



ONCE WE WERE PITMEN

by Christian Johannes Koch, Jonas Matauschek



SYNOPSIS

Black dust, shrill metallic noises, dark tunnels, muscular bodies – all that is the past. At the end of 2018, extraction of coal throughout Germany came to an end. That same year, the voices of the emerging climate protest movement Fridays for Future grew louder. Against the backdrop of these media and socio-political events, the film *ONCE WE WERE PITMEN* follows five miners on their tragic, humorous and heartwarming search for a new role in life.

Locke & Langer, the tall one and the short one, are among these last «real pitmen». While Locke clings to his miner's pride, Langer longs for ways to fulfill himself in retirement. Then there's Thomas, who has been living with his mother since being made redundant; his social meeting place will soon disappear. Kiri fled civil war in Sri Lanka in his youth and found a new home in the colliery; the closure of the pit has triggered fundamental questions about his identity which can no longer be ignored. Martina had come to feel unable to...

FESTIVALS

2024

11 dokKa Karlsruhe, Germany

8 SWR Doku Festival

5 LETsDOK

CAST AND CREW

DIRECTOR Christian Johannes Koch, Jonas Matauschek

Germany 2023

105 min

ORIGINAL TITLE

WIR WAREN KUMPEL

FORMAL CATEGORIES

Current Affairs

ORIGINAL LANGUAGES

German, Tamil

PREMIERE

Germany (2023)

COPRODUCTION COMPANY

[Elemag Pictures GmbH](#)

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LINKS / REFERENCE

PRODUCTION

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