

Pool of Princesses

By Mitchell Gatt

Fifteen, it's such a sweet and innocent age. Part-time jobs, falling in love, community service, chatting to strangers on sex-lines, and late-night-to-early-morning binges . . . wait a minute.

Growing up in Kreuzberg, Berlin, is not an easy life, yet Klara Reinacher, Tanutscha Glowasz, and Mina Bowling still manage to entertain themselves accordingly. This documentary follows three young girls as they live their lives the way they want: the real-life experiences of these real teenagers. The content itself may at times shock its audience, but that's what a good documentary does: it enlightens and educates its viewers on different aspects of different cultures around the world.

The three girls, although similar in nature, differ entirely from each other. Klara is somewhat of a rebellious underachiever. Once a shining maths student, Klara turned it down for boys, cigarettes, and alcohol. Klara's mother has dictated two rules if Klara is to live in her house:

1. No heroin
2. No pregnancies

Tanutscha is seemingly maternal in her ways. She is very defensive of her two best friends. That's not to say she is a good role model, however: she sees her younger brother playing with a set of sharp scissors, cutting paper playfully as his hands edge ever closer to the scissors' blades, and does nothing. She has decided she doesn't want children, which is possibly a good thing. In contrast, Mina seems to be the only girl with her head screwed on somewhat tightly. She and her boyfriend George spend a lot of time together. She is happy, which reflects positively on her friends.

Although the documentary's content could be debatable as appropriate, the subtle underlying themes it harbours are of a positive nature. Look deep, deep, deep, deep down beneath all the sex, drugs, late nights, and racist remarks and you will find several important lessons. Despite the events these girls put themselves in, their friendship remains strong.

In technological terms, *Pool of Princesses* follows the standard documentary formula. The soundtrack, though, may have you running around, pausing your DVD player to see if your audio input is still connected. Throughout the film, the viewer can krump along to some interestingly mixed German hip-hop. You'll be bouncing along when suddenly the music cuts short and then restarts again ten seconds later. This can be at times frustrating.

Overall, this film could be argued all through the night. On one hand, it's interesting to watch these young girls deal with their life experiences; on the other, you will discover it's all to no point. The film goes around in circles: the girls seem to learn little and are portrayed in images of grandeur, when in reality it should be the opposite.

If you enjoy documentaries, or if you have a keen eye for cultured films, *Pool of Princesses* offers a new perspective that one may find enjoyable; otherwise perhaps it's best to rent out this week's hottest blockbuster.