



TOURA D'OR 2017

Category "Informational Films and Documentaries"

Mare Nostrum – A Concert. A Journey. (Mare Nostrum – Ein Konzert. Eine Reise.)

by Michelle Brun and Stefan Haupt, Vivante Productions

(57 minutes, German, 2015)

How does "intercultural dialogue" work – only as a vision? An exceptional film on an exceptional educational and arts initiative provides an answer to this question:

The documentary fulfils the TOURA D'OR contest criteria in an exceptional manner: It *encourages tourists to seek encounters with local people*, it gives *positive examples for socially responsible and sustainable travel* and wants to contribute to a *better understanding of every day realities*. The film tries to break *stereotypes* and encourages tourists to *engage with the country and the theme*. *Music, sound and language* strongly support the film's content. What is unique is the skilful way of linking a long standing music project at a Swiss school with a journey to Morocco that was initiated as one of its outcomes. The statements by the people involved, the sophisticated concert and the illustration of how a comprehensive intercultural dialogue was realised make the film prize-worthy.

Mare Nostrum, the Latin term for the Mediterranean, is currently most probably known as the name of a naval operation to rescue refugees on their way from Africa to Europe. In this context, however, it is about a project involving two schools in Switzerland and Morocco. The *Scuola Vivante* – Living School – in Buchs in the canton of St. Gallen is an innovative educational project recognized by UNESCO. It has contributed to the film as a result of its activities over several years. The almost one hour documentary allows viewers to be part of a musical journey around the Mediterranean. It also allows them to accompany the Swiss students on their visit to their partner school *École vivante* in Morocco. The film is therefore not a classic travelogue, but rather evidence of an encounter at various levels between people, cultures, regions, and religions.

The cooperation with the Catalan musician Jordi Savali led to a concert in Buchs: *Mare Nostrum – Dialogue of Ottoman, Jewish and Christian Music from around the Mediterranean*. Following the concert, a group of young people travelled to Morocco and enjoyed a lively exchange with the students in the High Atlas mountains.

The concert and interviews with the participating musicians from nine countries are the leitmotif of the film. Their statements are embedded in the students' travel experience from Europe to Africa. The students' impressions on the bus tour which took many days and their encounters in Morocco give evidence of the impacts of such an intercultural dialogue.