

Can't Be Silent

On Tour with The Refugees

They are musicians from Africa, the Balkans and Iran. And since May 2012 they have been touring Germany with songwriter Heinz Ratz and his band Strom und Wasser. What makes this project special is that these musicians are asylum seekers. Throughout the summer we have accompanied them on their journey and followed them with our cameras.

On the stage: young rappers join together with an experienced Jazz pianist, a reggae singer with a German singer-songwriter, an African percussionist with accomplished Roma musicians and a beatboxer with Greek roots. Despite their differences, they gather in a respectful way – meeting each other eye to eye. Their creativity unfolds as they work to develop a common language through music. “I can’t be silent will show this process of convergence: from the wrong notes to the beautiful harmonies, from the stage-fright to the shining moments. We will show the small locations and thunderous applause, the enthusiasm and the grinding routines

Only as the film progresses will the viewers begin to experience the arduous daily lives of the refugees in the group. As the film unfolds, so too will their stories and their experiences of living under the stark statutory requirements attached to their status. Viewers will begin to understand that refugees are not just allowed to travel freely inside Germany, that they have to live with many people in cramped spaces, and that they don't always have a possibility to rehearse or to practice their instrument. They will be asked to contemplate living under the constant threat of deportation and having to put up with the memories of their traumatic experiences coming to Europe. The lives of refugees are precarious and the future more than insecure. But in “**I can't be silent**”, the musicians are not handled as objects of pity, but will be viewed as strong individuals who express the issues that define their lives through their music.

Credits

Length: 85 min

Language: english, farsi, french, german

Subtitles: english, german

Format: 16:9 HD

Country: Germany

autofocus | Videowerkstatt

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Quelle: http://www.cant-be-silent.de/english/home_english/