



ECHOES OF HOME Heimatklänge

Switzerland, Germany | 2007 | 82m | U

Director: Stefan Schwietert

Screenplay: Stefan Schwietert

Cinematography: Pio Corradi, Ueli Nüesch

Editing: Stephan Krumbiegel, Calle Overweg

Original Music: Knut Jensen

Leading Players: Erika Stucky, Noldi Alder, Christian Zehnder



It would be hard not to have a preconceived idea of a documentary about yodelling. Quite shamefully, I had images of plump women with long blond plaited hair and men dressed in twee costumes flashing across my mind as I pushed the 'play' button. However, it took only the opening seconds of *Heimatklänge* to dispel these rather distasteful images and replace them with the haunting beauty of Switzerland and the entrancing music so synonymous with its mountaintops.

Schwietert's documentary traces the journeys of three musicians, each with their own personalised style of yodelling. Noldi Alder, born into the Alder musical dynasty, traces back to his beginnings as an eight-year-old boy playing lead violin with his father and brothers in the 'Alder Boys'. From his beginnings so rooted in tradition, it seems a brave move to experiment with music as he does - a point well noted by his conservative father. Erika Stucky presents a hugely diverse musical range, spanning solo comedic performances to a duet with Sina accompanied by a video montage. Constantly stuck in limbo with her Swiss-American nationality, Stucky's interviews begin to touch upon the difficulties of belonging to two such diverse cultures. Finally there comes Christian Zehnder, the musician who seems to have travelled the furthest, turning to yodelling following a series of seizures leaving him incapable of remembering lyrics and, therefore, unable to pursue his dream of becoming a lyrical baritone. As a result, his form of non-verbal singing is perhaps the most experimental of all three, drawing his inspiration from machinery and engaging in the performance in a way their neither Stucky nor Alder seem to achieve.

As a documentary, Schwietert has kept the pace alive through the diverse use of footage and sound. Performances are often matched with grainy, scratched images of rural Switzerland, machinery or home-video style footage. It seems unfortunate, considering the beautiful editing and clear vision of Schwietert, that some of this footage gets repeated so early on in the film. Mixed in amongst breathtaking shots of Switzerland, however, such a crime is forgivable.

TONIGHT'S SCREENING SUPPORTED BY WILL GREGORY



what did you think of the film? please mark or tear your vote ▶

excellent A

please add further comments about the film or the festival here

B

fair C

D

poor E

to be included in our e-mailing list (you'll receive occasional bulletins about film festival activities, special email-only offers and news) **please give your email address** on the other side of your voting slip ▶

There are a few rather bizarre moments in the film which are left unexplained; men in traditional costume and elaborate headpieces trekking through the snow singing door to door whilst banging oversized bells on their bodies, hairy beasts encircling and capturing two women in a very surreal video accompaniment to a song by Sina and Stucky, and Zehnder's somewhat unusual teaching methods almost driving a man to hysterical tears. Making an exception of such moments, Schwietert presents three fascinating musicians and three equally intriguing stories throughout the documentary.

Heimatklänge is an incredibly stunning film. Not only does the music bore right into the core of your being and tingle you from head to toe, but the postcard images leave a lasting imprint of the beauty of Switzerland. The cinematography is commendable with the powerful images sitting comfortably with such strong music. One of the best documentaries that I have ever seen, and possibly the only film ever to have transformed my opinion so dramatically, *Heimatklänge* is a film which can only be described as being simply beautiful. Never again will I resort to stereotypes.

BFF Film Note by Nicola Richardson

Also tonight at Bath Film Festival 2009...

8.50pm | Chapel Arts | £6 / £4

The Sky Crawlers

Mamoru Oshii | Japan | 122m | 15tbc

In this nightmarish world, war is a media contrivance played out between gigantic corporations to reassure the populace that things are being taken care of. The meditative, dystopian worldview of Mamoru "Ghost In The Shell" Oshii's latest anime is balanced by stunning aerial action sequences and a muted but striking beauty.

and tomorrow...

Friday 20 November, 7.00pm | Chapel Arts | £6 / £4

Afghan Star

Havana Marking | UK, Afghanistan | 87m | 12A tbc | sub-titles

After decades of war and Taliban rule a new TV talent show is taking Afghanistan by storm. Winner of Best Director and the Audience Award at Sundance 2009, this timely and moving documentary follows four contestants (including two women) from the regional auditions to the final.

Director Havana Marking will be at the screening to take questions from the audience.

to be added to our mailing list, or to have your entry updated, please give us your **name:**

address:

phone:

email:

we might occasionally have an opportunity to send you details of other arts events which we feel might interest you. Please tick this box if you would prefer **not** to receive these:

I am interested in:

a year-round arts cinema club directors' introductions film with other artforms film / live music festival pass for all films
short / experimental film email film newsletter matinee screenings late-night screenings workshops volunteering
sponsoring an event **something else...**

would you be interested in joining a 'Friends of Bath Film Festival' scheme, which would confer benefits in return for a small joining fee?
yes **no** please detach this slip from your flmnote and hand in following the screening, or return to:

BFF, c/o On The Video Front, 7 Terrace Walk, Bath BA1 1LN telephone / fax: **01225 401149** email: **info@bathfilmfestival.org.uk**