

ULRICH POLSTER

NOTTURNO

January 11 – February 23, 2013

Opening on January 10, 2013

Ulrich Polster, who grew up in the GDR during the era of the Cold War, has traced out his aesthetic influences in his single channel projection *Notturmo*. The artist approaches his video pieces from a painterly angle and finds it very important to convey their visual presence to the full. For this reason he decided to project the work onto a Perspex surface.

For all the ironic signals that are scattered throughout the work, the artist is in fact extremely serious when it comes to the core of socialist modernism.

The complex structure of this impressive video runs riot amid the open simultaneity he builds up from a great diversity of visual and acoustic sources and modes of expression.

Polster filters out images from moment-to-moment experience and links them together so as to connect them back to historical locations and events that are of over-riding importance – not only to the Communist utopia, but also to the Stalinist web of lies and its “pathos formulae”.

What may sound like complication for the sake of experiment is brought off by Polster with bravura. This work is informed by the principle of the meandering digression.

Notturmo is full of lively shards of memory. With its liberal use of quotations, Polster affirms or assumes a distance to his own experiences and the things that have helped shape his state of being as both artist and person.

In this way *Notturmo* also becomes the document of a transformation within the artist, a visually-grounded exploration of a disposition that Polster has discerned in both himself and his contemporaries.

Ulrich Polster’s store of images ranges from the greyness of the East German post-war cities to the coarse-grained flickering super-8 film experiments of art sub-culture in the GDR, from references to Eisenstein’s *Battleship Potemkin* to Godard’s *Film Socialism*, and is simultaneously enriched by the inner-scapes he has garnered on his lengthy travels between Saxony, Vienna, Chernovitz and the Crimea. With a sensuously charged sensitivity, Ulrich Polster has set out to roam the questions about his own artistic development. The accompanying soundtrack extends from a live performance by Vic Chesnutt to the Polish avant-garde composer Henryk Górecki and the German melancholiac Max Richter.

Christoph Tannert

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