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Agonif

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In this semi-documentary drama, directed by a filmmaker who is also a psychiatrist (Dr. Gernot Eigler), a young actress (played by Cordula Wiedemann) suffers from schizophrenia, becomes more and more introverted and caught up in her illness. *Agonif* attempts to describe the causes, and the various levels of her sufferings, and deals with the question of society's isolation of the mentally ill. In making *Agonif*, Dr. Eigler involved some patients in the filmmaking process, so that the film contains examples of cinema experiments made by mentally disturbed individuals. One German critic wrote of *Agonif*: "Psychically disturbed people have often been objects of film documentaries but Eigler's wish was not only to make a statement about the symptoms of schizophrenia according to diagnostic criteria, but to show where society fails in its duty towards the mentally ill. This is a film which shakes up and calls attention to guilt. Above all the guilt of those who rest easy in the knowledge of their 'normalcy.' Cordula Wiedemann was able to transmit the idea of this sorrow, which comes over people who disenfranchise themselves, with her intensely moving performance."

Written and Directed by Gernot Eigler. ZDF Production Executive, Eckart Stein. With Cordula Wiedemann. (1973, 78 mins, color, English titles, Print Courtesy of The Goethe Institute)



Agonif Gernot Eigler