

WRITING AND SILENCE

With the poet Friederike Mayröcker



Dokumentary by Carmen Tartarotti

Length: 90 min. Format: 35 mm

www.das-schreiben-und-das-schweigen.realfictionfilme.de

SYNOPSIS

FRIEDERIKE MAYRÖCKER is not a protagonist who obeys the laws of the media. Many categories collaborate in the light of her aura.

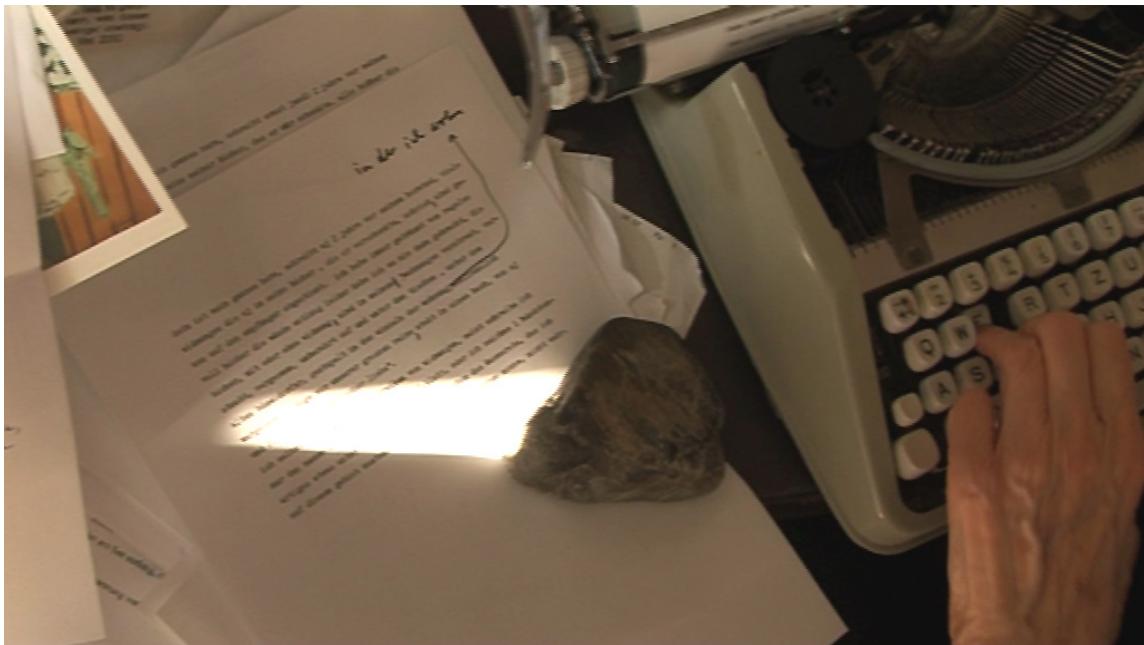
"WRITING AND SILENCE" leads the viewer into the centre of a poetic existence so that even the most unremarkable things turn into a universe breathing with life.

THE FILM

Following her first Mayröcker film (*1 Häufchen Blume, 1 Häufchen Schuh* (*1 Pile of Flowers, 1 Pile of Shoes*)), made in 1990 for the 'Kunststücke' ('Art Pieces', series on the ORF TV channel), film-maker Carmen Tartarotti decided, 15 years later, to attempt a second film with the poet, this time without restricting expectations in terms of content and form, and with no fixed length and completion date being dictated by the commissioning producer. Over several years, she accompanied the poet as discreetly as possible in her apartment and on her reading tours, for the most part alone with the camera and microphone, as the protagonist had expressly requested – but with the crucial assistance of Swiss cameraman Pio Corradi.

One of the preconditions for the making of the film was absolute respect for the writer's current life situation and for her work rhythms. This made it necessary to evolve different methods and procedures than are usually found in film production – the fragile room architecture in Mayröcker's apartment makes the use of normal camera and lighting equipment completely impossible. Over a period of months, the director was careful to capture statements from the poet which are not answers to questions so much as statements which seem to stand for themselves, unspectacular and matter-of-fact and yet, and because of that, extremely powerful.





I just thought it should be a film about silence. Writing and silence. But then, how can you do that? Maybe other authors can pull different things out of their brain when they talk. While I can't produce anything else. I don't like talking. And this is what we'll base our film on!" That's what we'll do! (Friederike Mayröcker)

Carmen Tartarotti has found her own aesthetic form for attempting to come close to her opposite and to give form in film to this process of rapprochement. Transparency and distance are important to this media-shy writer, which is what makes the way she opens herself up in this film all the more surprising. Even while the impossibility of making the film is being thematised, access is gained to the poet's personality and the space in which she works. We see the chaos, which only seems to be so, and watch while Mayröcker creates the title for the film. We hear that it is ruled out for us to be present when she is sitting at her typewriter and yet we are transported into the art of the poet's language, drawn into the process of writing, as intimately as though the camera were not there at all and we were being permitted to be there ourselves, so close to this other, this alien way of being.

WRITING AND SILENCE , this new, extensive documentary by filmmaker Carmen Tartarotti with the Grande Dame of Austrian letters, who is now 85, is a film about the conditions for her poetic production and at the same time a reflection on the possibility of presenting that as film.

PRODUCTION NOTES

When I was able to accompany the writer Friederike Mayröcker to Sweden in 2004 for a poetry festival, to find out whether and in what form it might be possible to make a second film, F.M. said to me one day in the hotel lift, "Now I know what our film should be about: *Writing and Silence*." I was not a little surprised and after thinking about it for a while it seemed to me that the poet should in a sense make it her own film, to talk about her cosmos undisturbed by opinions and commentaries. She has already given so many interviews in the course of her life, and nothing new would emerge from asking direct questions, and certainly nothing that would make a good film.

Very little has been staged in the film; it is more a matter of discovering. Sometimes, very rarely, I asked FM to repeat something so that I could film it. Before each short visit I thought about whether I should take the camera or rather the tape-recorder, how I should pack the equipment so that Friederike Mayröcker would not be alarmed when she opened the door of her apartment to me, how I should go about hauling those big bags along the narrow hallway and overcoming all the hurdles on my way to my set place without anything happening. Then I would sit mostly in the guests' chair, equipped with only my Taskam tape-recorder and the table microphone on its wobbly bed; always with an eye to getting statements from the poet which are not answers to questions so much as statements which seem to stand for themselves, unspectacular and matter-of-fact and yet, and because of that, extremely powerful. organisational reasons might not be there another time. During these





drawing from Ernst Jandl, 22.07.78

tape Recordings, I kept an eye out for images in the apartment that could be filmed, frequently worried that all these images I had missed filming for.

The film did not start out from self-contained themes and scenes, but from loose images and sounds, and sound and text recordings, recorded mostly on different days, in different weeks and months and in different places, thus completely fragmentary and distinct from each other. When assembling the film, these fragments then had to be thought through and joined together in minute detail in such a way that they did not seem constructed.

It was important to me that F. Mayröcker's speaking voice should accompany her actions, very softly and matter-of-fact, as though she were holding dialogues with herself, only occasionally allowing in the external world and me as the one present. To achieve that, I searched out the most by-the-way and apparently irrelevant things the writer said and assembled tape-recordings made over a period of two years into a single monologue. It was a kind of aim of this film to remain quite unartificial and find poetry in simplicity.

The music in the film comes from Friederike Mayröcker's universe. Music she listens to herself and which appears in her writing: Schubert, Keith Jarrett, mostly Maria Callas. But jazz, Ernst Jandl's music, is there too.





The window opposite, etcetera....

Monolog FM:

"From my kitchen, I can see into a window that I've described in many poems. When I get up, my first view is into this window. I feel haunted by it that I include reality in my work now"

The window opposite, etcetera....

green blotches red blotches lettuce radishes roses
and small ghost-plants in the aureole,tattered brown turban
window-rags aquaria and prison-bars and other ruins...

"All these window poems, I stand there literally by the window and write down by hand everything I see. And then the associations come when I'm sitting at the typewriter. That's how it works: writing down reality."

In the past I thought reality equals non-poetic, or little-poetic. And now I realize that reality is full of poetry. That's interesting..."

BIOGRAPHICAL DETAILS

Friederike Mayröcker

was born in Vienna on 20 December 1924. She published her first poems as early as 1945 in the journal 'Der Plan'; she has subsequently published more than eighty books, including poetry, radio plays, children's books, novels and short prose. She is one of the most important women writing in German and her life's work has been honoured with many awards and prizes.



Suite (in *Magic Leaves VI*)

"A stranger I arrived here, on that 20 December 1924 when I leapt from my mother – after she'd taken the bundle into the kitchen to the stove-skeleton: she's carrying, she's rocking the bundle in her arms, but there's nothing inside it, not yet , she's rocking it in her arms, so great is her joyful anticipation, she's rocking the empty upholstery, she's living on the conception that the child so much longed for is already with her, is already inside, trace of the concealed child, etcetera.

Although I'm always alien to myself, there are these rare *naked* moments when I believe I can see through myself, I then recognise my bad character traits, cowardice, laziness, lack of resolve, intellectual weakness, uncritical attitude, and I lament, I lament how time is seeping into the soul etc."

AWARDS (SELECTION)

Bremer Literaturpreis 2011
Peter-Huchel-Preis, 2010
Hermann-Lenz-Preis 2009
Ehrenring der Stadt Wien 2004
Georg-Büchner-Preis 2001
Karl- Scuka- Preis für das Hörspiel „Das Couvert der Vögel“ 2001
Christian-Wagner-Preis 2000
ORF Hörspielpreis 1997
Meersburger Droste-Preis 1997
America Awards Prize 1997



Monolog FM:

„The 16th the City of Vienna is conferring its "Ring of Honour" on me. In City Hall, in the big conference hall, I think. I have to sit there nicely and listen. I even had to tell them my ring size. But I don't wear rings! I even had to go to the watchmaker to measure my ring size“.

Großer Literaturpreis der Bayerischen Akademie der Schönen Künste 1996
Elke- Lasker- Schüler-Dramatikerpreis 1996
Manuskripte- Preis 1994
Friedrich-Hölderlin-Preis der Stadt Homburg 1993
Hans- Erich- Nossack- Preis 1989
Österreichisches Ehrenzeichen für Wissenschaft und Kunst 1987
Ehrenmedaille der Bundesstadt Wien in gold 1985
Literaturpreis des Südwestfunks Baden-Baden 1985
Roswitha-Preis 1982
Großer Österreichischer Staatspreis für Literatur 1982
Anton-Wildgans-Preis
Georg-Trakl-Preis 1977
Literaturpreis der Stadt Wien 1976
Österreichischer Würdigungspreis 1975
Hörspielpreis der Kriegsblinden 1969 (mit Ernst Jandl)



F. Mayröcker und C.Tartarotti

Foto: Edith Schreiber

THE LITERARY TEXTS

The literary texts in the film are not taken from any one single book of poems or prose, but from various published sources depending on the inner necessity of the film situation being evoked.

Poems

5thBrandenburg concert
this is the old year my tears are
auxiliary romanticism, etc.
would do anything for you if
proem on the tailor Aslan Güttekin
The window opposite, etcetera

Gesammelte Gedichte, Suhrkamp Verlag Frankfurt a. M. 2004

Prosa

Und ich schüttelte einen Liebling
Suhrkamp Verlag Frankfurt a. M. 2005

Magische Blätter VI
Suhrkamp Verlag Frankfurt a. M. 2007

Paloma
Suhrkamp Verlag Frankfurt a. M. 2008

DIRECTOR

Carmen Tartarotti

Born in 1950 in Laces/ SouthTirol/Italy. Study of Germanistic and Political Science in Frankfurt am Main. Freelancer at HR/television, simultaneously assistant director for film. In 1982 she shoots her first short film *Kribus-Krabus-Domine*. For her portrait film about Friederike Mayröcker 1 *Häufchen Blume 1 Häufchen Schuh*, 1989 she is awarded with the Film prize of the city of Munich. The runner up documentary film *Paradiso del Cevedale* wins several awards. With the last documentary film *Writing and Silence* she was awarded with the "Hessische Filmpreis 2009" of Frankfurt. Carmen Tartarotti splits her time between Frankfurt and Berlin.

Filmography (Selection)

1980 „KRIBUS-KRABUS-DOMINE“, Kurzspielfilm, 16 mm, Farbe, 17 Min. Filmförderung BMI, *Prädikat: Besonders wertvoll*

1983 „DA CAPO AL FINE“, Kurzspielfilm, 16mm, s/w, 17 Min. Filmförderung FFA/Berlin

1985 „JEDES HAAR WIRFT SEINEN SCHATTEN“, 16 mm, Farbe, 30 Min, Fernsehfilm, im Auftrag des Hessischen Rundfunks

1987 „DIE KUNST IST GEGEN DEN KÖRPER DES KÜNSTLERS GERICHTET“, Filmporträt über die Schriftstellerin Elfriede Jelinek, 16 mm, Farbe, 45 Min., im Auftrag des WDR/Köln. Gesendet u. a. im NDR, SDR, HR

1988 „WENN DIE SCHWALBEN ZIEHEN“, Hessische Drehbuchförderung

1989 „1 HÄUFCHEN BLUME 1 HÄUFCHEN SCHUH“, Filmporträt über die Schriftstellerin F. Mayröcker, 16 mm, Farbe + s/w, 45 Min. Im Auftrag des ORF, Redaktion: Kunst-Stücke. *Filmpreis der Stadt München: LiteraVision*

1992 „PARADISO DEL CEVEDALE“, Dokumentarfilm, 16mm, Farbe, 70 Min. Eigenproduktion, *Filmstein in Gold beim Internationaler Wettbewerb Film+Arch/ Graz, 1993, Förderpreis 1992 Walther von der Vogelweide*

1994 „GANZALLERLIEBST. Vom Mythos der Kurstadt Meran“. Dokumentarfilm, 16 mm, Farbe, 101 Min., Eigenproduktion

1996 „WUNDER ÜBER WUNDER“, Märtyrerlegenden in der Südtiroler Freskenmalerei. Fernsehserie in 12 Folgen mit Leo Andergassen. Eigenproduktion in Zusammenarbeit mit der RAI- Sender Bozen

1998 VIDEOINSTALLATION im Landesbergbaumuseum im Ahrntal/Südtirol. Im Auftrag der Autonomen Provinz Bozen/Amt f. Hochbau

2001-2003 VIDEO & SOUNDINSTALLATION in Schloss Tirol „ Bilderwelt des Mittelalters“ Im Auftrag der Autonomen Provinz Bozen

2004-2006 „ZWISCHEN GRANT UND ELEND“, Dokumentarfilm, 90 Min. Eigenproduktion / Hessische Filmförderung / Autonome Provinz Bozen.

2005-2009 „DAS SCHREIBEN UND DAS SCHWEIGEN“, Dokumentarfilm mit Friederike Mayröcker, 90 Min., Eigenproduktion. Förderungen: Hessische Filmförderung, Bundeskanzleramt Wien, Autonome Provinz BZ. *Hessischer Filmpreis 2009. Licher Filmpreis 2010.*

CAMERA

Pio Corradi

was born in Basle in 1940. After attending art college and training as a photographer, he worked as a freelance cameraman. He lives in Zurich and is one of Switzerland's most renowned cameramen.

Filmography (Selection)

- 1978 GUBER – ARBEIT IN STEIN (Regie: H.U. Schlumpf)
- 1979 WINTERSTADT (Regie: B. Giger)
- 1980 KLASSENGEFLÜSTER (Regie: Nino Jacusso)
- 1982 DER RECHTE WEG (Regie: P. Fischli / D. Weiss)
- 1982 LUDWIG HOHL – VOM ARBEITEN (Regie: A.J. Seiler)
- 1983 PFEIFFER VON NIKLASHAUSEN – WDR (Regie: A. Jungraithmayr)
- 1984 DER GEMEINDEPRÄSIDENT (Regie: B. Giger)
- 1985 HÖHENFEUER (Regie: Fredi M. Murer)
- 1986 DER SCHÖNE AUGENBLICK (Regie: F. Kappeler / P. Corradi)
- 1986 REISEN INS LANDESINNERE (Regie: M. von Gunten)
- 1987 CANDY MOUNTAIN (Regie: R. Frank / R. Wurlitzer)
- 1987 DER LAUF DER DINGE (Regie: P. Fischli / D. Weiss)
- 1987 BAILEY HOUSE, NEW YORK (Regie: Alain Klarer)
- 1988 MERETH OPPENHEIM (Regie: Anselm Spörry)
- 1989 TENNESSEE NIGHTS (Regie: Nicolas Gessner)
- 1990 ARTHUR RIMBAUD-EINE BIOGRAPHIE (Regie: Richard Dindo),
- 1990 DER GRÜNE BERG (Regie: Fredi M. Murer) QP
- 1991 PARADISO DEL CEVEDALE (Regie: Carmen Tartarotti)
- 1992 DUNKLE SCHATTEN DER ANGST (Regie: K. Schmidt)
- 1992 KONGRESS DER PINGUINE (Regie: H.U. Schlumpf)
- 1993 ERNESTO CHE GUEVARA – (Regie: Richard Dindo)
- 1995 UNE SAISON AU PARADIS (Regie: Richard Dindo)
- 1996 DAS WISSEN VOM HEILEN (Regie: Franz Reichle)
- 1996 DIE SALZMÄNNER VON TIBET (Regie: Ulrike Koch)
- 1998 VOLLMOND (Regie: Fredi M. Murer)
- 1999 EIN ZUFALL IM PARADIES (Regie: Matthias von Gunten)
- 2000 GRIPSHOLM (Regie: Xavier Koller)
- 2001 WOLKEN – BRIEFE AN MEINEN SOHN (Regie: Marion Hänsel)
- 2002 MANNI MATTER (Regie: Friedrich Kappeler)
- 2003 VON WERRA (Regie: Werner Schweizer)
- 2003 ÄSSHÄK – GESCHICHTEN AUS DER SAHARA (Regie: Ulrike Koch)
- 2006 VITUS (Regie: Fredi Murer)
- 2007 GERHARD MEIER: DAS WOLKENSCHATTENBOOT (Regie: F. Kappeler)
- 2007 HEIMATKLÄNGE (Regie: Stefan Schwietert)
- 2008 DAS SCHREIBEN UND DAS SCHWEIGEN (Regie: Carmen Tartarotti)

CREDITS

Titel	WRITING AND SILENCE
Tecnical data	Documentary Digi Beta / 35 mm /Stereo, 90 min. German with english subtitels
Cast	FRIEDERIKE MAYRÖCKER Edith Schreiber Peter Huemer Bernhard Fetz Hannes Schweiger Julia Danielczyk Aslan Gütkekin Isabel Centoglu
Production companie	© Carmen Tartarotti, Frankfurt
	Directed: Carmen Tartarotti Screenplay: Carmen Tartarotti, Georg Janett Cinematography: Pio Corradi Editing: Ferdinand Ludwig, Carmen Tartarotti Sounddesign: Kai Tebel



Hessische Filmförderung



federal arts bmuk



AUTONOME PROVINZ BOZEN SÜDTIROL PROVINCIA AUTONOMA DI BOLZANO ALTO ADIGE

Deutsche Kultur und Familie

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