

# YALOM'S CURE

A film by Sabine Gisiger

74 min / English / 2014 / Color / Switzerland / Digital (DCP and Blu-ray)



## FIRST RUN FEATURES

The Film Center Building  
630 Ninth Ave. #1213  
New York, NY 10036  
(212) 243-0600 / Fax (212) 989-7649  
Website: [www.firstrunfeatures.com](http://www.firstrunfeatures.com)  
Email: [info@firstrunfeatures.com](mailto:info@firstrunfeatures.com)

## **Synopsis**

Bestselling author, popular scholar and existentialist Irvin D. Yalom is one of the most influential living psychotherapists. This cinematic feature is more than a classic biography. Together with Dr. Yalom we travel in a existential journey through the many layers of the human mind while he shares his fundamental insights and wisdom. Dr. Yalom's books sold millions of copies worldwide and critics describe him as: mind-bending, stunning, inspiring, haunting, life-changing.

## Filmmaker Statement

The death of my father 13 years ago was a wakeup call for me. It was then that I realised that I too have only one life, that this life will have an end, and that I should make the most of it.

Only: how often are we our own worst enemy, especially when it comes to relationships and love. How many times do we compulsively repeat the same patterns, how often do we react in a way that we do not even understand ourselves. How often do we torment ourselves with conflicting thoughts and emotions. How often do we act contrary to our own best and that of others. I found it to be a great challenge to live in the present - a life not determined by the injuries of the past nor the fears of the future. Analytic psychotherapy and reading Yalom's books helped me on the journey to myself.

My introduction to Yalom's world was "Love's executioner and other tales of psychotherapy". In the prologue, Yalom describes a group exercise, in which he asks men and women who are "by no means desperate or needy, but successful, well-functioning people" to ask each other one single question: "What do you want?"

I shall quote the passage in more detail, because it contains the essence of his therapeutic experience: "The group members called out to those who are forever lost - dead or absent parents, spouses, children and friends:

"I want to see you again." "I want your love." "I want to know that you are proud of me." "I want you to know how much I love you and how sorry I am I never told you." "I want you back – I am so lonely." "I want the childhood I never had." "I want to be healthy – to be young again." "I want my life to mean something."

"I want to accomplish something. I want to matter, to be important, to be remembered." So much wanting. So much longing. And so much pain, so close to the surface, only minutes deep. Destiny pain. Existence pain. Pain that is always there, whirring continuously just beneath the membrane of life. Pain that is all too easily accessible." Ultimately, Yalom says that it is a question of social conditions, personal character and financial means that determine whether someone enters into therapy. The suffering in life, however, is universal. We all repeatedly face the question of who are we, the question of what actually drives and motivates us, the question of what is the meaning of it all.

With "YALOM'S CURE", I wanted to make a film that effects on the viewers in the same cathartic way as the reading of Irvin Yalom's books effected on me - a film that inspires the audience to think about themselves and their own existence.

– Sabine Gisiger

## **Filmmaker Biography**

Sabine Gisiger was born in 1959 in Zurich; she studied history in Zurich and Pisa, and graduated in 1988. She wrote her final dissertation on the history of the housemaid. In 1989 she trained as a TV journalist with Swiss television and then worked for many years as a reporter at home and abroad.

Sabine Gisiger has been making documentaries as a freelance director since 1990.

In 2000, she caused a stir with her documentary entitled DO IT, which she directed together with Marcel Zwingli. It was an international sensation and won the film award in 2001 for the best Swiss documentary. She had further success with her films GAMBIT in 2005 and GURU - Bhagwan, His Secretary & His Bodyguard (together with Beat Häner) in 2010, which were both nominated for the Swiss Film Award.

She has been teaching as lecturer on documentary films since 2002 at the ZHDK Zurich (Master Class), and at the Lucerne School of Art & Design.

Sabine Gisiger is been a member of the Federal Film Commission since 2012.

## Subject Biography

American bestselling author, popular scholar and existentialist Irvin D. Yalom M.D. is one of the most influential living psychotherapists. Dr. Yalom's books sold millions of copies worldwide and critics describe him as: "mind-bending," "inspiring," "haunting," "life-changing."

He is the author of the bestsellers *The Schopenhauer Cure*, *Lying on the Couch*, and *Love's Executioner*, as well as the author of several classic textbooks and teaching novels on psychotherapy.

In his novels and stories, which he calls "teaching narratives," he combines psychotherapeutic experience, philosophy, and historical research with enthralling, profound stories. The message is always the same: It is worth trying to know yourself and to break old patterns.

*When Nietzsche Wept* was a bestseller in Germany (1 Million copies), Israel, Greece, Turkey, The Netherlands, Argentina, and Brazil with millions of copies sold worldwide. His new book with stories from psychotherapy will be out in winter 2014 in English and in spring 2015 in German.

## **Selected Credits**

Written & Directed by  
**SABINE GISIGER**

Produced by  
**PHILIP DELAQUIS**

Camera by  
**HELENA VAGNIÈRES**

Additional Camera by  
**MATTHIAS GÜNTER**  
**TIM METZGER**

Sound Recordist  
**SAUL ROUDA**

Underwater Filming by  
**STEFAN ZUBER**

Edited by  
**BARBARA WEBER**  
**ANDREAS WINTERSTEIN**

Music Composed by  
**BALZ BACHMANN**

Sounddesign by  
**PETER BRÄKER**

With  
**IRVIN D. YALOM**  
**MARILYN YALOM**  
**SUSAN K. HOERGER**  
**LARRY HATLETT**  
**EVE YALOM**  
**LILY CARSTENS**  
**ALANA CARSTENS**  
**BEN YALOM**  
**REID YALOM**  
**DESMOND YALOM**  
**VICTOR YALOM**