

Otto Grünmandl (1924-2000) was the cranky philosopher of the outlying districts, who told his stories about the lunacy of banality with stoic calm but with complicated intellectual processes. During his work as the head of entertainment for the Tyrolean broadcasting network, he presented his first solo program for the Austrian Radio in 1967. The grumpy comic made the lack of punch lines his punch line, for "the best way to be silent is to talk" (Grünmandl in "My Name Isn't Oblomow"). Bizarre paradoxes and parodies taken to absurdist extremes characterized the "Alpine Interviews" ("Alpenländische Interviews") with which he earned his reputation on the radio from 1973 on. Here, the everyday phenomena included a canary that tumbled to his doom while mountain climbing.

Otto Grünmandl

"What tongue-twisting weasel-like swiftness is for Jandl, tapir-like slowness is for Grünmandl. His one-man barroom gang could grace any performance of Horvath—torture from the Vienna Woods. ... Here reason and logic are mercilessly taken to the point of higher nonsense. If one could invent an absurdist cabaret, then he has done it." (Süddeutsche Zeitung, 1980)

