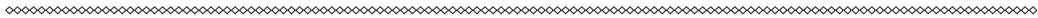




QUOTES & TEXTS COLLECTION



"I LOOK LIKE I'M JUDGING ON LIFE AND DEATH, BUT I'M JUST ARRANGING COOKING SPOONS."

Daniel Spoerri

"... There are films as letters, films as songs, films as poems but one rarely hears about films as being gifts. Salomonowitz gifts us an understanding of how beautiful and necessary it can be to give a film as a present."

Patrick Holzapfel, Viennale, Vienna International Filmfestival

"A remarkable meditation on life."

Thomas Taborsky, Die Furche

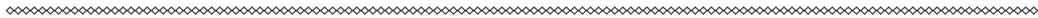
"But what's probably the most beautiful thing about this lovingly drawn film collage is how it manages to effortlessly and playfully provide new perceptions on a world of ideas that evokes a much more fundamental reflection on art."

Ania Gleich, skug





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“With THIS MOVIE IS A GIFT, Anja Salomonowitz enters Daniel Spoerri’s world and without translating it, without simplifying it, succeeds in the perilous art of opening a hallway toward its core. The dialogue between Spoerri’s and Salomonowitz’s creation works like a charm and the viewer, third party in it, ends up with a sense of intimacy with both artists.”
Déborah Laks, Researcher, CNRS Paris

“It’s an inventive film, made of simplicity and profoundness.”
Eva Sangiorgi, Viennale, Vienna International Filmfestival

“The rage to collect, the assemblages as memento mori, death: as Salomonowitz’s film reflects, it reaches far beyond the usual artist documentary. She shows that Spoerri’s accumulation of all the doll’s heads, spoons and hearts is not an end in itself, but that they enter into a new cycle through him.”
Nina Schedlmayer, The Gap

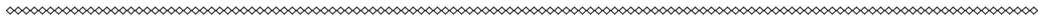
“This film is not a conventional artist’s biography, but actually a beautiful, unexpected gift to all of us.”
Michael Omasta, Falter

“THIS MOVIE IS A GIFT is a very special, unconventional and very personal film. Hard to describe in its form: no portrait, no interview film either. Rather an exchange of ideas. And a bit like a poem.”
Martin Schweighofer, Austrian Film Commission





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“Together with Spoerri and her youngest son Oskar, Anja Salomonowitz created a subtle film where one can quietly laugh and even cry a little.“

Ditta Rudle, Tanzschrift

“Anja Salomonowitz has developed her own form of documentary film. With every dry instruction, meticulousness or blandness her films have the same effect on the emotional level, as a feature film.“

Ditta Rudle, Tanzschrift

“This Movie is a Gift: A poetic portrait.”

Wiener Zeitung

“With the help of large tableaux, a special colour design and an unconventional visual language, Salomonowitz succeeds in poetically translating the reality of the artist’s life into a film.”

Verena Franke, Wiener Zeitung

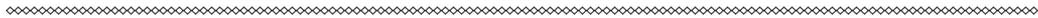
“The film is a free play of artistic forces, an essay that combines private life and politics and, last but not least, a jointly brewed prank.”

Wolfgang Popp, Ö1





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“A successful and positive film about the life and work of a great optimist.”

Harald Wilde, ORF

“Moments, snatching from oblivion. Capturing the eternal cycle of life, that is what Spoerri is still interested in today.”

Harald Wilde, ORF

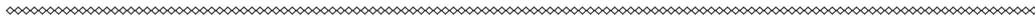
“Austrian filmmaker Anja Salomonowitz uses Spoerri’s idea of life as a cycle to remember her late father and at the same time to tell about Spoerri’s childhood under the Nazis. A touching, fragile portrait film.”

Kurier





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“Daniel Spoerri creates art out of found objects that lose their function as soon as he integrates them into his works. Anja Salomonowitz makes films that are devoted to the visualization of time and conflict. The intersection of the two is THIS MOVIE IS A GIFT, a work that intertwines the work of both in a very personal way. The film’s title already suggests that it is more about giving than representation: Salomonowitz expresses her gratitude to Spoerri with a portrait that repeatedly links his work with objects back to his biography: Spoerri, born Feinstein, is the son of a Romanian Jew who was abducted and murdered. At the same time, the film looks ahead and extends its memory into the future by staging Salomonowitz’ son Oskar as a stand-in and counterpart of Spoerri. Nothing is lost but is merely reassembled in surprising ways.”

Dominik Kamalzadeh, film journalist, Vienna

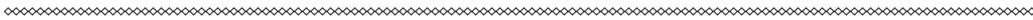
“Akin to a part song, Anja Salomonowitz’s tender approach to artist Daniel Spoerri is arranged for several voices. The first is the artist himself, a fascinating man of multiple talents. The film mainly focuses on his work with objects, the so-called snare pictures. Those pictures are also the second voice as the film uses them to create an idea of resurrection. Cycles are renewed, life begins again. The third voice belongs to Salomonowitz’s dead father and the act of mourning that loss. The fourth voice belongs to her son Oskar, who re-enacts statements by Spoerri. The fifth voice is connected to the pogrom in Romania during World War II. Spoerri, who comes from a Jewish family, lost his father during that time. Largely shot at Spoerri’s studio, the film connects all these voices and lets them overlap. The flow of voices delves into a deep understanding of life in larger circles. Resurrection, the film tells us, is possible when one finds a way to accept death. There are films as letters, films as songs, films as poems but one rarely hears about films as being gifts. Salomonowitz gifts us an understanding of how beautiful and necessary it can be to give a film as a present.”

Patrick Holzapfel, Viennale, Vienna International Filmfestival



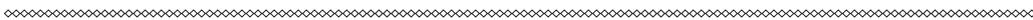


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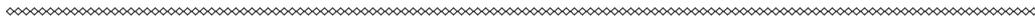
“The Swiss Daniel Spoerri, who now lives in Vienna, is one of the outstanding representatives of object art. Together with Jean Tinguely and Yves Klein, he founded the Nouveau Réalisme and is considered the creator of Eat Art. Today he produces his assemblage paintings with objects he finds at flea markets: He breathes new life into things that others no longer need. Salomonowitz follows Spoerri’s idea of existence as a constant cycle, linking aspects of her own life with it (from her late father to her son Oskar, who also interacts with Spoerri here) and thereby touching on questions of Jewish identity.“

Lars Penning, Viennale, Vienna International Filmfestival





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Synopsis#1

Daniel Spoerri arranges things into one of his assemblages as if he were contributing something to the order of life. Oskar Salomonowitz, the filmmaker's son, vividly brings the artist's thoughts closer to us, as if they were his own. The spoons of the late father of Anja Salomonowitz are added to the cycle of life. People die, things remain. By also updating Daniel Spoerri's past through the child, the film courageously undertakes a new documentary path of cinematic, biographical representation. Spoerri's father, Isaac Feinstein, was murdered in the Holocaust and Spoerri's life was shaped by this disappearance. In his work, he says, the things found at the flea market, which he collects and nails to the wall as compositions, no longer disappear. He has captured life for a moment.

Synopsis#2

THIS MOVIE IS A GIFT is a film about the artist Daniel Spoerri. Actually, it's a film about a perception of Daniel Spoerri: a film almost without Daniel Spoerri, who is mostly portrayed by a child - to say nothing less than that everything in life continues, even if you die in between.





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Description

Doll heads, porcelain hearts, work tools, glasses, cooking spoons, combs: these are just a few of the everyday objects the artist Daniel Spoerri collects and hoards in bowls and boxes, then arranges into new configurations creating works of art that capture a piece of daily reality. Fascinated by this adherence to process, to the cycle of life and death, the artist (born in Romania, 1930) continues to work on these object compositions every day at his studio in Vienna.

With *THIS MOVIE IS A GIFT* the filmmaker Anja Salomonowitz reflects upon one of these particular works of art, at the center of which is a porcelain heart owned by her late father. Her cinematic interest is far more than an artist's biography, however. On the contrary, she seeks to provide viewers with a fresh perspective on memory and related, often commonplace objects. Thus, in the processing of death, a wooden spoon can become a source of sadness and something that comforts you at the same time. The film finds a language for the simultaneity of these two poles and tells of how close they are to each other in life. Unexpected and delightful are the paths Salomonowitz uncovers when she joyfully strays from the familiar routes of storytelling and playfully interrogates practiced habits of seeing.

In the union of past and present, the film also tells a piece of European history and - as an extension of our memory - looks forward: Salomonowitz's 10-year-old son Oskar recites the memories of Spoerri - from his traumatic childhood as the son of a Jewish father who barely escaped the Holocaust, to his refuge as a youth in Switzerland. Oskar serves, in scene and dialogue, as Spoerri's counterpart: For history continues to reassemble itself in a surprising way.
