

Bonus DVD: Edgar Reitz on the DVD Edition.

Amateur translation by Angela Skrimshire, with advice from Thomas Hönemann, March 2007, published on www.heimat123.de, March 2007.

Good day, ladies and gentlemen, dear viewers, dear friends of the Heimat Trilogy, I'd like to take this opportunity to greet you warmly and tell you how glad I am that there is now this medium for viewing Heimat. When we began to realise that gigantic project over 20 years ago, no one knew that one day this possibility would exist. All the same, with this project we were continually pushing at the boundaries of what had hitherto been feasible. We were working on the aesthetic of "Heimat" within the tradition of the cinema, which is in fact by nature particularly unsuitable for performing such a huge work of by now 56 hours' duration. In practice there is hardly any way of showing it by which the audience could absorb so many hours. There is simply no infrastructure with refreshments, intervals, a chance to meet each other. The television, on the other hand, always slots the episodes into the whole course of the evening programme. It runs in automatic juxtaposition with a lot of everyday happenings, and the habits of TV-watching in a household are determined by a very idiosyncratic dynamic, that we can't influence at all with the help of means designed for film.

As we sketched out the concept for Heimat we kept remembering the possibilities that literature once used to offer, since for centuries there have been these great forms in literature. The novel is the classic medium of literature, developing material that sometimes takes the reader days or even weeks to enjoy. People take a book on holiday, and spend exceptional moments of life with one, tiding over periods of sickness and loneliness with books. Up to now that has not been possible with films, but with this new medium of DVD it has become possible. We now have much better technical conditions, so that the aesthetic quality of the film can come to be better valued. There are the big, high resolution flat-screens, there are even projectors with which you can improvise a kind of cinema at home. You can invite friends and watch films together, something of a cinema-like experience can be introduced in this way of showing a film, you can experience it together, I find that a fantastic new opportunity.

In our supplementary material contained in this DVD edition, you will find documentary scenes shot during the work of filming over 25 years. You will see how we all, I, my colleagues, above all the actors and performers, have aged, how touchingly young we still were when we started, and how the years have eaten away at us during these productions. I find all that very moving, in that this additional material that we offer is perhaps a small glimpse not only of the filmmaker's workplace but also of that interconnection, that fateful relationship between the film making and this work. So I can just wish you a good time that is valuable to you, when you may watch the films just as you choose, in instalments that fit in with your way of life. Greetings too to your friends who are with you, watching our Heimat Trilogy.