

Shadow Distribution Presents

Touch the Sound

A sound journey with Evelyn Glennie

By Thomas Riedelsheimer

*director of **Rivers and Tides***

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99 Minutes

TOUCH THE SOUND takes us on a remarkable journey with Evelyn Glennie, one of the world's foremost musicians, a Grammy-winning classical percussionist whose solo work is unrivalled. She is also deaf.

This is her story. Supported by her caring father, Evelyn overcame considerable obstacles to become an extraordinary success. Through her, sound is palpable and rhythm is the basis of everything. Without vibration, there is nothing. From silence to music, from hearing to seeing and to feeling, sound is felt through every sense in our body.

Cinematographer and director Thomas Riedelsheimer (director of the award-winning box office success RIVERS AND TIDES) demonstrates his gift for mapping a world of senses, of colourful images and evocative sounds of Japan, England, California and New York. Hearing images, seeing sound. We see, hear and truly feel the beat of the universe. We are transformed.

My personal approach

Michi excited me. This Marimba piece of the Japanese Muscian Keiko Abe, interpreted by Scottish percussionist Evelyn Glennie, accompanied me through the long phase of the rough-cut of my previous film, Rivers and Tides. At that time I didn't yet know Evelyn, but the dynamics of the playing, the warmth of the soundscape and the changing sentiments in her interpretations remained in my mind. In the summer of 2001 I went to a solo concert of Evelyn in Cheltenham, England. Only a few minutes after she began to play, I knew I wanted to do my next film on Ms Glennie and this world of sounds. Her energy and this incredible ability to hear with the whole body and each of her senses, was fascinating. I wanted to listen into her world with my instrument – the camera.

Hearing is a form of touch, she says – and that's what it's about. To listen and to let yourself be touched. The film deliberately avoids what makes up Evelyn's musical everyday life: her concerts and performances with the biggest orchestras of the world. Instead, journeys of sound occur – to places foreign or familiar. And through the small, improvised sessions with other musicians from around the globe. The filming itself lasted an entire year. Add another year for post production. And because of this time, I hear differently – simply by being more aware. I believe that sounds and rhythm essentially influence our surroundings, our moods and our quality of life. Consciously hearing is as important as an appreciation of seeing, or eating. In this sense: Enjoy your meal!

~ Thomas Riedelsheimer

Evelyn Glennie

Evelyn Glennie was born in 1965 near Aberdeen in Scotland. She grew up on her parents' farm with her two brothers. At the age of twelve she became interested in the snare drum. It was around this time that her hearing began to deteriorate as the result of a neurological disorder. A few years later she was eighty per cent deaf. However, her Scottish stubbornness would not let her give up. She learnt to feel the vibrations of the notes and to distinguish between them with the help of different areas of sensitivity throughout her body.

Evelyn Glennie had one goal--to play classical percussion. Not at the back of the orchestra but as a solo performer, an independent artist. However, quite apart from the fact that many people believed that both her poor hearing and her small, petite stature would prove an insuperable barrier, there was no established solo percussionist role to serve as a model. Evelyn's inexhaustible energy swept all objections aside. In 1988 she won a Grammy for her first CD recording. Over the following years she played with all the great orchestras of the world and recorded a dozen CDs. She worked with Brazilian samba groups, Japanese kodo drummers, Indonesian gamelan orchestras and with the Icelandic rock singer, Björk. She commissioned contemporary pieces for percussion, thereby constantly expanding her repertoire. Evelyn had achieved the heights at a very young age.

Now at thirty six she is in a new phase of creativity. She no longer has to prove anything to anybody. She listens now to what is within herself and prefers improvising through good feeling to a perfected technical style. The dimension of the individual beat is as important to her as a complete score. She values the fine shades of sound much more highly. She is an amazing performer

With an instinctive understanding of the sensual enjoyment which makes for a good show. Evelyn's concert tours take her to Japan, Europe and, above all, to the USA, where she keeps a second complete set of percussion instruments. In between her tours she hatches new ideas in her sound studio, at home, in the countryside north of London.

Evelyn's Website: >>> www.evelyn.co.uk <<<

Fred Frith

Fred Frith is renowned as an expert of improvisation and one of the leading musicians and composers of avantgarde music. Fred is master of various instruments but plays guitar the best. Born in England, he lived and worked for a long time in New York and Stuttgart. He was the co-founder of various cult bands such as "Henry Cow", "Massacre", "Keep the Dog" and the "Fred Frith Guitar

Quartet". He has worked with other avantgarde musicians such as John Zorn, Ikue Mori and Tom Cora. He has also composed scores for film and theatre, as well as for orchestras such as the Ensemble Modern. Fred also composed and interpreted the music score for my previous film "Rivers and Tides".

Fred's website: >>> www.fredfrith.com <<<

Thomas Riedelsheimer

Born September 1963; studied at the Academy for Film and Television in Munich (1984-1991); since 1986 free-lance author, director and cameraman in Germany and abroad (Somalia, Tanzania, South Africa, New Zealand, Latvia, Russia, Tibet, Nepal, Japan, Canada, Scotland, etc.); lecturer at seminars on cinematography at the Film Academy in Munich; own equipment: camera crane, steadicam, lights; camera work on 16mm, S16mm and 35mm, as well as on Beta SP and DigiBeta. Pre 2001: production work for Riedelsheimer Dokumentarfilm 2001 till present: director of the film production company Filmquadrat, with partners Stefan Tolz and Thomas Wartmann.

Credits as Director and Director of Photography

RIVERS AND TIDES - ANDY GOLDSWORTHY WORKING WITH TIME
Germany/Scotland 2000, 90 min, col., S16mm, director, camera; Prod: Mediopolis, Co-Prod: Skyline Productions for ARTE, YLE, FFF. Multi-award winning film on international theatrical release. DVD release 2004 www.riversandtides.co.uk

METAMORPHOSEN (Metamorphoses)
Germany 1997/98, 45 and 93 min, col., Digi Beta 16:9

LHASA UND DER GEIST TIBETS (Lhasa and the spirit of Tibet)
Germany 1996/97, 60 min, col., Digi Beta 16:9

SCHWEBEN HEIßT LIEBEN (Floating means Love)
Germany 1994, 80min, col., 16mm

DANN WERDEN SIE SCHON SCHIEßEN...
Germany 1992, 63min, s/w, 16mm

SPONSAE CHRISTI (The Brides of Christ)
Germany 1991/92, 68min, col., 16mm

BILDSCHIRMHERRSCHAFT (Government on Air)

Germany 1988/89, 60min, col., SP Highband

Awards

2003 2 x German Filmprize "Lola©" - Best Camera, Best Documentary

2003 Best Documentary, San Diego Critics Circle

2002 Bester Dokumentarfilm, Verband der deutschen Filmkritik

2002 Best Documentary, San Francisco Critics Circle

2002 Grand Prize, San Francisco

2002 Grand Prix, Montreal

2001 German Camera Prize

1998 Film Award, Munich

1993 German Video Art Award

1993 Adolf-Grimme Gold Award (Best Documentary on German TV)

Stefan Tolz

Stefan Tolz (born 1966) studied at the School for Film and Television in Munich (Germany) and at the Georgian Institute for Theatre in Tbilisi (Georgia) with short-term stays at the film department of the New York University and at the Beijing Film Academy.

Since 1993 he has been working as a free-lance filmmaker and producer for various public TV Stations, first in Cologne, since 1999 in Munich. Some of his documentaries won awards at international filmfestivals as his latest feature length film, which had its cinema release in Germany last year.

For the last six years he has had various teaching appointments in the field of documentary film and TV journalism and has also been involved in the development of an interactive language course series (fiction & documentaries) for the Goethe Cultural Institute.

In 2002 Stefan Tolz co-founded the Filmquadrat Production company in Munich - although he is considered to have lost his heart to the Caucasus...

He is fluent in English, French, Russian and Georgian.

Crew

director, photography, editor:
Thomas Riedelsheimer

producers:
Stefan Tolz
Leslie Hills
Trevor Davies

music improvised and performed by:
Evelyn Glennie and Fred Frith
Roxanne Butterfly, USA
Horazio "El Negro" Hernandez, USA
Za Ondekoza, Japan
This Mika & Saikou, Japan
Jason "The Fogmaster", USA

sound designers:
Marc von Stuerler (location sound)
Gregor Kuschel (location sound)
Christoph von Schoenburg
(sound edit)
Hubertus Rath (re-recording mix)

camera assistants:
Dieter Stuermer
Oliver Sachs
Shinji Heboki
Isabel Alvarez

line producers:
Andrés Jauernick
Heinz Hausner
Dave Tarvit

production manager:
Markus Breimaier

production assistants:
Katrin Jäger
Claudia Seifert
Stephanie Hills

commissioning editors:
Walter Greifenstein, BR Germany
Jochen Kölsch, ARTE
Erkki Astala and Eila Werning,
YLE Finland

With the support of:
Scottish Screen National Lottery
Fund
FilmFernsehFonds Bayern
Filmförderanstalt
BKM, minister of Culture,
Germany
NRW Filmstiftung, Germany

co-production with:
BR, Bavarian Television
ARTE
YLE TV1 Co-productions,
Finland

produced by:
Filmquadrat, Munich

in co-production with:
Skyline, Edinburgh

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