

“Fragments of Kubelka” von Martina Kudláček

SHORT VERSION

ENGLISH

A film about the master artist Peter Kubelka (born 1934, Vienna) and how he has created a monument, not only to himself but also to the era of analog cinema which is coming to an end. For nearly four hours, “Fragments of Kubelka” accompanies the filmmaker as he elucidates his work, his life, even the totality of sensory perceptions of a physical embrace of the world. In an apparently seamless monologue Kubelka creates a broad, sensual arc from the beginnings of his work in the 1950s to his favorite recurring themes of cooking, metrics and time, language, and metaphor in the world of things.

For an extended period of time Martina Kudláček observes the grand master of Austrian (and international) avant-garde film as he philosophizes - alongside his collection of artifacts, while sitting in his kitchen cooking and eating, and while giving lectures. Every element matches the refrains of his engaging sermon and is occasionally provocative. At the same time Kubelka, in dialogue with the director/camera person who remains invisible almost the entire time, attempts to share everything that in his opinion holds art together to its innermost elements.

Beginning with his first metric film work, “Adebar” (1957), the documentary “Fragments of Kubelka” takes us through the haptic world of the artist’s thoughts and ideas, modulating themes, variations and improvisations with an almost musical daring. Only four times in the entire 233 minutes does someone other than the master make a comment, in each instance supporting and corroborating his approach of providing compressed echoes of a chord of maximum resonance that spans the globe. Archival materials, such as an appearance on U.S. television as well as a cooking show and excerpts from the diaries of Kubelka's close friend

filmmaker Jonas Mekas, briefly interrupt the restrainedly surging flow of ideas.

And so the artist's words gush forth, diverge and gather, taking their time and making metaphors. And in spite of hours of elaboration, rather than totally exhausting its possibilities, "Fragments of Kubelka" remains open and fresh.

Christian Höller, 2012

Translation Steve Wilder and MK