»PACKAGE TOUR«
(TÁRSASUTAZÁS), 1984
DIRECTED BY GYULA GAZDAG
WITH ENGLISH SUBTITLES

followed by a discussion between
the director and Frank Stern (Institut
für Zeitgeschichte, Universität Wien)

VWI VISUALS

7. März 2013
Admiralkino
1070 Wien, Burggasse 119
18.30 Uhr

WIENER WIESENTHAL INSTITUT
FÜR HOLOCAUST-STUDIEN (VWI)

Gyula Gazdag's Hungarian documentary follows a group of concentration camp survivors on a bus tour that takes them back to Auschwitz. With his emphasis on the passing of time and the transformation of the camp into a tourist attraction, Gazdag seems to be after something other than the usual Holocaust documentary, yet the tales of horror told by the survivors overwhelm his abstract, philosophical perspective, and the end result is a serious and moving film. The »package tour« of the title of this excellent documentary is a trip to Auschwitz and Birkenau by a group made up of concentration camp survivors and a younger generation of their relatives. Interspersed with the tour of both death camps and the reactions and comments of the visitors (no narration is added), is an interview with a woman who could not go on the tour because she needed yet another operation to mend the physical damage she suffered in one of these camps. As a part of her story, she tells of a chilling encounter with a neo-Nazi during one of her hospital stays who flatly states that Hitler »should have finished the job.« One of the reasons that „Package Tour" is effective and eye-opening is just this kind of juxtaposition of ignorance and cruelty versus the harsh truth of historical reality and human suffering.

GYULA GAZDAG (UCLA SCHOOL OF THEATER, FILM AND TELEVISION)
born 1947, writer and director; numerous feature films include »The Whistling Cobblestone« (1971); »The Resolution« (1972) which was named one of the hundred best documentaries of all time by the International Documentary Association, »Lost Illusions« (1983), winner of Best Screenplay at the Hungarian Film Week; »A Hungarian Fairy Tale« (1987), winner of Best Feature Film of the Year of the Hungarian Film Critics and »Stand Off« (1989). He serves as the Artistic Director of the Sundance Filmmakers Lab.