

# COMMUNE OF BLISS

Documentary, 96 min., Canada/Germany  
Director: Klaus Stanjek / Camera: Volker Gerling  
Production: Cinetarium and Ö-Film GmbH  
2004 / Digi Beta 16:9

## Director's Statement

„What's it like to see the course of history seemingly halted centuries ago? Encountering a people who manage to live their Utopia as a long term vision? In „COMMUNE OF BLISS“ we are able to see a radical, fundamentalist vision in practise – a people who are hardly known even though they have been living in this way for almost 500 years. The Hutterite Brethren were heavily persecuted as heretics – maybe also on the grounds that they chose to take the Sermon on the Mount literally. Thus they never chose to defend themselves, practising the non-violent belief. They always lived communally and share all property. The Early Christian ideal of a commune is reality with the Hutterites. And it has brought them wealth and success to this day.

As they live in secluded communities and generally object to the use of modern media, they have been able to preserve the specifics of their life-style right into the present. This is a rare and lucky opportunity for a documentarist who wishes to take the point of view of an observer. Taking this close a look, also a sense of curbed in freedom and orthodoxy in the community becomes evident. Still I was truly taken and surprised by the emphasis they place on social justice and the amount of human kindness and warmth to be felt with the Hutterites.“

Klaus Stanjek 2004