



TOURA D'OR 2012

Category "Informational Films and Documentaries"

Indian Dreams – The amazing journey of Bhupinder Chauhan

by Walter Größbauer and Claudia Pöchlauer, Fortuna-Media, Austria

(90 minutes, English and vernacular languages, with subtitles, 2012)

The documentary accompanies a young Indian fulfilling his dream: From Delhi Bhupinder Chauhan takes a train to the seaside in Kerala, 3,000 kilometres south. He takes three weeks for his journey. On the train, he gets opportunities for conversations and for meeting people. At some stations, he gets off the train in order to get to know the homes or workplaces of some of his travel acquaintances. He is curious and interested in encounters, he asks questions about the living conditions of his countrymen and women, and he gets a more differentiated idea of his native country that is new for him, too. And by accompanying him we learn what we would also learn as tourists if we decided to discover the country in this manner.

The protagonist allows us to take part in his journey which is adapted in an exemplary manner: We get to know different parts of the country and learn about political, cultural and economic conditions. The film presents a gradual picture of India, of conflicts on the one hand and of people's dreams on the other. It does not paint an idealised picture, but spot-lights daily life reality.

Our traveller is thus also a reporter who takes us on his journey and allows us to participate in his experiences and insights. Clichés are broken when we learn how the people portrayed see themselves and talk about their hopes. Of course there are not "THE Indians" and "THE India" as such. Bhupinder Chauhan manages to open up confidential and very personal situations, fates and fortunes: Taxi drivers and animal welfare activists, corpse washers and amateur actors, fishermen and photographers allow us insights into their daily lives.

Fade-in quotes provide catchwords that lead to new questions and assessments. The music specifically composed for this purpose provides a perceptive atmosphere. Furthermore, songs by local music groups have been added. The excellent camera work is authentic, sometimes poetic and often very close, yet not obtrusive.

The film is not a report about popular tourist destinations. However, it shows aspects of India which a traveller would also be able to explore. It is both: a documentary about a train journey and an encouragement to travel in the same way – perhaps not the entire route, but at least part of it.

"Indian Dreams" fulfils the TOURA D'OR criteria by pointing out a way of travelling with an appropriate and sensitive attitude towards the country and its people.