



TOURA D'OR 2017

Category "Informational Films and Documentaries"

Close to Heaven – The Rice Terraces of the Philippines (Dem Himmel nah – Die Reisterrassen auf den Philippinen.)

by Antje Christ, Christ Media GmbH

(44 minutes, German, 2015)

"Travel and Encounter" – this approach is embodied in the documentary on the traditional paddy fields and the inhabitants of Banaue in the North of Luzón in the Philippines. For centuries, highly labour-intensive paddy cultivation has been practiced there on the rough terrain of mountain slopes. The terraces are said to be the oldest structures in the Philippines. They have been recognized as UNESCO world cultural heritage since 1995. The indigenous Ifugao practice this traditional form of agriculture – but many young people no longer consider it attractive and rather engage in the developing tourism sector which has a future just because of the rice terraces. This, however, leads to gradual neglect of the characteristic paddy fields which would actually need regular care.

This is exactly the problem described in the documentary: On the one hand, we learn a lot about the world view of the local people, about their ancestor worship, their beliefs, and the challenges posed by the tedious manual labour. On the other hand, we learn about the efforts of generating new sources of income through tourism products and services. Preservation here, renewal there – this motto is illustrated in a vivid manner. The example of a farmer's son helps us follow the ways in which he manages to bridge the gap between the two.

The film *encourages* tourists *to look behind the scenes and to meet local people*. It also gives *positive examples of socially responsible, environmentally friendly and sustainable tourism products and services*.

Antje Christ already received the TOURA D'OR 2006 for "Cape Verde – Islands of Hope".