

## magic hour

Manfred Neuwirth, who works in the border region between New Media, documentary and avant-garde film, is searching for the first look. His main interest is directed at images and sounds from everyday life which have not been chosen intentionally, „structured“ and subjected to complex treatment, but those created en passant which are nevertheless dense and able to communicate a message.

*magic hour* is the conclusion of a trilogy which takes the viewer from Tibet (*tibetan recollections*) to Japan (*manga train*) and then Lower Austria. Unprejudiced and non-nostalgic consideration of various places, sounds and tastes of childhood and home is probably more difficult to grasp than that of distant lands: There is also an exoticism of remembered images. But when Neuwirth „remembers“ in a film, a rare balance is achieved between the archetypal and the unique, that which is wholly rooted in the present; a balance between dream and diary.

The soundtrack plays a decisive role. It creates a spatial tension which doesn't want to be separated from the image: a blind spot in the representation specifically intended to distinguish it from the „whole“ and „actually experienced“ moment. The customary relationship between the film's levels is reversed. The soundscore creates for us a plastic image of the world; the images, which have been slowed to one fifth of their normal speed, produce a kind of flowing motion which one would normally associate with the perception of sound.

Neuwirth takes himself and his audience through „a certain colour on a street into a different country, into a different distance, into a different music“ without the aid of speech or text. The viewer that waits expectantly for something in the dream time of magic hour has already lost.

*Alexander Horwath*