerade ein nicht Raum nichts davon merkten, tigen-
 blieben haben wir Wohnungsorgen, eine Überfülle
 von Wohnungen, aber die predtrollen rücken un-
 erscheinlich an uns vorbei und der Rest ist
 fragwürdig. Wenn man etwas verdienen könnte!
~~Stück~~ für 12 - im-Bett-Liegen gibt hier je-
 mand etwas. Ein Bekannter, ein junger Maler, hat
 jetzt einen schönen Beruf um den ich ihn schon
 manchmal beneidet habe er ist Straßenbuchhänd-
 ler, gegen 10 Uhr vormittag berichtet er den Stand
 und bleibt bis in Dämmerung, und es geht schon
 10' Frost und mehr. Um die Werkloshauszeit verdient er
 10 K täglich, jetzt 3-4.

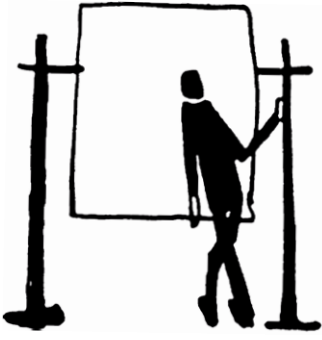
CONCEPT

Six episodes span Franz Kafka's life story. He was considered by many to have been the greatest and most important writer of the twentieth century. The storyline primarily focuses on the points of view of the people closest to him while basing the narrative on the three-volume biography by Reiner Stach.

The first episode, **MAX**, is about Kafka's friend Max Brod. He is a recognized writer who is full of energy and ideas, but his greatest project is to gain fame for his friend Franz. This is an inverted Amadeus constellation of sorts: With all his might, Brod tries to help his difficult friend—who never returns any artistic recognition or support to his most loyal patron. Brod is a verified manic womanizer and is always involved in several affairs at the same time. He is a warm-hearted person and the energy and power center of the story. Unfortunately, he's not a very good writer—a fact that Kafka is clearly aware of. It is Max who saves his friend's works from oblivion by breaking his promise to burn all unpublished papers after Franz' death, and it is him who carries them to safety on the last train out of Prag at the onset of the Second World War.

The second, **FELICE**, focuses on Kafka's long-time fiancée Felice Bauer. She is Max Brod's cousin, whom Kafka gets to know only superficially, but then showers with letters for weeks and months. Without really knowing each other, they become engaged. The relationship is long, complicated, and agonizing; the engagement is broken off, renewed, only to be ended yet again.

The third episode, **FAMILY**, focuses on Kafka's strict and domineering father, Hermann, to whom his son will address a merciless indictment letter more than 100 pages long, which he ends up never sending. During the episode, the focus shifts towards Kafka's relationship to Zionism and his friendship with Yitzhak Löwy, an actor of a traditional



Yiddish theatrical troupe. The confrontation between his father and his friend Löwy prompts Kafka to write “The Metamorphosis”, the story of a man who turns into a bug, arguably the most influential work of literature of the Twentieth Century.

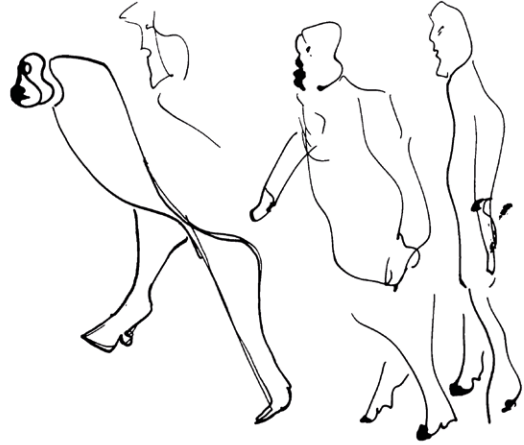
The fourth episode, **THE BUREAU**, focuses on Kafka as an insurance lawyer. He is a notable expert in this field, winning every court case on behalf of the company and held in high esteem by his superiors—an honor he does not reciprocate. For him, the rather comfortable workplace is a living hell he simply wants to escape from. At the height of the First World War, both of his superiors go so far as to save Kafka’s life by having him officially declared indispensable and therefore preventing him from foolishly enlisting. This episode underlines the reversal of Kafka’s nightmarish fear of an overpowering bureaucratic force he highlights so well in his work, for Kafka’s superiors are by no means inaccessible: They are kind and helpful—a fact Kafka fails to ever recognize or admit.

The fifth episode, **MILENA**, is about Kafka’s brief but intense relationship with the writer Milena Jesenská, who recognizes his genius in a way that thus far only Max Brod has. During a long afternoon in the Vienna Woods, they go through all stages of a passionate love affair until finally parting ways.

The first half of the final episode, **DORA**, centers on the vacation of Kafka, already mortally sick from tuberculosis, in a nice spa town, which in his imagination turns into the dark and mythical village of his final and most famous novel “The Castle”. But he also meets his last great love, Dora Dymant. After he eventually manages to escape the hated bureau, the couple live in Berlin for a number of months before spending his last days together in a sanatorium outside Vienna.

sich mehr als die Grundworte geschweigt hatte. Jetzt
 war das Wichtigste von ihrem ^{as unvollständig} ~~Zeit~~ ^{in die}
 des Limmers geriet und der Empfänger von
 ihm. ~~Er war für~~ ~~einmal~~ ~~aus~~ ~~dem~~ ~~am~~
 die Tiere unter einander geschlossen und eine
 auf die ~~Rücknahme~~ ~~des~~ ~~Vertrages~~ ~~gelegt~~ ~~ist~~ ~~vor~~
~~hätte~~ ~~den~~ ~~er~~ ~~hatte~~. ~~Der~~ ~~Empfänger~~ ~~hatte~~ ~~den~~
~~im~~ ~~aber~~ ~~schon~~ ~~und~~ ~~gefunden~~ ~~war~~. ~~Das~~ ~~war~~
 selbst nach auf die Tiere zu beschränken dachte
 welchen lang sollte es ihm erlaubt sein. Wenn
 mir wiste, es für eine Behörde es sein. Kann der
 menschlichen aber in einer in die Behörde gehört
 aussieht. Wenn Sache, so große Verantwortungen
 kann. Denn dieses Sache ^{mit} ^{man} ^{scheit} ^{ein}
 große Verantwortung nehmen. Drei Personen ^{mit}
 den für mich angewendet. ⁱⁿ ^{dem} ^{Limmer} ⁱⁿ ^{dem}
 gebildet. ^{das} ⁱⁿ ^{der} ^{Sache} ^{stehen} ^{nach} ³ ^{Personen}
~~haben~~ ~~und~~ ~~haben~~ ~~die~~ ~~Entscheidung~~ ~~des~~ ~~Trägers~~

~~an.~~
~~F~~ in einer Ecke des Limmers standen drei junge
 und neben die Entschleunigen des Trägers. ^{Träger}
 die in einer auf der Wand angebrachten Karte
 in der Nähe des offenen Fensters hing eine weitere
 Frage in gegenüberliegenden ^{Träger} ^{lag} ^{über}
 wie ^{stehen} ^{hinter} ^{den} ^{Stellen} ^{hinein} ^{zu} ^{den} ^{Beobachtern}



CENTRAL CHARACTERS

FELICE BAUER Nov 18, 1887, in Prudnik, Poland; † Oct 15, 1960, in New York

Felice, who was Kafka's fiancée twice, came from a Jewish family and had considerable business acumen, enabling her to work her way up to the position of authorised signatory at the Carl Lindström Company, Berlin. In contrast to Franz Kafka, she took on a great deal of responsibility for her family's upkeep, contributing substantially to their income. Kafka met her in 1912 at the home of his friend Max Brod:

"She sat at the table and yet seemed to me like a maid. I immediately came to terms with her. Bony, empty face, almost broken nose. Charmless hair, strong chin. As I was sitting down, I looked at her more closely for the first time; by the time I was seated, I had already formed an unshakable judgement."

(Kafka in a letter to M. Brod)

MAX BROD May 27, 1884, in Prague; † Dec 20, 1968, in Tel Aviv

Max Brod, born in Prague in 1884, was a writer, critic, and musician. He was Franz Kafka's best friend, his decisive supporter, his testamentary executor, and he defied Kafka's desire to have his entire estate destroyed after his death.

"I met Kafka when I was 18 and he was 19, and until his death, there was not a single day—for over 20 years—when we did not meet, sometimes even twice a day."

(M. Brod)

HERMANN KAFKA (FATHER) Sept 14, 1952, in South Bohemia; † June 6, 1931, in Prague

Kafka's father was a Jewish butcher. After his military service, he first worked as a simple travelling salesman before marrying the wealthy daughter of a brewer, Julie Löwy, and opening a wholesale shop for fashion accessories and fancy goods in Prague.

"I was continually in disgrace; either I obeyed your orders, and that was a disgrace, for they applied, after all, only to me; or I was defiant, and that was a disgrace too, for how could I presume to defy you; or I could not obey because I did not, for instance, have your strength, your appetite, your skill, although you expected it of me as a matter of course; this was the greatest disgrace of all." (Kafka in Letter to His Father, translated by Ernst Kaiser and Eithne Wilkins)

MILENA JESENKSKÁ Aug 10, 1896, in Prague; † May 17, 1944, Ravensbrück concentration camp

Milena, whose family belonged to the upper middle class, developed musical interests at an early age, immersed herself in Prague's bohemian life, and was committed to a psychiatric ward by her father until she came of age because of her relationship with the author Ernst Polak.

Kafka met her in 1919, and their correspondence developed into a love affair. It did not last, however, because Milena was not yet ready to give up her marriage to Ernst Polak.

"She is a living fire, such as I have never seen; incidentally, a fire that despite everything, burns only for him (= Ernst Pollak)." (Kafka in a letter to M. Brod)

THE BUREAU

Franz Kafka, who had a doctorate in law, worked at the Workers' Accident Insurance Institute for the Kingdom of Bohemia in Prague from 1908 until his retirement in 1922, due to illness. The firm was founded in 1887 and was by far the largest of seven Austrian institutions of its kind. Although Kafka found his work to be a burden, he was promoted four times in the course of his career.

"My duty is ridiculous and miserably easy [...] I don't know what I get paid for."

(Franz Kafka in a letter to Milena Jesenská)

DORA DYMANT March 4, 1898, in Congress Poland; † August 15, 1952, in London

Dora, who grew up in a strict Hasidic home, was the only woman Kafka ever lived with and actually wanted to marry. The 25-year-old met Franz Kafka, who was 40 at the time, in July 1923 at the Müritz Baltic Sea Resort, where she was working as a supervisor at the Ferienkolonie des Volksheims (a holiday camp belonging to a Jewish social centre). In September of the same year, Kafka and Dymant moved into a flat together in Berlin-Steglitz. She cared for him until his death.

Dora's Franz was *"as sensual as an animal (or a child). Where does the assumption of Franz as an ascetic come from?"*

(Dora Dymant in her journal)

SUPERFILM

SUPERFILM Filmproduktions GmbH, based in Munich and Vienna, was founded in 2006 by John Lueftner and David Schalko.

With the claim to tell extraordinary stories and produce high-quality entertainment shows, the company quickly developed into a brand for quality television and films with a concise signature.

From the multiple award-winning *Sendung ohne Namen* to late night shows such as *Willkommen Österreich*, *Ringljetter* or the literary show with Thomas Gottschalk, to series with international lighthouse character such as *Braunschlag*, *Altes Geld*, *M – Eine Stadt sucht einen Mörder* or *Ich und die Anderen*, the company clearly positions itself for entertainment with high standards. The company name is a promise of quality.

In addition to serial formats, SUPERFILM realizes selected feature film projects from crime scene to arthouse cinema. In addition to relevant content, the focus is always on unconventional narration or formal features. Projects that stand out, sometimes polarizing, but always interesting. The approach must be courageous – but never reckless.

For some years now, SUPERFILM has been concentrating more and more on bringing together talents across borders and developing and realizing films and series for the international market at a high level.



SUPERFILM