**On "Piggy Bank"**

*Bert Rebhandl*

When you hear the word “piggy bank", you usually think of a small object with a slot into which you can put small change. When you need the money again, you have to “slaughter” the pig. The many metaphors contained in this word are taken to extremes by Christoph Schwarz in his film of the same name. He turns himself into a (moral) piggy bank, and not only because, as he casually admits at the beginning, he plundered his daughter’s savings account for his 40th birthday. He goes much further, to the point of embezzlement. When Schwarz, previously known for “self-involved short films,” receives 90,000 euros from Austrian national broadcaster ORF to make a documentary, he spends the money on a house in the Waldviertel that his wife Michaela desperately wants that happens to cost exactly that much. However, he still has to deliver a film. So therefore, logic dictates that it be a no-budget film. Schwarz invents a suitable topic: he wants to film himself going on a money strike for one year. For one year he doesn’t want to have anything to do with the thing that makes the world go round. When the family goes on vacation in Carinthia, he follows on foot. This is just an example of the many issues that arise in the course of his experiment. Right from the start, the film **Piggy Bank** reveals itself to be a mockumentary – in other words, as an experiment with documentary that is also a satire (for example on the process by which the ORF chooses its topics). However, the satire unexpectedly becomes serious where Schwarz is actually trying to make fun of himself: the “Schnorrer” becomes a climate activist, the frivolous money strike is transformed into a variety of activities for the future, and in this role of acting and agitating against the end of the world, despair also lurks on the horizon as a real possibility. But Schwarz then opts for humor against ecocide in a film rich with a thousand levels and ideas. *(sixpackfilm catalogue, Translation by John Wojtowicz)*