

Capturing the minutiae of daily life. Friederike Mayröcker

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Friederike Mayröcker (1924–2021) is widely regarded as one of the most prolific and resilient Austrian writers of the 20th and 21st centuries. In 2024, the year of her 100th birthday, she was honoured with numerous events and a series of new publications (see below). The routines of everyday life play a pivotal role in Mayröcker's oeuvre. This is repeatedly referred to in reception, whether in academic works (e. g. Kasper 1999) or, most recently, in many international obituaries (e. g. Goldman 2021).

From a narratological perspective, the question arises as to the relationship, possibly even the reciprocal conditionality of the focus on everyday life and Mayröcker's resolute commitment to a narrative without story, a commitment that was considered by Siegfried J. Schmidt an “example of a constructivist narratology” as early as 1989 (Schmidt 1989). For Mayröcker, therefore, the question is not: “What strategies are used in literary storytelling to stage the ordinary and banal as worth telling?” She does not tell stories, but rather undermines existing narratological concepts in an “apology of a magical everydayness” as Kasper puts it.

In 2012, Mayröcker published her last book in prose and her last volume of poetry labelled as such. From then on, she began to explore a new form, the “Proëm”, a portmanteau word blending the sounds and combining the meaning of prose and poem, with reference to Francis Ponge (see Beyer 2024). The paper examines the importance of breaking down the boundaries of genre to capture the minutiae of daily life and questions the relevance of the *effet de réel* in her writing.

Literature:

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