

Reflections on „Andritzki.Saint“

Sonja Toepfer`s „Andritzki.Saint“ is a surprise: The film irritates and intrigues, thereby becoming an inspiring gift. Who from this short film expects the usual summary of some key data of the life of the designated Blessed Alojs Andritzki (1914 – 1943) - since 1941 until his death of typhoid prisoner in the Priest Block of the KZ Dachau - will be disappointed. But who is prepared to accept Sonja Toepfer`s experimental approach, who is open to its rhythm and images, may through listening and looking find a deep, long-lasting understanding, touching the heart while at the same time provoking deep thought.

„Andritzki.Saint“ is not a „Bio-Pic“, no biographic film in an instant format, rather it as an art-product is the attempt – not linear, but full of metaphoric symbols – to understand a person, a time and an unfortunately not only historical constellation: The conflict of an individual, who lives in his deep biblically based beliefs in the value, the dignity and the inviolable freedom of the human being, and a totalitarian regime whose boots trample on these beliefs.

In its circular approach to the title figure „Andritzki.Saint“ is reaching beyond the singular fate to show this Sorb priest as paradigmatic: As a figure in his passion being a timeless example of someone following Christ on his way to the cross in all its consequences; however, also as a figure in his passion who accepts martyrdom in the firm belief that death is not the end. The remarkably relaxed features on his face demonstrate St. Paul`s words “Death, where is your victory? Tod, wo ist dein Stachel?“ (1 Kor 15,55). This accentuated moment of the radical following of Christ demonstrates what a blessed person should be: To remember him should become an example, a model for ones own creed.

This film invites all to meditate the unshakeable belief in the suffering and resurrected Christ which provides this priest with support and hope in his darkest hours. With its esthetical and multi-faceted approach to Andritzki and his example this film becomes a confession by the artist to this martyr and his inner strength. And the viewers have to the answer the question what this belief means for them.

(Übersetzung JWB)