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Original German text by Martin Preisser

St.Gallen composer filmed his Requiem: Here the soul goes to the light after death

Christoph Schnell has also filmed his last year's "Requiem X" without covering up the gripping music. Tomorrow is a premiere in the Cantonal Library of St.Gallen.



Death has nothing frightening in this film and in this music. The soul goes to the light. Normally, music accompanies the film, with Christoph Schnell's "Requiem X" it is exactly the opposite. The music is the script, it is accompanied by the film. And this "script" is gripping and captivating.

Schnell has composed a Requiem that seems to be created in one piece, tight, pushing forward and sound-intensive, just like an exciting plot. In June 2018 it was premiered in the St.Galler Linsenbühl church. By the Austrian Arpeggione Chamber Orchestra and the London Sonoro Choir under the direction of the St.Gallen violinist and conductor Robert Bokor.

Delightful Japanese Taiko drums

That a composer, who is also a computer scientist, filmed his own work, is quite unique and shows Christoph Schnell as an all-round artist, who seems to deal

with the visual as well as the musical art equal sovereign. You can see in Schnell's 18th film as a background story the world premiere in the Linsenhühl church in black and white. Strange far, almost historically this works, although it is only one year ago. The use of the Japanese Taiko drums is particularly inspiring here. The ritual, often depicted very vividly, not only forms the central theme here through the powerful Requiem.

Images of NASA accompany the journey of the soul

This film needs no "action", the music itself is the action. That this is precisely what is revealed is a performance of the film. Christoph Schnell as director invites the musical drama of life and death with animated still images, 3D scans and complex computer animations. Particularly convincing in the imagery, which is never simply painted over the musical statement, are the pictures of NASA, which amplify the expanse, the cosmic of the Requiems idea. Christoph Schnell does not avoid the dark elements of life nor its fleetingness and fragility. He shows images of war and inferno, of fast pace and decay, often combined with symbolic elements.

And yet the director and composer keeps coming back to the hope: after death, the light waits in this Requiem. The imperishable expands into infinity. Beguiling elements of the floating show cinematic as well as musical effect.

A thriller-like plot

Anyone who has heard the premiere will be reminded once again of a compact, concentrated and closed interpretation in the film. Christoph Schnell also surprises with a special "Agnus Dei" in his "Requiem X". He wrote it in bolero rhythm. This part forms a culmination point of the whole Requiem, intense and urgent, simply impressive.

In short: To anyone who wants to experience music for life and death as a thriller-like action and wants to see dying as a journey into the world of light, this movie is recommended.