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Posted: Thurs., Mar. 1, 2007, 12:26pm PT

Bellavista

(Documentary -- Austria) An Echtzeitfilm production. Produced by Gerhard Kastler. Directed, edited by Peter Schreiner. Screenplay, Schreiner, Giuliana Pachner.

With: Giuliana Pachner, Bernardina Piller Puicher, Erminia Colle Tiz, Barbara Pachner, Diana Pachner, Gino Sacco Comis, Luigi Kratter, Marina Casanova Borca, Kaur Jasvir, Nadejda Khrolenko, Alexander Khrolenko, Cecilia Piller Rosina, Eugenio Fauner, Marco Soravia Puicher, Maurizio Piller Roner, Andrea Polencic, Luca Kratter, Giuseppina Pachner Quinz, Giorgio Piller Puicher.

By [JAY WEISSBERG](#)

Bellavista is a hotel in northeastern Italy where Peter Schreiner, long fascinated by isolated enclaves, focuses his B&W meditation on the pull of the past and the weight of belonging. Almost entirely composed of closeup and medium shots, sometimes taken to incomprehensible extremes, docu persuasively portrays the mountain hamlet of Sappada, charged with a nostalgia that can feel like an open-air prison. Occasionally repetitive but rarely dull, the pic has aleisurely pace and downbeat air that will challenge all but tuned-in fest auds.

Sappada is one of the few remaining places where the Tyrolese language Plodar, or Sappadino, barely hangs on. Resident linguist Giuliana Pachner escaped as a student but found the expectations of her hotelier family, plus the pull of an insular community, too much to resist. Docu concentrates on this chain-smoking, very depressed woman ("Wou can die from an excess of buoyancy") and her troublesome relationship with the town and her past. Two elderly women epitomize the sense of loss brought by globalization, but it's Pachner's philosophical melancholy that takes up the most screen time. Vid quality is excellent, especially notable for lovely effects of light.

Camera (B&W, DV), Schreiner. Reviewed at Rotterdam Film Festival (Cinema of the World), Feb. 1, 2007. German, Plodar/Sappadino, Italian dialogue. Running time: 117 MIN.

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