

film by Lidija Mirkovic
Film von Lidija Mirkovic

I HAVE DREAMT OF WORKING AS A HAIRDRESSER ICH HABE DAVON GETRÄUMT, FRISEUSE ZU WERDEN

Press view

(...) But only two-thirds of them are on sufferance, they have to face alien's deportation. They are not allowed to work, they receive only 70 % of the welfare entitlement and they have no right to receive child or education benefits. Not only materially their life is difficult: until today Roma are faced with ancient prejudices.

"How funny is the Gypsy life?" the two-day film festival at Lichtmess is asking ... Initially the narration of the story of the young Roma Iva visualises the question. Already the film title tells about what she dreamed when she and her family fled from poverty and racism in Yugoslavia to Germany: "I have dreamt of working as a hairdresser". But the fled hairdresser can't realise her modest dream. Instead of that she become object of German migration bureaucracy, her family and she are threatened by deportation. Instead of cutting hair, she and other Roma resist against the enforced returning.

Though the film does not only describe the struggle, but it clarifies also why Iva and the others wage the struggle, since what they await in Serbia is figured out by the film team in Belgrade: national heated atmosphere, which is also expressed in daily antiziganism. The majority of the population lived out the lasting effect of the trauma of the NATO bombing war against Yugoslavia in aggression against minorities. Social exclusion is everyday life for Roma; violence, rape or even homicide are the order of the day.

When the team returns to Germany Iva already disappears into illegality. The film shows how she and her family come to terms with this situation. A situation, in which many Roma living here find themselves. As persons with exceptional leave to remain for humanitarian reasons they have to face deportation at any time. A state of uncertainty in which they have to live for years.

The director Lidija Mirkovic portrays also other Roma families and their children in Germany and see them after their deportation in former Yugoslavia. Noticeable visible is the mental overload of the children, which – born and raised in Germany – now find themselves in a

completely different state. Their dreams and plans, the familiar surrounding and friends were forcibly destroyed. (...)

Gaston Kirsche, TAZ, Hamburg, 2008-04-12

A dream, a little dream, and its fulfilment should be no problem. The greatest desire of a young woman is to become a hairdresser. But for Iva this ordinary dream is unattainable. Iva has fled with her family from discrimination and racism from Serbia to Germany. But even here she has to contend with difficulties. It's not just that she is threatened by deportation, but also discrimination and suspicion accompany her everyday life.

Buxtehude Hamburger Abendblatt, 2008-11-25

North Rhine-Westphalia premiere of the documentary by Lidija Mirkovic (Germany 2008, 85', original language version with subtitles, DVD). The film portrays the in the media little-known daily reality of the so-called "gypsies" in Western and Eastern Europe of our time. The film tells life stories, like tragedies, which merge to a larger, more general history with many protagonists and plot lines. The fact that the Sinti and Roma represent with about 15 million people an unknown but deeply European minority, which is located across the continental area, makes their situation unique. Since the fall of the Berlin Wall and the rising conflicts between nationalities in the Eastern European states, Gypsies are increasingly ostracized, discriminated and disadvantaged. Many are seeking a new home in the countries of Western Europe, which the West does not want to be and deports these refugees usually. Against this background, this documentary dives into the contemporary lives of the Sinti and Roma, meets very different people in Düsseldorf and Belgrade – asylum seekers and deportees, demonstrators, street sweepers, street vendors, street musicians, school children, shoe shiners, garbage sorters, prostitutes – and tells of the reality of this people.

TERZ, online edition, December 2009

A political film that deals with the situation of Roma in Europe using the example of Germany and Serbia. The film is a plea for the overdue social concessions, which enable Europe's largest minority a decent life, a life free from persecution and racial discrimination.

film.at online, December 2009