



Sunday Warriors

A film by **Andreas Geiger**

Development and production funded by the Medienboard Berlin-Brandenburg
Production funded by the Medienboard Berlin-Brandenburg, the DFFF, the MFG and Filmfonds Wien
In cooperation with RBB/ARTE, in co-production with Golden Girls Filmproduktion

Hidden in our forest they live almost unnoticed: elves and Orks, warriors and undeads, dark rulers and beautiful shining lights. Every weekend thousands of these weird beings meet for the big game. Martial screams echo through the woods, swords strike together, armies of soldiers trek over the fields and left behind a mass of destruction. The good versus the bad – the everlasting fight.

What sounds like a scenario from „The Lord of the Rings“, is for thousands of actors an exciting reality and means plunging in a world of myths and magic. These live action role-playing games are called LARP, whose process and ending is determined by the actors themselves. There is no audience, they are acting for themselves, are actors and audience at once. Between April and October hundreds of Cons, as the role-playing events are called, take place every weekend. Sometimes a dozen of role players meet, but during „big cons“ like the „Conquest of Mythodea“ in Brokeloh in Niedersachsen, with about 300 inhabitants, or

the „festival of the Dragon“ in hessian Diemelstadt, almost 8.000 participants come together. Only Germany counts a role-playing Community of about 250.000 players.

Each player chooses his own character: elf, Ork, prince, beggar, magician, settler, jester, druid, healer, knight, fire being, juggler, goblin, hobbit or vampire are the most popular parts, whose properties can be combined and developed as desired. Many players advance their characters within years, there is no fixed script, improvisation and phantasy are their tools, when the fight to the death begins. It is a world just like in the childhood, when nothing else mattered than playing.

Sunday warriors“ portrays five players and shows their live between battlefield and computer workstation.

When Dirk as „Ruler of the undeaden Flesh“ leads his 300 men army to the fight, nobody supposes him to work as

a secretary for the party „Bündnis 90 die Grünen“. Chris, the strict gymnasium teacher from Tübingen, is as „Aniesha Fey, Ruler of Emptiness“ one of the most popular and feared role-playing figures in Germany and the star of the scene.

Gregor, the gay make-up artist from Berlin decodes as archmage „Lamathiel“ secret formulas and loves the play with identities and characters – whether during the magician meeting or in the gay scene.

The corpulent Sven works as an assemblyman at VW, but at the weekend he turns into the „Gardener of the oily Pestilence“. „With my figure I can't act like a prince, but my character doesn't mind being corpulent!“ and is able to laugh at himself.

Since over 700 years, the kindly queen of elves Lenora reigns over the Auental and has to face a decision of fate: shall she lead the elves in a war or shall they flee into the woods? In real life the shy student from Groß-Ziehdorf is about to enter the workforce – as an expectant fashion designer, she loves to tailor imaginative dresses and costumes.

Sensitive and close to the protagonists, but with a good portion of humour director Andreas Geiger arises the question, where the longing for fantasy worlds, archaic myths and the common play is coming from? And how do our protagonists, absolute normal, endearing and reflected persons, deal with the contradictions of their parallel world?

The film addresses in an entertaining way the multifaceted behavioural role in our postmodern society, in which everybody changes his identity confidently to live out all aspects of their personality in job, family and free time. And not at least the propagation of social networks like facebook fortifies the self-evidently change between reality, virtuality and the play with identities and characters. Likewise the massive dissemination of video games blurs the boundaries between fantasy world and reality. By now the global game-industry earns way more than the film industry and more people plunge as players into foreign fantasy worlds.

The film plays knowingly with fiction and reality and changes dramaturgically and formally between feature film and documentary. Coloration, wide screen and sound design remind of current fantasy productions like „Games of Thrones“ or „Spartacus“, even the influence of established game-aesthetic are visible.

Sunday Warriors balances with his protagonists between pathos and banality, myth and all day life, play and self-analysis and gives an insight in a world, in which the big human desires of today become visible. An Ode to the play and the phantasy!