



FRITZ BAUER

TOD AUF RATEN DEATH BY INSTALMENTS

Fritz Bauer - Death by Instalments
a film by Ilona Ziok

100 Min. D, 2010

"We emigrants were guilty of well-meaning misjudgement. The fact that Germany lies in ruins has also a good side, we thought. The debris is cleared and we build the cities of the future. Broad, bright and welcoming."

These words, spoken by Fritz Bauer in 1967 to the writer Gerhard Zwerenz, describe the enthusiasm with which the Swabian lawyer wanted to ensure the passage for post-war Germany from the clutches of the Nazi dictatorship to a democratic and human political system. Not only the political but also the legal sphere was to contribute to this process.

Bauer had no idea that he would be rolling a Sisyphean boulder, that the path would be strewn with obstacles and hostilities and that it would finally end in an untimely death, the exact circumstances of which remain puzzling even today.

Ilona Ziok's film "Death by Instalments" tells of Bauer's courageous fight for justice. The director has carried out meticulous research in the archives and obtained startling testimonies from the General State Attorney in Hesse. Around this she has built, in the form of a mosaic, extraordinary film archives, selected works of classical and contemporary music as well as the eye witness accounts of Bauer's contemporaries: friends, relatives and those who fought with him for justice. This film not only provides the exciting biographical depiction of a unique life, it also paints an impressive portrait of one of the most important lawyers of the 20th century.

Fritz Bauer's name is linked with Eichmann's extradition to Israel, the rehabilitation of the authors of the Valkyrie plot to assassinate Hitler and the legendary Frankfurt Auschwitz trials.

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