CLEMENS VON WEDEMEYER

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CLEMENS VON WEDEMEYER

THE ILLUSION OF A CROWD
March 3 - Mai 5, 2022

VOX, Montreal, Canada

Coup, insurrection, parade, protest, resistance, revolution, or rioting mob: terminologies like these require a careful contextual analysis within (counter-)hegemonic narratives. Clemens von Wedemeyer's moving-image works and his artist's publication *The Illusion of a Crowd* (2020) provide a comprehensive insight into how visual culture displays such forms of temporary collectivity.

In the film *Emergency Drill Revisited* (2020), documenting a rehearsal by the civil protection unit of Leipzig, he investigates a scenario that serves to re-establish the status quo after a situation of distress. Dedicated to a future state of affairs, his found-footage montage *Transformation Scenario* (2018) is based on the premise of exchanging one's physicality for a virtual alter ego. In *Crowd Control* (2018) he addresses logistics: based on a police simulation program to prepare officers for encounters with crowds, the artist's interest concerns the control of people flows such as the organization of complex operations through the perspective of executive force.

When, however, does a protest become an intervention of the masses into historiography? Wedemeyer's work *70.001* (2019) takes into consideration the intentions of the Monday demonstrations that occurred in the city of Leipzig in the former German Democratic Republic in 1989. He therein tests how a shared political memory can be kept alive through transfers of historical accounts and recordings to different media milieus. Montage and editing, hitherto central to Wedemeyer's storytelling, become secondary modalities. Simulation allows a virtual camera to navigate the urban set without cuts, to tell several episodes through daylight and "dusk, night is falling"2 in a time warp, and to fluidly switch from a bird's-eye perspective to close-ups.

[...]

The events of the date referenced in *70.001*, October 9, 1989, could only happen due to a vertical corporation and partial insubordination of security personnel. Once the force of the police's presence faded into the background, the chorus (stemming from the ancient Greek tragedy, comedy and satyr play) of the demos promised to become a revolutionary power. Oscillating between approval for the protesters' peaceful action and a distant reflection of mass and power, *70.001* remains within these radical ambiguities.

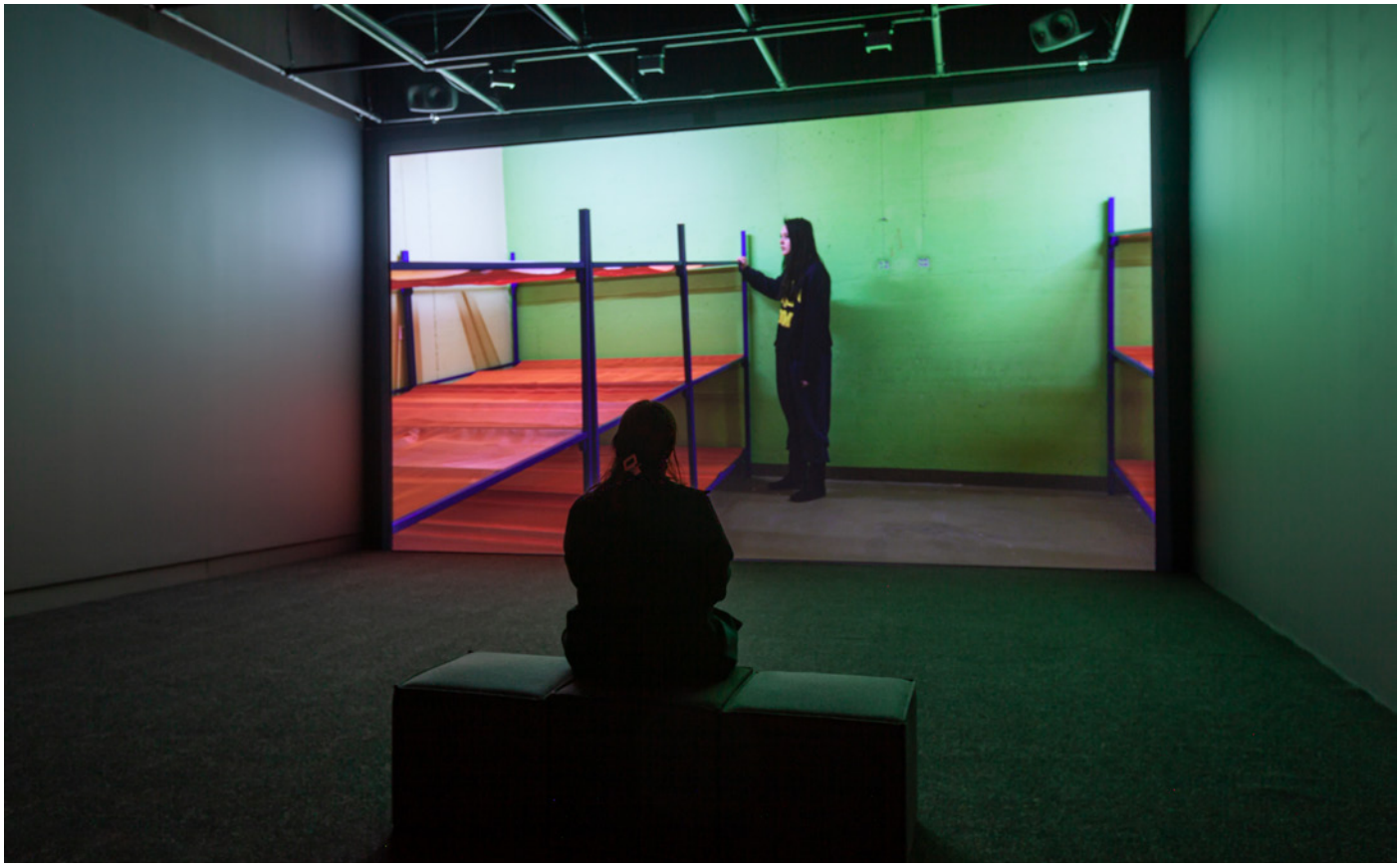
Clemens von Wedemeyer's investigations into the visual-political representations of crowds such as the technical and socio-political programmability of behaviour appear to partly sympathize with behaviourism's critique on the "myth of interiority," forming a negative foil not only to the philosophy of mind, but also to depth psychology evolving around 1900. With the then parallel development of cinema and psychoanalysis, a thinking about Wedemeyer's work suggests both a contemplation of media-theoretical genealogies and a mapping of a diversified history of ideas of concepts such as actor, agency, behaviour, mass, power, praxis, and historicity. In today's future industries information management plays an increased role. By inserting "1" into the established number of 70,000 demonstrators on the mentioned day, the artist shows that such counts are in fact recounts—thereby opening narrative structures for speculative actualizations.

Text by Lisa Stuckey (excerpt)













CLEMENS VON WEDEMEYER

LE PRINTEMPS DE SEPTEMBRE
Sur les cendres de l'hacienda
Septembre 17, 2019 - October 10, 2021

Curated by Christian Bernard

Toulouse, France

Titled Sur les cendres de l'hacienda, Le Printemps de septembre 2021 celebrates three «families» of contemporary artists: those who turn to their imagination; those who observe the world; and those formally attached to the continuation of the history of their chosen form of expression. La Folle du logis brings together the first family, Le Heurt du réel the second, and Poursuivre et commencer the third. These subtitles provide a schematic description of three main types of attitude embodied by our guest artists. They may also be seen as markers of exhibitions dispersed around different festival venues.





Clemens Von Wedemeyer, exhibition views, photo : Michelle Brunelle

CLEMENS VON WEDEMEYER

GIULIA PISCITELLI, CLEMENS VON WEDEMEYER
Nella società, in Gesellschaft
November 2, 2019 - February 9, 2020

Kunstmuseum Luzern, Switzerland

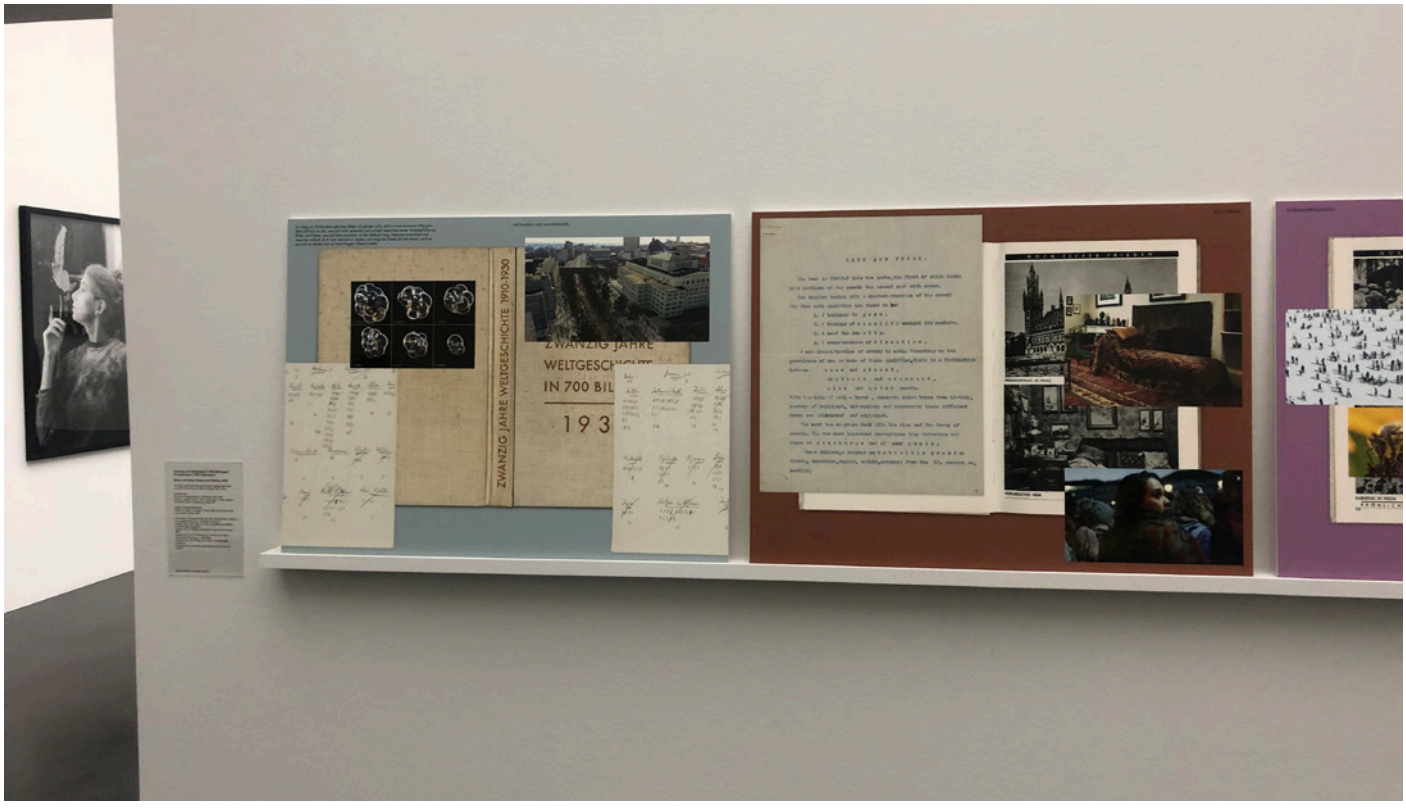
Curated by Fanni Fetzer

Giulia Piscitelli (*1965) und Clemens von Wedemeyer (*1974) verstehen ihre Kunst im gesell-schaftlichen Kontext. Die beiden Kunstschaffenden nehmen eine engagierte Haltung ein und beschäftigen sich in ihrer Arbeit mit den globalen Bewegungen von Menschen, Ideen und Waren. Piscitellis Objekte und Bilder, von Wedemeyers Videos und künstlerische Recherchen untersuchen die Mechanismen, mit denen eine Gesellschaft Zugang gewährt oder ausschliesst. Nella società, in Gesellschaft ist als loser Dialog der beiden Positionen gedacht.

Giulia Piscitelli reflektiert das konfliktreiche Aufeinandertreffen von politischer und indivi-dueller Dimension anhand von Erinnerung, Zeit, Körperlichkeit und Arbeit. Die italienische Künstlerin lässt sich vom neapolitanischen All-tag, von Materialien und Eindrücken am Strassen-rand oder auf dem Markt inspirieren. Oft greift sie alltägliche Dinge auf und verwandelt diese. Dabei kombiniert sie Objekte mit grosser Symbolkraft, beispielsweise überzieht sie katholische Beichtstühle mit islamischen Gebetsteppichen. Una nuvola come tappeto (2019), so der Titel der Arbeit, die in Luzern zum ersten Mal zu sehen ist, verweist auf die Verbindung und den Widerspruch von Seelenheil und Angstmacherei, aber auch auf Parallelen zwischen Religionen. Spica (2011) dagegen verknüpft Zahlungsmittel mit Getreide. Die Ähren, die Giulia Piscitelli mit Bleichmittel auf Seide malt, stammen nämlich alle von Scheinen und Münzen verschiedener Währungen. Indem sie Bleiche als Zeichnungsmittel verwendet, verschränkt die Künstlerin Schaffensprozess und Zerstörung und erzählt gleichzeitig von Furchtbarkeit, Sesshaftigkeit, alten Mythen, Handel und der oft zwiespältigen Verbindung von Kapital und Nahrung.

Clemens von Wedemeyer nimmt historische Perspektiven auf, um unsere Gegenwart zu reflek-tieren. Für die Ausstellung im Kunstmuseum Luzern dient dem deutschen Künstler Elias Ca-nettis Klassiker Masse und Macht von 1960 als Folie, um die Lenkung von Massen in unserer Gesellschaft zu untersuchen. Er hat in Luzern einen neuen Film realisiert – wir haben dafür anfangs Jahr Statistinnen und Statisten gesucht. Faux Terrain (2019) zeigt eine junge Erwach-sene, deren Identität ungeklärt bleibt. Lange Isolation hat sie sprachlos gemacht und der Welt entfremdet. In Luzern besucht sie Orte, die Geschichte und Gegenwart der Schweiz verbinden: Das Bourbaki Panorama, das Kunstmuseum Luzern und die grösste Zivilschutzanlage der Welt im Sonnberg in Luzern. Psychisch isoliert, versucht sie den Blicken der Menge zu entfliehen, bis sie schliesslich in die Bildwelt auf dem Bildschirm in ihrer Hand eingesogen wird. Eine weitere Arbeit von 2019 thematisiert die Gruppendynamik: Für 70.001 transfor-miert von Wedemeyer die Montagsdemonstrationen in Leipzig 1989 in den virtuellen Raum. So verknüpft er Vergan-genheit und Gegenwart, Realität und Fiktion und fragt, ob die Welt besser wär, wenn sie durch Computeralgorith-men statt durch politische Entscheidungen gesteuert würde oder ob das eher eine Art von Techno-Faschismus wäre.




ZWANZIG JAHRE WELTGESCHICHTE 1910-1920
IN 700 BIL
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CLEMENS VON WEDEMEYER

LE COURS DES CHOSES
June 27 - August 16, 2020

CAPC - Musée d'art contemporain de Bordeaux, France
Curated by Alice Motard and Sandra Patron

Borrowing its title from the iconic film by the famous duo of artists Peter Fischli and David Weiss, the exhibition *Le Cours des choses* brings together in the exhibition space about thirty films and videos by artists whose works can be reinterpreted in the light of the current health crisis. Thought in immediate response to the COVID-19 pandemic, that has led to the self-isolation of nearly half of the world's population and the abrupt cessation of all activities considered not essential to crisis management, this presentation was built during the few weeks of lockdown in France.





Clemens von Wedemeyer, Exhibition view 2020

CLEMENS VON WEDEMEYER

Mehrheiten (Majorities)

July 13- November 17 14, 2019

GfZK - Galerie für Zeitgenössische Kunst, Leipzig, Germany

Press release:

Digital public spheres have not only changed the image of society, but also enable new democratic models of participation to emerge. However, tools of political opinion making are contested, and are also used for the purposes of stigmatisation and exclusion. Based on Elias Canetti's book Crowds and Power, published in 1960, Clemens von Wedemeyer's exhibition Majorities deals with past and present phenomena of mass mobilisation and the representation of crowds, as well as their political and psychological impact.

How do people join forces with one another, what dynamics can arise within physical and digital crowds, how is social behaviour rehearsed and regulated by means of simulation? The artist's interest ranges from historical photography and cinematic portrayals of crowds to the analysis of computer simulations in the gaming and surveillance industries.

The exhibition, designed with the architecture of GfZK in mind includes a thematic selection of cinematic works and video installations by the artist. Based on conversations and research on the subject of the Monday demonstrations in Leipzig, Clemens von Wedemeyer has also developed a new production entitled 70.001, which presents a fictitious reproduction of the events of 1989. Faux Terrain, another work produced for the exhibition links Switzerland's past and present relating to questions of isolation and community.





Clemens von Wedemeyer

Exhibition view: Mehrheiten (Majorities), GfZK - Galerie für Zeitgenössische Kunst Leipzig, 2019





Clemens von Wedemeyer
70.001, 2019
video, colour, sound,16:9, screen wall (4 or 9 monitors), 4 single channel interviews, headphones, 16 min (video length)
ed. 1/3 + 2 A.P.

Exhibition view: Mehrheiten (Majorities), GfZK - Galerie für Zeitgenössische Kunst Leipzig, 2019



Clemens von Wedemeyer
Transformation Scenario, 2018
video, colour, sound, 16:9, screen wall, 20 min. (video length)
ed. 1/3 + 2 A.P.

Exhibition view: Mehrheiten (Majorities), GfZK - Galerie für Zeitgenössische Kunst Leipzig, 2019





Clemens von Wedemeyer
Faux Terrain, 2019
video, colour, sound, 16:9, 21 min. (video length)
ed. 1/3 + 2 A.P.

(top) exhibition view: Mehrheiten (Majorities), GfZK - Galerie für Zeitgenössische Kunst Leipzig, 2019
(bottom) videostill

CLEMENS VON WEDEMEYER

Clemens von Wedemeyer: Vermin of the Sky
Guest artist of the Jindřich Chalupecký Award 2017

September 22, 2017 - January 14, 2018

Moravian Gallery in Brno, Czech Republic

Press release:

The novelty of last year's edition of the Jindřich Chalupecký Award for young visual artists was the launch of the tradition of an international guest who would introduce his or her solo project in parallel with the exhibition of the award finalists. It would be a distinctive contemporary artist whose work resonates with the current events on the Czech art scene, although it may not have been introduced here so far. After presenting an exhibition project of Laure Prouvost in 2016, guest for 2017 is the Berlin-based artist Clemens von Wedemeyer. In his conceptual moving image works and audiovisual installations, Wedemeyer often works with (film) archives, historical and symbolic references while adding engaged commentaries which link the archival material to contemporary issues.
With most of his research drawing on site-specific inspirations, the artist pays particular attention to social and physical constellations and power relations connected to a particular space in its present or historical moment. In Vermin of the Sky, a project created especially for this occasion, Wedemeyer decided to use several works from the Moravian Gallery's sculpture collections, resulting in a new video work presented at the Atrium Gallery at Pražák Palace, and an installation intervening into the permanent collection display in the same building. The artist created a poetic yet political narrative, building unexpected connections between both historically and conceptually disparate works: from a largely damaged Gothic Madonna through archetypal portraits by canonical Czech artists Josef Václav Myslbek and Vincenc Makovský to less renowned works and artists. In a surreal meeting at outer space, digitalized sculptures engage in dominance and submission exercises, which turn a bust of a locally meritorious general, a mask of the prime Czech patron saint and Prometheus' head into mere physical matter, played out in a newly told Space Odyssey. The work is a continuation of the artist's research on the discursive, social and symbolic value of sculpture in relation to film, the actor, and also the spectator, which Wedemeyer already explored in The Cast, presented at MAXII Rome in 2013, and the subsequent project Cast Behind You The Bones Of YourMother, shown in KOW Berlin in 2015.



Clemens von Wedemeyer
Vermin of the Sky, 2017
HD video, aspect ratio 2,35:1, sound loop

Exhibition view: Jindřich Chalupecký Award, Moravian Gallery, Czech Republic, 2017-2018



Clemens von Wedemeyer
Vermin of the Sky, 2017
HD video, aspect ratio 2,35:1, sound loop

Exhibition view: Jindřich Chalupecký Award, Moravian Gallery, Czech Republic, 2017-2018



Clemens von Wedemeyer

Exhibition view: Jindřich Chalupecký Award, Moravian Gallery, Czech Republic, 2017-2018



Clemens von Wedemeyer

Exhibition view: Jindřich Chalupecký Award, Moravian Gallery, Czech Republic, 2017-2018

CLEMENS VON WEDEMEYER

P.O.V.

October 21 to December 31, 2016

Galerie Jocelyn Wolff, Paris, France

Press release:
Presented at Documenta 13, the film installation *Muster* by Clemens von Wedemeyer explored the complex connections between a unique place and three different temporalities (World War II, the 1970s, and the 1990s) as well as the relationships between collective and individual memory.
This research found new development with *P.O.V.* (point of view), presented in Berlin at Neuer Berliner Kunstverein (n.b.k.), in which, for material, the artist uses films by Captain Freiherr Harald von Vietinghoff-Riesch, an amateur cameraman and German officer in the Wehrmacht, who filmed in Europe during the Second World War between 1938 and 1942 behind the frontline.
Using these historic war footage made from a subjective point of view, the artist orchestrates a confrontation with the present time, by, for example, making use of digital technological tools used for creating video games: the multiplicity of the points of view make critical, scientific, experimental and ludic approaches simultaneously intersect. Von Wedemeyer here investigates, who is behind the camera and which information can a subjective view provide.
At a time when witnesses of World War II are disappearing and the generational transmission of the memory of the conflict and the Shoah are becoming more abstract, the analytical, ethnographical and sensitive work of Clemens von Wedemeyer offers new perspectives. This is why it seems to us important to show *P.O.V* in Paris in a re-thought format developed for the gallery exhibition space.
The production has been finalized in a conceptual collaboration of Clemens von Wedemeyer with the artist Eiko Grimberg. The project was commissioned by n.b.k. Berlin and funded by Medienboard Berlin-Brandenburg.

Communiqué de presse:
Le travail de Clemens von Wedemeyer présenté à la Dokumenta 13 explorait les liens complexes entre un lieu unique et trois temporalités différentes (la seconde guerre mondiale, les années 70 et le temps présent), ainsi que les relations entre mémoire collective et individuelle. Cette recherche a trouvé un nouveau développement avec P.O.V (point of view), présenté à Berlin à la NBK cet été, où l'artiste utilise comme matériau les films du capitaine Freiherr Harald von Vietinghoff-Riesch, caméraman amateur, officier allemand de la Wehrmacht. Ainsi, à partir d'archives où apparaissent un point de vue subjectif sur la guerre, l'artiste orchestre une confrontation avec le temps présent, ayant par exemple recours aux outils technologiques digitaux du jeu vidéo : la multiplicité des points vue permet alors de croiser simultanément approches critique, scientifique, expérimentale ou ludique.
Au moment où disparaissent les derniers acteurs de la seconde guerre mondiale, où la transmission familiale de la mémoire du conflit et de la Shoah devient plus abstraite, le travail de Clemens von Wedemeyer d'analyse de l'image, ethnographique et sensible, ouvre des perspectives nouvelles, et il nous semble important d'accueillir à Paris P.O.V. sous une forme repensée pour l'espace d'exposition de la galerie.

CLEMENS VON WEDEMEYER

P.O.V.

May 28, 2016 - July 31, 2016

Neuer Berliner Kunstverein (n.b.k.), Berlin, Germany

The artistic practice of Clemens von Wedemeyer (b. 1974 in Göttingen, living in Berlin) becomes visible in video works, short films and multi-channel installations. His examination of historical phenomena is the basis of his interest and establishes socio-political references right to the present day. With non-linear narratives the artist creates condensations that make the levels of the historical and the fictional intertwine.

In the exhibition P.O.V. (Point Of View) at Neuer Berliner Kunstverein Using the material as an example, von Wedemeyer examines pictorial spaces and boundaries of the subjective camera at war. The historical shots are compared, analyzed and made tangible by way of an experimental presentation. The examination is made by means of an analysis of the filmed objects, places, points of view and duration of view as well as of other film-specific coordinates. Von Wedemeyer here investigates, who is behind the camera and which information can a subjective view provide at war. The 16mm material serves as a basis for the most recent media space installations. Such as in the work Against the point of view (2016), where one scene of the historic film footage by Harald von Vietinghoff-Riesch is isolated and reconstructed in a computer game environment in the manner of the “Virtual Battlefields” in order to then allow alternative courses of the historic event. In the two video essays Die Pferde des Rittmeisters (The horses of the cavalry captain) (2016) and Im Angesicht (Face to Face) (2016) entirely different motifs are reassembled. In the first work, horses become the central protagonists of the war machine, in the second, the cameraman‘s view of civilians, prisoners of war and Wehrmacht soldiers becomes apparent, and the perpetrator‘s perspective is made tangible. Was man nicht sieht (What you do not see) (2016) presents a conversation with the literary scholar, cultural theorist and writer Klaus Theweleit, the director of Neuer
Berliner Kunstverein, Marius Babias and Clemens von Wedemeyer himself, in which the historical footage is commented while viewing it and aspects such as the ethnographic view, soldiers as tourists and the crimes of the Wehrmacht are analyzed. The other new video works in the exhibition reflect the film in the continuity of previous wars and reveal how in the film footage memories of the amateur filmmakers construct themselves. Ohne Titel (Alles) (Untitled (Everything)) (2016) shows the more than three-hour long 16mm original footage trimmed to four minutes.





Clemens von Wedemeyer

Exhibition views: P.O.V., Galerie Jocelyn Wolff, Paris, France 2016

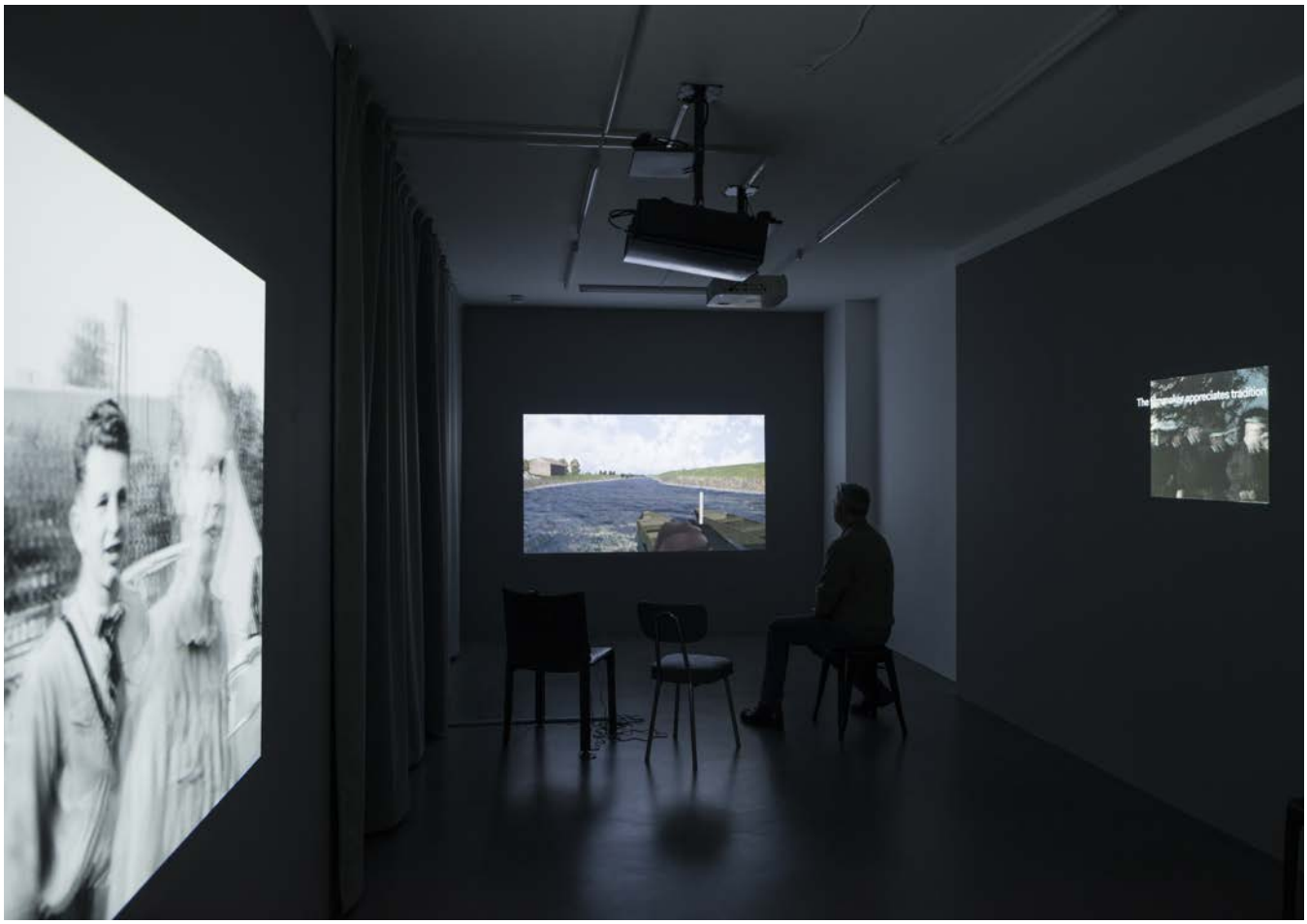




Clemens von Wedemeyer

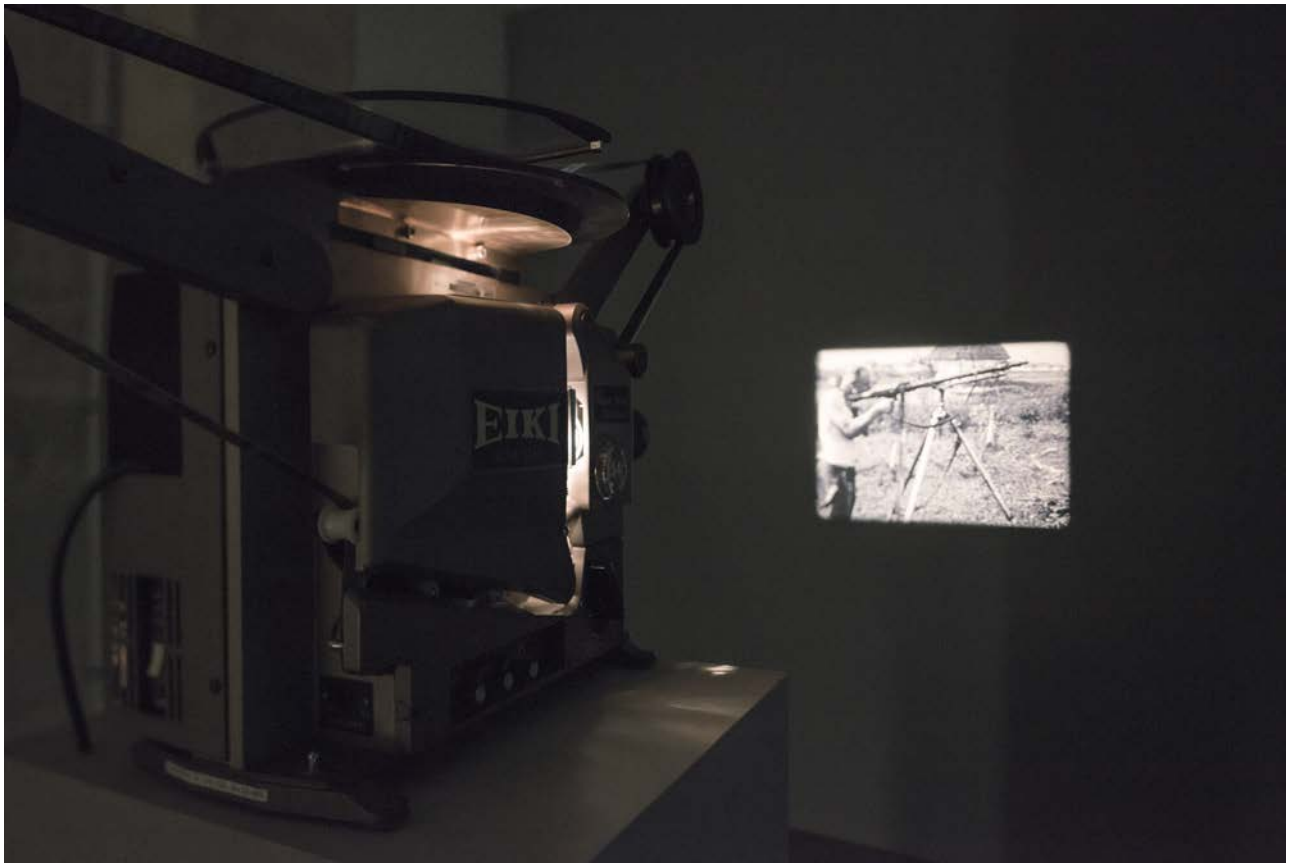
Exhibition views: P.O.V., Galerie Jocelyn Wolff, Paris, France 2016





Clemens von Wedemeyer

Exhibition views: P.O.V., Galerie Jocelyn Wolff, Paris, France 2016





Clemens von Wedemeyer
Ohne Titel (Alles) (Untitled (Everything)), 2016
16mm, color, b/w, 4’

Exhibition views: P.O.V., Galerie Jocelyn Wolff, Paris, France 2016 & Neuer Berliner Kunstverein (n.b.k.), Berlin, Germany, 2016



Clemens von Wedemeyer
Was man nicht sieht, 2016
HD video, 4:3, color, sound, 42’

Exhibition view: P.O.V., The Neuer Berliner Kunstverein (n.b.k.), Berlin, Germany, 2016



Clemens von Wedemeyer
Was man nicht sieht, 2016
HD video, 4:3, color, sound, 42’

Exhibition view: P.O.V., Neuer Berliner Kunstverein (n.b.k.), Berlin, Germany, 2016



Clemens von Wedemeyer
Was man nicht sieht, 2016
HD video, 4:3, color, sound, 42’

Exhibition view: P.O.V., The Neuer Berliner Kunstverein (n.b.k.), Berlin, Germany, 2016





Clemens von Wedemeyer
Was man nicht sieht, 2016
HD video, 4:3, color, sound, 42’
Film stills

Exhibition: P.O.V., Galerie Jocelyn Wolff, Paris, France 2016, Neuer Berliner Kunstverein (n.b.k.), Berlin, Germany, 2016





Clemens von Wedemeyer
Was man nicht sieht, 2016
HD video, 4:3, color, sound, 42’
Film stills

Exhibition: P.O.V., Galerie Jocelyn Wolff, Paris, France 2016, Neuer Berliner Kunstverein (n.b.k.), Berlin, Germany, 2016





Clemens von Wedemeyer
Die Pferde des Rittmeisters (The horses of the cavalry captain), 2016
HD video, 4:3, color, b/w, sound, 10’
Film stills

Exhibition views: P.O.V., Galerie Jocelyn Wolff, Paris, France 2016 & Neuer Berliner Kunstverein (n.b.k.), Berlin, Germany, 2016





Clemens von Wedemeyer
Die Pferde des Rittmeisters (The horses of the cavalry captain), 2016
HD video, 4:3, color, b/w, sound, 10’

Exhibition view: P.O.V., Galerie Jocelyn Wolff, Paris, France 2016





Clemens von Wedemeyer
Die Pferde des Rittmeisters (The horses of the cavalry captain), 2016
HD video, 4:3, color, b/w, sound, 10’
Film stills

Exhibition: P.O.V., Galerie Jocelyn Wolff, Paris, France 2016, Neuer Berliner Kunstverein (n.b.k.), Berlin, Germany, 2016





Clemens von Wedemeyer
Against the point of view, 2016
HD video, 16:9, color, sound, 18’
Film still

Exhibition: P.O.V., Galerie Jocelyn Wolff, Paris, France 2016, Neuer Berliner Kunstverein (n.b.k.), Berlin, Germany, 2016





Clemens von Wedemeyer
Against the point of view, 2016
HD video, 16:9, color, sound, 18’
Film still

Exhibition: P.O.V., Galerie Jocelyn Wolff, Paris, France 2016, Neuer Berliner Kunstverein (n.b.k.), Berlin, Germany, 2016

CLEMENS VON WEDEMEYER

ORTE UNTER EINFLUSS. AFFECTED PLACES

September 30, 2016 - January 8, 2017

Hamburger Kunsthalle, Hamburg, Germany

Clemens von Wedemeyer (*1974) is a video and film artist whose works range between documentaries and feature films, reality and fiction. Within that overlapping artistic zone, von Wedemeyer explores the complexity of locations in the context of their temporal and spatial systems. The many facets of his work are reflected in the installations and photographs which accompany, enhance and expand his cinematic pieces and open multiple levels of perception. At the same time, von Wedemeyer focuses on the fundamental questions of representation as expressed in film and its alternative forms which he extends, distorts and visualises: the cinema is wide open, the projection screen becomes transparent as the seam between the auditorium and backstage. The viewers themselves also serve as extras: Are we just the audience, or are we already part of the performance?

n 2012, von Wedemeyer gained international renown with Muster his contribution to dOCUMENTA (13) where he staged the diverse history of the former convent Breitenau near Kassel as a prison, a concentration camp and finally a reformatory on three projection screens, working with various film levels. The triangular installation enables the clips to intertwine and intermingle. In addition to Rushes (2012) or Big Business (2002), it is works like Rush (2008) or Basler Podest (2006) which allow the backstage area (as a place behind-the-scenes) to become a setting of ambivalence and unexpected turns. On the other hand, in Sun Cinema (2010), the screen is regarded as a projection screen to mirror cultural and social locations. Von Wedemeyer repeatedly uses the making-of as a means to tap further documentary and temporal levels. In the science fiction film Esiod 2015 (2016), the future of banks is staged as an almighty database for memories and relationships, thus referring to contemporary social networks and their economic potential. In his latest film Square, that was shot specifically for the exhibition on the platform of the Hamburger Kunsthalle, he documents a new view of motion patterns.

The exhibition Clemens von Wedemeyer. Affected Places is the first solo exhibition of the artist in a German museum. It encompasses ten works, classified according to the concepts of 1. Screen, 2. Data Bank, 3. Church, Prison, Museum und 4. Backstage, and analyses their structures.



Clemens von Wedemeyer
Basler Podest / Basel Platform, 2006
stage setting, mixed media

Exhibition view: Orte unter einfluss. Affected Places, Hamburger Kunsthalle, Hamburg, Germany





Clemens von Wedemeyer
Big Business, 2002, digital video, 24’

The Making of Big Business, 2002

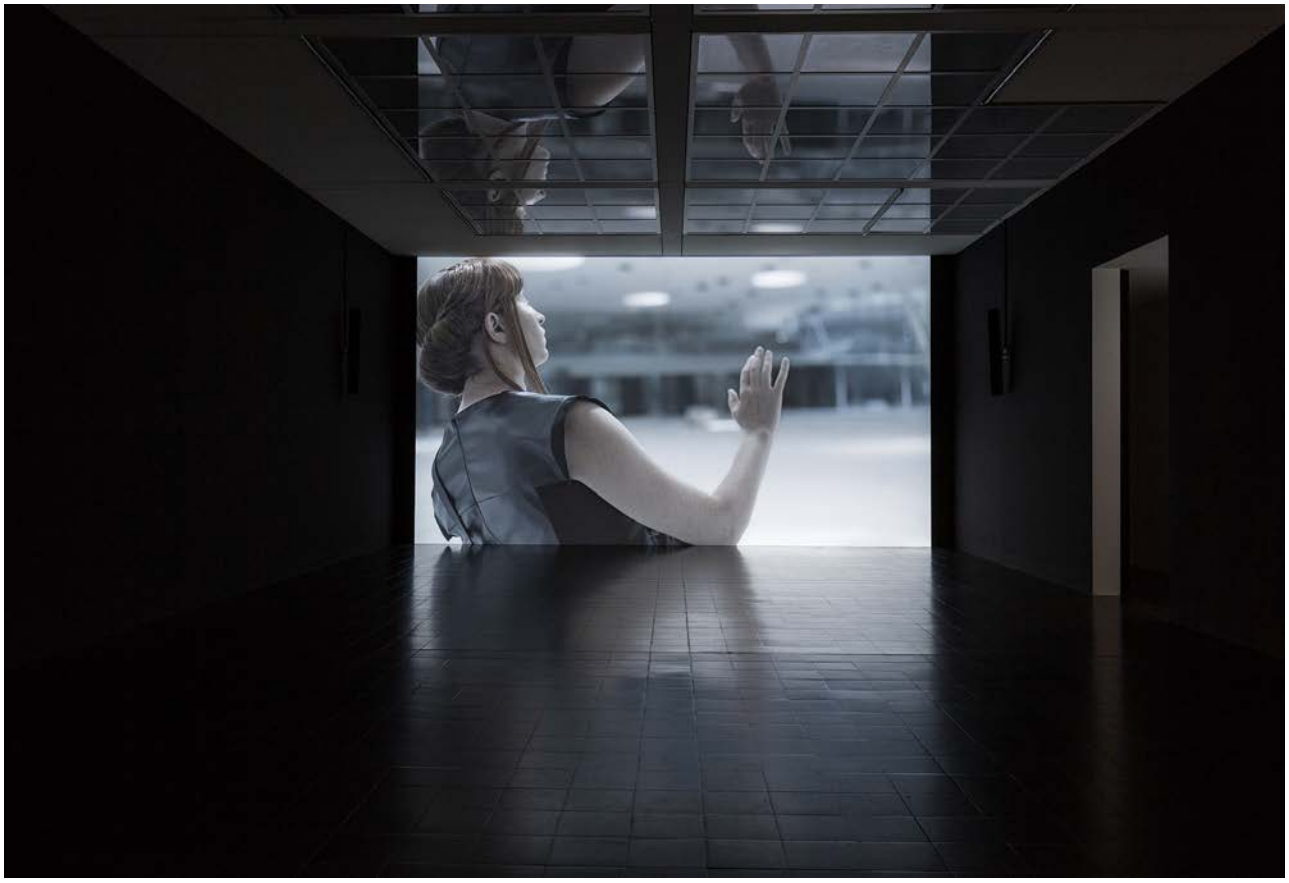
Exhibition views: Orte unter einfluss. Affected Places, Hamburger Kunsthalle, Hamburg, Germany

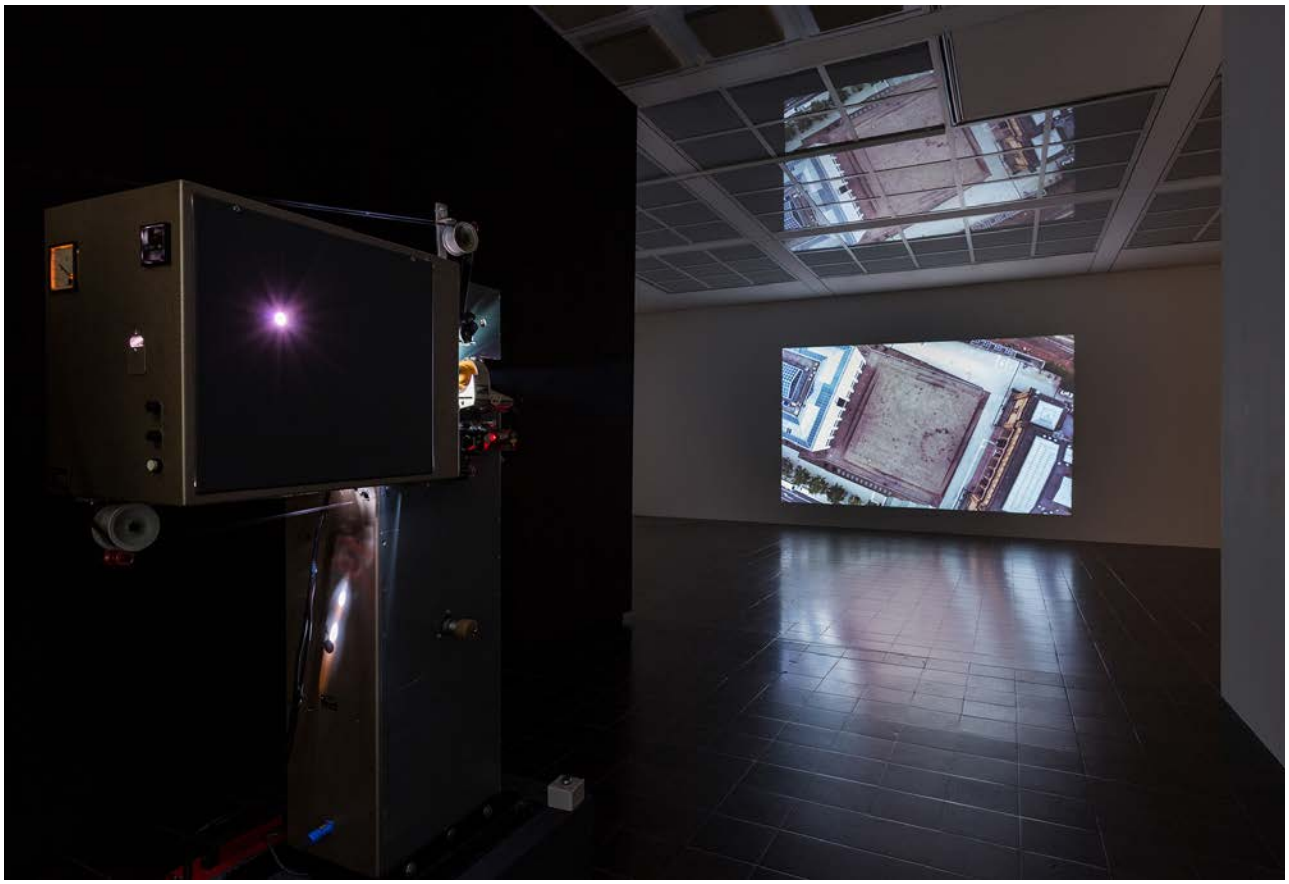




Clemens von Wedemeyer
Muster, 2012, 3 x 27 min

Exhibition views: Orte unter einfluss. Affected Places, Hamburger Kunsthalle, Hamburg, Germany

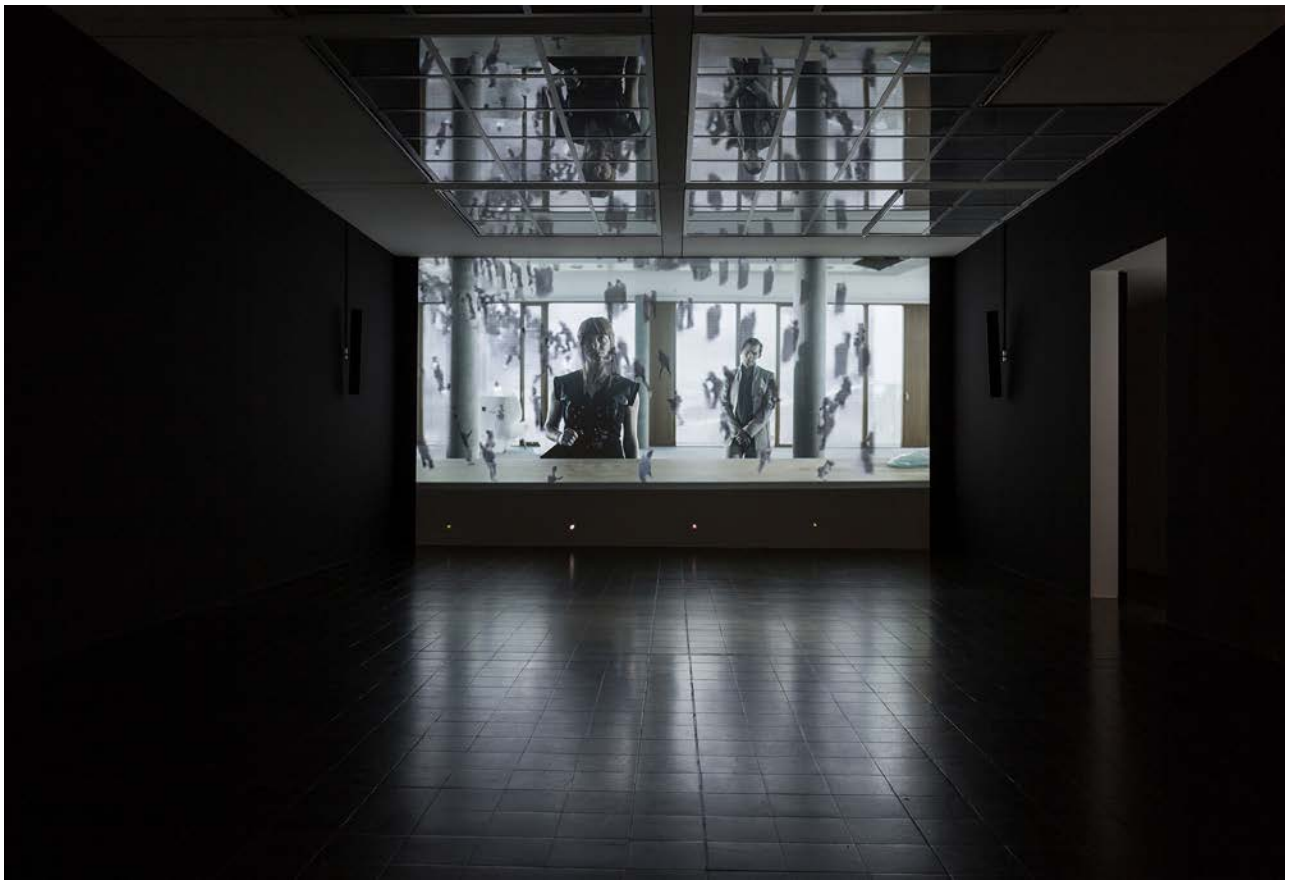




Clemens von Wedemeyer
Esiod 2015, 2016
HD video, color, sound, 38’

Exhibition views: Orte unter einfluss. Affected Places, Hamburger Kunsthalle, Hamburg, Germany





Clemens von Wedemeyer
Esiod 2015, 2016
HD video, color, sound, 38’

Exhibition views: Orte unter einfluss. Affected Places, Hamburger Kunsthalle, Hamburg, Germany



Clemens von Wedemeyer
Esiod 2015, 2016
HD video, color, sound, 38’

Exhibition view: Orte unter einfluss. Affected Places, Hamburger Kunsthalle, Hamburg, Germany

CLEMENS VON WEDEMEYER

CAST BEHIND YOU
THE BONES OF YOUR MOTHER

December 19, 2015 - February 27, 2016

KOW, Berlin, Germany

press release by Alexander Koch

If works of art carried as little social and political significance as some skeptics claim, would they be as hotly contested as they are, again and again? We can draw a mental timeline of iconoclasm from the statues and temples ISIS is currently smashing to pieces in Syria back to countless military campaigns, revolts, and regime changes in which the conquest of people went hand in hand with the plunder and destruction of their artistic treasures. Two exhibitions by Clemens von Wedemeyer and Dierk Schmidt highlight the political contentiousness of sculpture. The appropriation and exhibition of aesthetic objects is an inherent part of the struggle over dividing up the world. Schmidt examines the history of German colonialism, with a particular view to the politics of restitution and Berlin's Humboldt Forum. But first, Clemens von Wedemeyer explores the cinema as a social scene and battleground that unfolds upon—but also behind, in front of, and around—the silver screen; a project he has pursued since 2002 in an oeuvre that has increasingly expanded into the genres of documentary environment, architectural installation, and sculpture.

Wedemeyer's show is the eighth and final chapter in our yearlong program titled ONE YEAR OF FILMMAKERS. In the twentieth century, the moving image has dominated our field of vision and helped reshape how we see others and ourselves. The five-channel film installation THE BEGINNING. LIVING FIGURES DYING(2013) draws on the arsenal of scenes of conjuration and destruction in which the cinema has taken possession of the material images of man (and his gods and demons) by putting them on the screen. In a collage of historic footage, Wedemeyer traces how film staged the aura of bodily presence, animating objects and investing the human likeness with outsize magical power while also shattering it. A brief cultural history of sculpture in the movies in which Greek and Roman antiquity is the foil upon which the creation of a human figure as well as its demonization are projected, the video installation is also a historical catalogue of the implements of suggestion, the props, mockups, and effects, in which the cinema fabricated phantasms of the alien and menacing Other.

Wedemeyer's exhibition builds on and extends the ensemble he produced for MAXXI in Rome. For the video installation AFTERIMAGE (2013), he created a detailed digital record of the interiors at CineArs, where props for Cinecittà, the hub of Italian filmmaking, have been manufactured since 1932—Cinecittà Holding is currently threatening to close the studio. Two statues that he scanned now resurface in the gallery's basement showroom as 3D sand prints (2015). Resurrected by algorithms, the two sculptures embody a scene from Greek myth: after Zeus sent a deluge to destroy humankind for its depravity, Deucalion and Pyrrha were the only human beings left on the deserted earth. They consulted the oracle of Themis, who instructed them to cast the bones of their mother behind them. Initially baffled, Deucalion and Pyrrha eventually understood that they were children of the earth—so

their mother's bones must be the rocks at their feet. They threw them over their shoulders, and a young generation sprang up from the stones. A new humanity, born from dead matter. The sound installation is a joint work with the artists Moritz Fehr and Lukas Hoffmann.

To make his sculptures, Wedemeyer harnesses techniques archaeologists use to reconstruct ancient temples and works of plastic art—and, in the future, to literally reprint objects destroyed in ravages like the one unleashed by ISIS in Palmyra. Iconoclasm is producing a new type of future artifacts from the past, artifacts that are clearly not what they once were and form a distinctive category of aesthetic objects. Another such object is A RECOVERED BONE (2014). In an act of digital theft, Wedemeyer lifted one of movie history's most famous props from the screen and set it on a pedestal in the gallery. A key scene from Stanley Kubrick's «2001: A Space Odyssey» tells the story of humankind's earliest technological moment: a humanoid uses a bone as the first tool—and the first weapon—and then flings it toward the heavens in a gesture of triumph. Wedemeyer excised the object from the famous scene and reconstructed its shape using 3D modeling technology. The heavens are deserted, the bone is tangible, but each is as inauthentic as the other. Or is it?

3D and nanotechnology, AI, and other twenty-first-century developments herald the advent of novel metamorphoses that throw a different light on the animistic worldviews that speak from ancient stories. Images and spaces, information and bodies become mutually convertible; the boundary between animate and inanimate substance looks increasingly implausible, as do the distinctions between real people and their media incarnations, between genuine objects and mere dummies. Linear time is riddled with holes and folded in wrinkles. Artistic methods of reenactment, the theatrical recreation of past events, widen to include processes of material and immaterial transformation whose coordinates in time and space seem ever more mutable and inject historic moments of emancipation and critique into the social struggles of the present. Instants of resistance leap across the time of history.

In the final section of Wedemeyer's exhibition, the mute bit-players and extras of a distant past rise up in a noisy rebellion against the movie industry, the "most powerful weapon in modern societies" (as Mussolini put it when he founded the fascist studio Cinecittà). Shot in Rome in 2013, PROCESSION: THE CAST, a film about the extras' riots that rocked the Roman studio in 1958, features members of the Teatro Valle Occupato, a self-organized ensemble that came together in 2011 to prevent the closure of the historic Teatro Valle by taking the venue's management into its own hands. Today's cultural activists speak in the voices of yesterday's insurgents. In 1958, the American film Ben Hur was shot at Cinecittà—also known as the Italian Hollywood—and thousands of unemployed locals sought work on the movie's now-famous crowd scenes. When they were turned away, they stormed the studios: the political dimension of iconoclasm extends beyond the toppling of works of visual art to the social protest against the conditions under which they are produced.



Clemens von Wedemeyer
The Beginning. Living Figures Dying, 2013

Exhibition view: CAST BEHIND YOU THE BONES OF YOUR MOTHER, KOW, Berlin, Germany 2016



Clemens von Wedemeyer
The Beginning. Living Figures Dying, 2013

Exhibition view: CAST BEHIND YOU THE BONES OF YOUR MOTHER, KOW, Berlin, Germany 2016



Clemens von Wedemeyer
Procession, 2013

Exhibition view: CAST BEHIND YOU THE BONES OF YOUR MOTHER, KOW, Berlin, Germany 2016



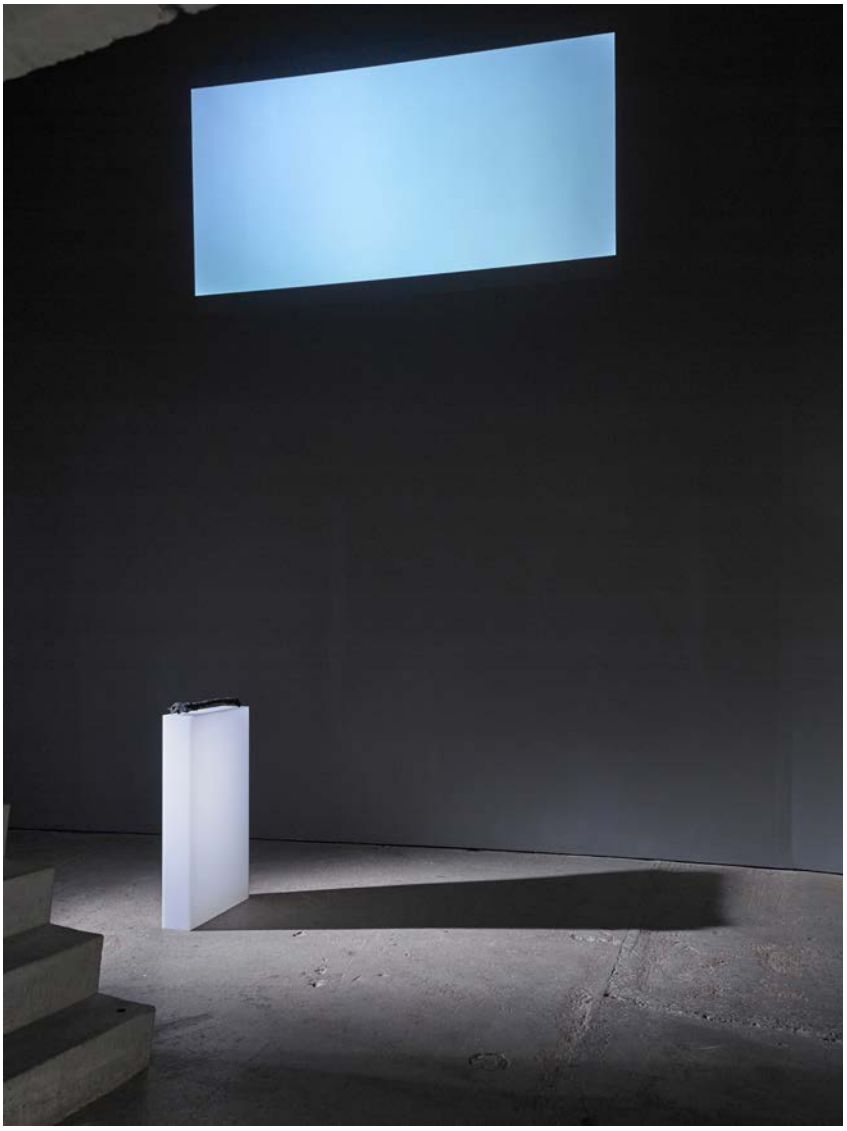
Clemens von Wedemeyer
Cast Behind You The Bones Of Your Mother, 2015

Exhibition view: CAST BEHIND YOU THE BONES OF YOUR MOTHER, KOW, Berlin, Germany 2016



Clemens von Wedemeyer
Cast Behind You The Bones Of Your Mother, 2015

Exhibition view: CAST BEHIND YOU THE BONES OF YOUR MOTHER, KOW, Berlin, Germany 2016



Clemens von Wedemeyer
A Recovered Bone, 2015

Exhibition view: CAST BEHIND YOU THE BONES OF YOUR MOTHER,
KOW, Berlin, Germany 2016



Clemens von Wedemeyer
A Recovered Bone, 2015

Exhibition view: CAST BEHIND YOU THE BONES OF YOUR MOTHER, KOW, Berlin, Germany 2016

CLEMENS VON WEDEMEYER

EVERY WORD YOU SAY

13 September 2014 – 16 November 2014

Kunstverein Brainschweig, Germany

Clemens von Wedemeyer (born 1974 in Göttingen, lives in Berlin) examines the complexity of places and their history in media-reflexive films. In his impressive DOCUMENTA (13) contribution Muster (2012), he episodically traced the vicissitudinous history of the former Benedictine monastery at Breitenau near Kassel in a 3-channel video installation. In the process, his filmic re-enactments distance themselves from the documentary as well as the dramatic, opening up spaces of perception instead that focus on the contingency of history and time. Clemens von Wedemeyer is planning an almost purely acoustic presentation for his solo exhibition at the Kunstverein Braunschweig. It is dedicated to the history of the Deutsches Spracharchiv (German Language Archive), the work of its founder, the linguist and neurologist Eberhard Zwirner, and the ideas behind phono-metry, which he decisively influenced.



Clemens von Wedemeyer

Exhibition view: Every word you say, Kunstverein Brainschweig, Germany, 2014



Clemens von Wedemeyer

Exhibition view: Every word you say, Kunstverein Brainschweig, Germany, 2014





Clemens von Wedemeyer

Exhibition views: Every word you say, Kunstverein Brainschweig, Germany, 2014



Clemens von Wedemeyer

Exhibition view: Every word you say, Kunstverein Brainschweig, Germany, 2014





Clemens von Wedemeyer

Exhibition views: Every word you say, Kunstverein Brainschweig, Germany, 2014





Clemens von Wedemeyer

Exhibition views: Every word you say, Kunstverein Brainschweig, Germany, 2014





Clemens von Wedemeyer

Exhibition views: Every word you say, Kunstverein Brainschweig, Germany, 2014



Clemens von Wedemeyer

Exhibition view: Every word you say, Kunstverein Brainschweig, Germany, , 2014

CLEMENS VON WEDEMEYER

THE CAST

September 26, 2013 - Januray 26, 2014

MAXXI, Roma, Italy
English

Props and extras referencing the giants of the Rome film industry; the relationship between statue and actor, but also between these two and the spectator's gaze; the history of film and its hidden aspects; the political struggles of the cultural sector workers of yesterday and today; the Greek myth of rebirth after destruction.

These are the themes of The Cast, the exhibition dedicated to Clemens von Wedemeyer, one of the international artists most committed to experimentation within a new idiom that concerns time as much as cinematic space.

Clemens von Wedemeyer presents a film show composed of three new works specifically conceived for the museum's Gallery 5 (Afterimage; The Beginning: Living Figures Dying and Procession) and an installation composed of diverse forms and sculptures (Remains: The Myth of Deucalion and Pyrrha). The title The Cast alludes to diverse meanings including the production of sculptures (the casting of forms), the process of selecting actors (casting) and the gesture of throwing (casting a stone).

The exhibition is born out of the research conducted by von Wedemeyer over the last year spent in Rome and deals with a number of its symbolic, historic and contemporary sites such as the Cinecittà Studios and the Teatro Valle Occupato.

CLEMENS VON WEDEMEYER

THE CAST

September 26, 2013 - Januray 26, 2014

MAXXI, Roma, Italy
Italian

Roma 3 settembre 2013. Oggetti di scena e figuranti che rimandano ai colossal dell'industria cinematografica romana; il rapporto tra statua e attore, ma anche tra questi e lo sguardo dello spettatore; la storia del cinema e il suo nascosto; le lotte politiche condotte dai lavoratori nel settore della cultura di ieri e di oggi; il mito greco della rinascita dopo la distruzione.

Questi i temi e i protagonisti di The Cast, la mostra prodotta dal MAXXI, a cura di Giulia Ferracci, dedicata a Clemens von Wedemeyer, tra gli artisti più impegnati nel panorama internazionale nella sperimentazione di un nuovo linguaggio che riguarda tanto il tempo quanto lo spazio cinematografico. Il progetto è stato sviluppato dall'artista in collaborazione con Paolo Caffoni, co-editor del catalogo (Archive Books), contenente i contributi di Marco Scotini e Avery Gordon.

LA MOSTRA

Clemens von Wedemeyer presenta un “film show” composto da tre nuovi lavori pensati appositamente per la Galleria 5 del museo (Afterimage; The Beginning. Living Figures Dying e Procession) e un’installazione composta da diverse forme e sculture (Remains: The Myth of Deucalion and Pyrrha). Il titolo The Cast, nella sua definizione in lingua inglese, allude a diversi significati tra i quali la produzione di sculture (casting a form), il processo di selezione degli attori (casting) e il gesto di lanciare (to cast a stone). La mostra nasce dalla complessa ricerca sviluppata da von Wedemeyer nel corso dell’ultimo anno trascorso a Roma e tratta alcuni dei suoi luoghi simbolo, storici e contemporanei, come gli Studios di Cinecittà e il Teatro Valle Occupato. Attraverso un linguaggio composito e video installazioni multiple, The Cast mette a confronto la materialità del film e quella della scultura, l’animazione degli oggetti di scena e la “pura presenza” delle comparse all’interno dei film. L’allestimento, sviluppato in quattro capitoli, apre al pubblico un percorso molteplice per forme e significati mai riconducibili ad una naturale struttura sequenziale, propria invece al cinema classico. Il grande merito del lavoro di von Wedemeyer sta nell’esposizione di ciò che è separato, sottolinea Marco Scotini: a partire dai resti della società dello spettacolo e dalla frammentazione del dispositivo cinematografico, il suo lavoro guida verso una nuova esperienza immersiva in cui sta allo spettatore la possibilità di ricostruire una propria visione.

Il primo capitolo, Afterimage, trova location a Cinecittà, nello storico laboratorio di scultura Cinears, della famiglia De Angelis, che per quattro generazioni si è occupato della produzione dei materiali di scena per film che hanno segnato la storia del cinema: dai colossal Ben-Hur e Cleopatra a Salò o le 120 giornate di Sodoma di Pier Paolo Pasolini. L’opera è un’animazione 3D dove protagonista è lo sguardo dello spettatore che, attraverso l’uso di una camera in soggettiva, si muove in un deposito dove sono ammassati props, sculture e oggetti di scena.
Secondo capitolo The Beginning: Living Figures Dying è un’installazione composta da brevi frammenti di film storici (da Mélies a Cocteau, da Fellini a Godard), proiettata lungo il pavimento vetrato della Galleria 5 per l’occasione trasformato nell’asse di scorrimento di un film. Il found-footage film analizza il rapporto tra sculture e attori, il perenne duello tra immobilità e movimento, seguendo uno schema drammaturgico del cinema classico: origine della statua, adorazione e successiva distruzione.
La terza parte della mostra presenta Procession, una commistione di genere documentario e cinema di finzione. Il copione del film richiama fedelmente un incidente fuori-scena accaduto nel lontano 1958, quando migliaia di comparse tentarono di entrare negli Studios chiedendo lavoro e interrompendo così le riprese del film in corso. Il cast di questa rimessa in scena (reenactment) è composto dagli artisti e attivisti del Teatro Valle Occupato che dal 2011 è diventato una delle realtà più significative delle trasformazioni in atto nel settore della cultura.
Ultimo capitolo è Remains. The Myth of Deucalion and Pyrrha, due sculture che narrano il mito greco di Deucalione e Pirra, gli unici due esseri umani sopravvissuti al grande diluvio che colpì il mondo in un tempo remoto, raccontato da Ovidio nelle Metaformosi. A loro gli dei concessero il potere di generare nuova vita lanciando pietre alle proprie spalle. In questa sezione sono esposte anche alcune forme in negativo, i calchi provenienti dal Laboratorio Cinears, già presentato nel primo capitolo.

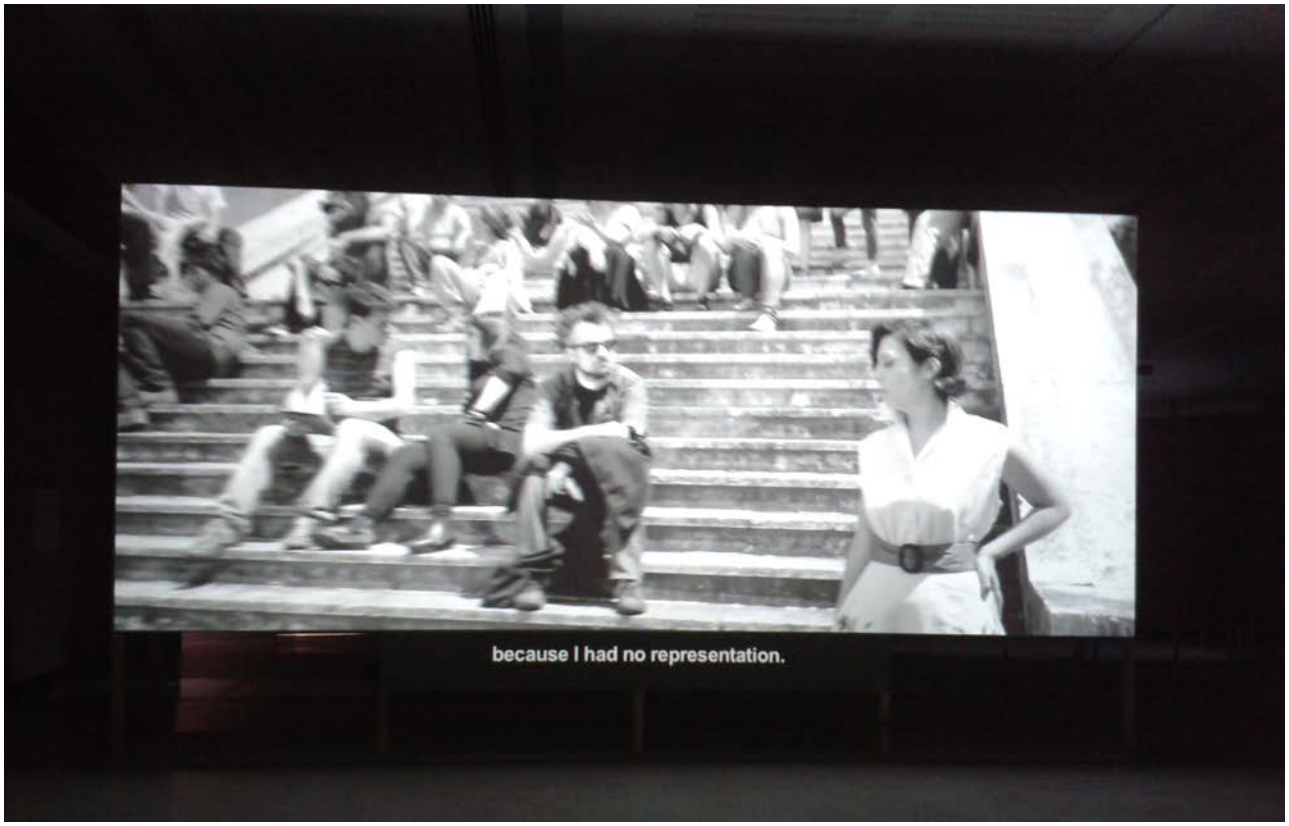
Nella sovrapposizione di tempi differenti – dal mito greco alla manifestazione delle comparse, fino alle lotte odierne dei lavoratori dello spettacolo – The Cast mostra come il ruolo della memoria, così come quello delle immagini in movimento (il cinema), non sia quello di definire l’immagine di ciò che è appena passato, ma una dimensione virtuale che costituisce il potenziale per ogni azione nel presente.



Clemens von Wedemeyer
Afterimage
part of the installation Blind Fire (Casting the bones of their mother)
3 channel semicircular video installation, colour, sound, 6’
2013

Exhibition view The cast, MAXXI, Rome, Italy, 2013-2014





Clemens von Wedemeyer
Procession
part of the installation Blind Fire (Casting the bones of their mother)
HD Video, sound, 14’
2013

Exhibition views The cast, MAXXI, Rome, Italy, 2013-2014







Clemens von Wedemeyer
Procession
HD Video, sound, 14 min, 2013



Clemens von Wedemeyer
The Beginning. Living Figures Dying
part of the installation Blind Fire (Casting the bones of their mother)
(10 channel video installation, sound), 18 min
2013

Exhibition view The cast, MAXXI, Rome, Italy, 2013-2014





Clemens von Wedemeyer
Remains. The Myth of Deucalion and Pyrrha
2013

Exhibition views The cast, MAXXI, Rome, Italy, 2013-2014

CLEMENS VON WEDEMEYER

MUSTER (RUSHES)

June 6 - September 16, 2012

Documenta (13), Kassel, Germany

Synopsis:
Breitenau is located south of Kassel. A former Benedictine monastery was transformed into a prison, and became a concentration camp and educational work camp during WWII. After it's liberation in 1945 by American troops, it was turned into a girls' reformatory in 1955, which was closed in the 1970s and replaced by today's psychiatric institution. A memorial museum was established in the 1980s.
Breitenau is located in the middle of Germany. The institutional change here can be seen as exemplary for german history.
Three films are being produced, which are set in three different eras of the 20th century.

The installation will present these on 3 screens, projected on the outside of a triangle: on each screen will be running a different film of 27min each - which is synchronized with the others in regard to it's space and story, while showing another era by different costumes and make-up of the actors. Sound is audible simultaneously within the spectator's viewpoint and influences the perception of the other screens.
In 1990, the friends August and Amelie visit the Breitenau memorial with their schoolteacher, learning about the inconceivable events that happened there in the past, while their own lives are dominated by lethargy, music, and drugs. In the meantime, on the second screen, American soldiers enter the work camp Breitenau in 1945 during the "battle of Kassel," arrest the guards, and liberate the inmates, helped by a translator who resembles the schoolteacher. On the third screen, Amelie appears both as a reformatory girl during the 1970s and as the leading actress in the making of a film reminiscent of Ulrike Meinhof's Bambule. Meinhof, whose eloquent critique of unprogressive and prisonlike girls' reformatories led to the institution's closure in 1973, is present in the film only as a rumor among cast and crew, who wonder whether she will make an appearance. Realities blur when, having been to a punk concert, the friends watch Bambule, which is shown reflected in August's eyes. The three separate film loops sometimes interdigitate, and time levels mingle. The camera moves slowly through the landscape of actors, while visual alienation effects—shadows, back projections, and double exposure—are employed to blend one time into the next.

The three acts of Muster circle around three motifs—music, the body, and language—while exploring notions of imprisonment and liberation in different times.



Clemens von Wedemeyer
Muster, 2012
3 x 27 min

Exhibition view: Documenta (13), Kassel, Germany, 2012





Clemens von Wedemeyer
Muster, 2012
3 x 27 min





Clemens von Wedemeyer
Muster, 2012
3 x 27 min





Clemens von Wedemeyer
Muster, 2012
3 x 27 min

CLEMENS VON WEDEMEYER

THE REPETITION FESTIVAL SHOW

May 27 - August 28, 2011

Fondazione Galleria Civica - Centro di Ricerca sulla Contemporaneità, Trento, Italy

press release:

Clemens von Wedemeyer, The Repetition Festival Show, the German artist's first solo exhibition at a public gallery in Italy.

Clemens von Wedemeyer (b. Göttingen, Germany, 1974), one of the most representative artists of his generation, explores the interaction between film and the visual arts. In addition to receiving numerous international awards, such as "Best German Short Film" at the International Short Film Festival in Oberhausen, the Kunstpreis der Böttcherstrasse, the VG Bildkunst Award for Experimental Film and Video-art at the Munich Film Festival, and the Marion Ermer Prize, Leipzig, he has taken part in many biennials, including the 7th Shanghai Biennale; the 17th Biennale of Sydney; the 2nd Thessaloniki Biennale; Skulptur Projekte Münster (2007); the 4th Berlin Biennale (2006); the 1st Moscow Biennale, and the 1st Turin Triennale. The list of prestigious international institutions that have dedicated solo exhibitions to his work includes Barbican Art Gallery, London; CGAC-Centro Galego de Arte Contemporánea, Santiago de Compostela; CAC-Centre d´art contemporain, Brétigny s/Orge; P.S.1-MoMA-Museum of Modern Art Affiliate, New York and Koelnischer Kunstverein, Cologne; and Augarten Contemporary, Vienna.

This retrospective takes the unique form of a full-fledged film festival housed in the foundation's exhibit spaces, presenting four of the artist's most celebrated film installations: Against Death, Interview, Found Footage, 2009; Otjesd & The Making of Otjesd, 2005; Occupation & The Making of Occupation, 2002 and Von Gegenüber (From the Opposite Side), 2007.

The individual screenings, scheduled from May to August, will be rounded out with materials such as preparatory videos, posters, photographs, texts and promotional matter, and will be subtitled in Italian for the first time.

The exhibition is conceived as a vast, periodically changing installation-in-progress that visitors can keep coming back to see in new incarnations, hence the title of the project: The Repetition Festival Show. The artist transforms the foundation into a movie theatre, and at the same time, into a centre for producing and thinking about film, an evocative space where it will also be possible to analyze and deconstruct the logic and mechanisms of classic cinema.
The Repetition Festival Show is a solo exhibition whose experimental, hybrid approach reinterprets both the classic format of the video installation and that of the retrospective. The artist's major films will be presented in rotation, a concept inspired by the film loops that characterize von Wedemeyer's installation work. Imperceptible adaptations of the screens or projection equipment for different films and the constant shifts in the set-up, made to accommodate new
documentary elements, become part of a constantly evolving project. Clemens von Wedemeyer has conceived the installations for each of the major films so that they overlap to form a retrospective that grows and changes in the course of time.

Avoiding traditional narrative techniques, von Wedemeyer's films are skilful orchestrations that mingle documented reality with narrative invention, unmasking the mechanisms behind traditional cinematic devices.

Overflowing with references to various forms of experimental cinema (Dziga Vertov, Samuel Beckett, Fritz Lang, Andrei Tarkovsky, and even Laurel & Hardy comedies) his films are sometimes accompanied by a "making-of" that includes, as an integral part of the work, an analysis of the ideas behind it and an illustration of how it was constructed, allowing the viewer to enter into its logic.

Von Wedemeyer thus reframes the aesthetic elements of classic cinema, taking an analytical approach. The boundary between fact and fiction, the relationship between film/work and viewer/audience, and the artwork's transformation over the course of time are elements constantly explored in von Wedemeyer's work, in which the room allowed for different possible interpretations demonstrates that the languages of cinema and the visual arts belong, in many ways, to a single sphere of investigation.

List of the films presented in the exhibition:

Against Death, Interview and Found Footage (2009)—segments from The Fourth Wall, a major project commissioned by the Barbican Art Centre in London—trace the story of the Tasaday, a small indigenous community that supposedly lives in the rain forests of Mindanao in the Philippines, a remarkable case now remembered as one of the biggest hoaxes in the history of anthropology.

Otjesd (2005), a work divided into two parts, describes the contemporary politics of border control, crowd behaviour and the processes through which the conditions of immigration (a highly topical issue) become abstract entities, trapped in a scene that keeps repeating itself.

Occupation and The Making of Occupation (2002) show their central characters - the crew and extras working on a film - gathered together in a field; the viewer gradually becomes a party to their work and to the actions behind the making of the cinematic illusion that is unmasked.

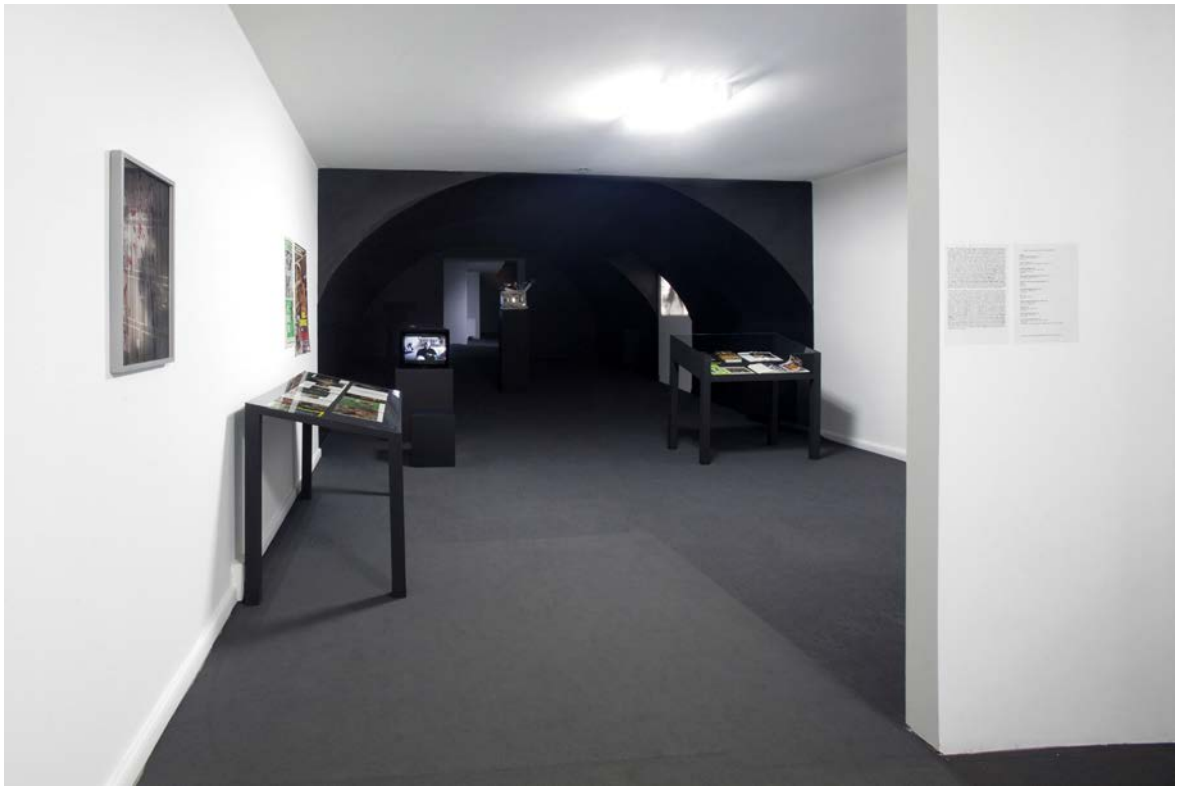
Von Gegenüber (From the Opposite Side) (2007), is based on continuous shots of various micro-events that take place over the course of the film in the square and central station of Münster, which are turned into an enormous set.
The film presents the artist's hallmark strategy: taking viewers behind the camera to create a disturbingly subjective vision of reality.

Each film will be screened according to the following calendar:
28th May – 26th June Against Death;
28th June – 16th July Otjesd;
18th July – 7th August Occupation;
9th August – 28th August Von Gegenüber (From the Opposite Side).

The exhibition is accompanied by a bilingual (Italian/English) guide that will be distributed free of charge to all visitors, jointly published by Projects Arts Centre, Dublin and Fondazione Galleria Civica - Centro di Ricerca sulla Contemporaneità, Trento.

The Repetition Festival Show is a project conceived by Clemens von Wedemeyer and Tessa Giblin, Curator of Visual Arts at Project Arts Centre, Dublin. The Repetition Festival Show at Fondazione Galleria Civica - Centro di Ricerca sulla Contemporaneità di Trento is curated by Andrea Viliani.

Parallel to Clemens von Wedemeyer. The Repetition Festival Show, Fondazione Galleria Civica di Trento is presenting Rosa Barba. Stage Archive; both exhibitions are part of its Silver Summer Program, an extensive calendar of events that will turn the foundation into a series of screening rooms and a centre for reflecting on the projective and evocative space of film.



Clemens von Wedemeyer
The Fourth Wall, 2009

Exhibition view: The Repetition Festival Show, Fondazione Galleria Civica - Centro di Ricerca sulla Contemporaneità, Trento, Italy, 2011



Clemens von Wedemeyer
The Fourth Wall, 2009

Exhibition view: The Repetition Festival Show, Fondazione Galleria Civica - Centro di Ricerca sulla Contemporaneità, Trento, Italy, 2011



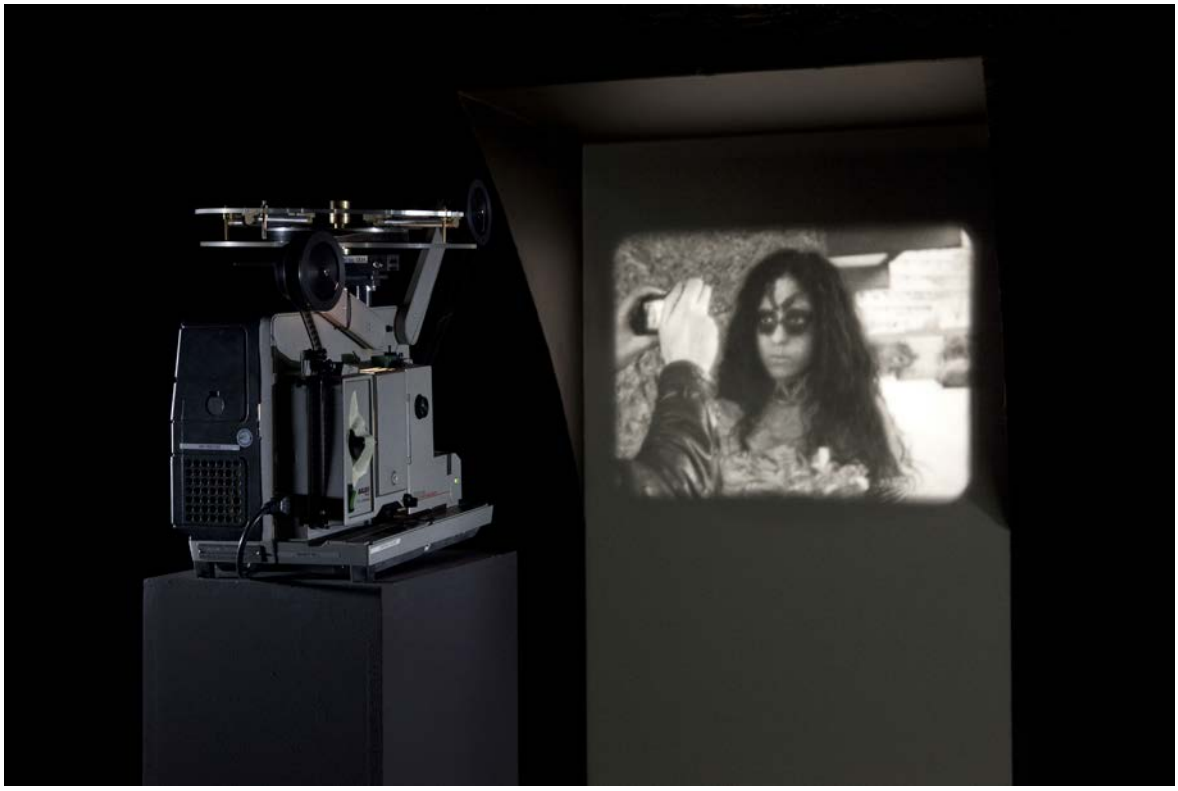
Clemens von Wedemeyer
The Fourth Wall, 2009

Exhibition view: The Repetition Festival Show, Fondazione Galleria Civica - Centro di Ricerca sulla Contemporaneità, Trento, Italy, 2011



Clemens von Wedemeyer
The Fourth Wall, 2009

Exhibition view: The Repetition Festival Show, Fondazione Galleria Civica - Centro di Ricerca sulla Contemporaneità, Trento, Italy, 2011



Clemens von Wedemeyer
The Fourth Wall, 2009
film

Exhibition view: The Repetition Festival Show, Fondazione Galleria Civica - Centro di Ricerca sulla Contemporaneità, Trento, Italy, 2011



Clemens von Wedemeyer
Against Death, 2009

Exhibition view: The Repetition Festival Show, Fondazione Galleria Civica - Centro di Ricerca sulla Contemporaneità, Trento, Italy, 2011



Clemens von Wedemeyer
Otjesd, 2005

Exhibition view: The Repetition Festival Show, Fondazione Galleria Civica - Centro di Ricerca sulla Contemporaneità, Trento, Italy, 2011



Clemens von Wedemeyer
Otjesd, 2005

Exhibition view: The Repetition Festival Show, Fondazione Galleria Civica - Centro di Ricerca sulla Contemporaneità, Trento, Italy, 2011



Clemens von Wedemeyer
Otjesd, 2005

Exhibition view: The Repetition Festival Show, Fondazione Galleria Civica - Centro di Ricerca sulla Contemporaneità, Trento, Italy, 2011





Clemens von Wedemeyer
Otjesd, 2005

Exhibition views: The Repetition Festival Show, Fondazione Galleria Civica - Centro di Ricerca sulla Contemporaneità, Trento, Italy, 2011





Clemens von Wedemeyer
Otjesd, 2005

Exhibition views: The Repetition Festival Show, Fondazione Galleria Civica - Centro di Ricerca sulla Contemporaneità, Trento, Italy, 2011

MAYA SCHWEIZER
CLEMENS VON WEDEMEYER

METROPOLIS. REPORT FROM CHINA

March 11 - May 8, 2011

Frankfurter Kunstverein, Frankfurt, Germany

press release:

In their solo works as well as in their joint projects, Maya Schweizer and Clemens von Wedemeyer seek to investigate and expand the documentary genre by means of elements from fictional or experimental film or with elements from staged photography: How can societal circumstances be represented and commented on while at the same time reflecting the act of their mediatization?

Maya Schweizer often bases her films, photographs, and installations on documentary material that she spins into stories in their own right by choosing details, creating image montages, and by adding sound or edited text. Her works oscillate between art and film, fact and fiction, and invoke subjects such as homelessness, cultural identity, and urban social structures. For her work “Newlaville” the artist photographed billboards that stood at construction sites and urban wastelands in cities such as Chicago, Frankfurt, and Hong Kong: Here, investor groups or communities, using computer generated images of high-rise buildings and new housing developments, had announced their planned projects at the sites; Schweizer cropped her photographs of the development billboards to show only their futurist visualizations and at the same time used shadows cast on the billboards by streetlights or trees to indicate that her images are photographs of posters put up in real places in the present. She replaced the project descriptions commonly found on such development billboards with phrases from a 2002 advertising campaign in Beijing: “Be serious-minded and dependable, think, with purpose, about the construction of the new neighborhood”. Or: “Don’t keep your talents to yourself; make a contribution to the development of your borough”. Public directives such as these were used to accompany the radical modernization – that is, the demolition – of an old neighborhood in Beijing which, in large part, still consisted of wooden Hutong houses built in the traditional way.

Through the combination of these textual components with images from diverse cultural settings, Schweizer provokes the impression that the architecture in large metropolises around the world – despite all efforts to create prominent buildings – is becoming increasingly uniform. Also, the demolition of old architecture in favor of new buildings seems to be a worldwide phenomenon commonly accompanied by campaigns that are aimed at creating public acceptance and which generally make claims about the advantages of the planned buildings, affirming all the while the prospects of a more beautiful, better world. In “Newlaville”, the glaring contradiction between the essential impossibility of active participation by the Chinese population in shaping public space on the one hand, and the propagandist call to get involved in the construction and transformation of the city on the other is applied to other metropolises. After all, in Frankfurt, Chicago or Hong Kong, for instance, it remains an open question whether the population would actually be able to get involved in the plans for city centers developed by powerful elites and whether the liberal air and openness of those societies is likewise a mirage. For earlier presentations, Maya Schweizer had the “Newlaville” text/image montages printed as billboard posters, which she then put up in front of urban construction sites, which is to say, she played the montages back into the public space. A slide projection at the Frankfurter Kunstverein documents these earlier interventions. Creating a parallel to the documentation, the billboards, mounted on construction fences, are shown in the exhibition space, adding in this way another dimension to Schweizer’s critical perspective on building projects and asking to what extent they are actually public. At the Kunstverein, the billboards now appear even more as miniatures of buildings – and they can be seen as a prologue to the adjoining exhibition space.

In the large hall at the Frankfurter Kunstverein, Maya Schweizer and Clemens von Wedemeyer are presenting the revised and expanded version of their joint film project “Metropolis. Report from China”. The project came out of a trip the artists took to Shanghai and Beijing in 2004 to ponder a remake of Fritz Lang’s film classic “Metropolis”. The Expressionist silent film – a flop when it came out in 1927 – has come to rank among the most significant works in film history and was the first film to be included in the UNESCO World Document Heritage List. It is set in a futurist metropolis featuring a marked two-class society: The privileged upper crust spend their time in gardens and entertainment districts, while the working class toil deep below the earth’s surface, working at machines that seem to be indispensable to both classes while not revealing their actual productive function. This science-fiction vision of a social order is partially informed by the Marxist critique of a capitalism where the ruling class exploits all other classes, and overcoming these circumstances is
impossible for the individual. Then, however, the film goes on to present the ensuing revolution in a decidedly negative light, showing that it ultimately achieves nothing but the destruction of the lower classes’ means of existence. “Metropolis” reveals the horrors of life under a totalitarian regime at the same time as warning against the dangers of civilization, or rather, technological progress.

To Schweizer/von Wedemeyer, the mega-cities of modern-day China, with their explosive growth and their increasingly deep chasm between the working class and nouveau riches were the obvious setting for a remake of “Metropolis”. The artists began looking for suitable film locations and interviewing architects, workers, screenwriters and novelists. From their research and film material, they created the 42-minute film “Metropolis. Report from China” (2007). The result is an artistic comparison of Lang’s 1920s utopia with a present-day communist system whose working conditions are quickly becoming capitalist. Searching for current urban utopias and their social reality, the artists continue to construe references to Lang’s “Metropolis”, as for example when pointing to the remarkable similarities between Shanghai’s contemporary architecture and the erstwhile futuristic style of “Metropolis”. From the interviews with workers and architects, we learn what they think about the cultural and architectural westernization of their country. On the one hand, western influences and the social values they symbolize are welcomed; on the other hand, the aim is to raise a new utopian architecture in China, of a kind that could not be realized in Europe: the high-rises appear novel while also anonymous, of super-human proportions while graspable in sober terms. Although the formerly communist system is increasingly becoming a capitalist system, all construction activity continues to be controlled centrally and with exactitude. On Chinese construction sites, the class segregation portrayed in Lang’s film becomes manifest in a great divide between workers and supervisors. This is well illustrated in Schweizer/von Wedemeyer’s film when a supervisor talks about his daily routine: His task, he says, is essentially to supervise the workers and to enforce strict working procedures. As opposed to the situation in “Metropolis”, Shanghai workers are not kept prisoners. But in order to make a living in the city – most workers come from the regions around Shanghai – they require residence permits and have to comply with strict rules. They live on the construction site, in the shadow of the highrises, where cramped two to three-storey container homes are set up for them.

While the dialogue in Fritz Lang’s silent film takes place through subtitles, Schweizer/von Wedemeyer’s film works with an interview soundtrack that is played over the footage: a never-ending flow of images runs with and against the voices of the interviewees. The camera work, even in the purely documentary sections of the film, remains strongly poetic, for example, in the impressive scene showing welding work at night: Like fireflies the sparks light up in the dark frame of the view finder, and as the camera withdraws, metal shavings fall down along the dark building wall like a glowing waterfall. To Schweizer and von Wedemeyer, “Metropolis. Report from China” is also an attempt at scrutinizing their own clichés: To what extent does the tentative analogy between the ideological fiction in Fritz Lang’s film and the actual situation of radical change in Chinese metropolises hold up to “on-the-scene” scrutiny? How significant is the similarity between the architecture in “Metropolis” and in Shanghai? To what extent is the situation in China a utopia and to what extent a dystopia?

Fritz Lang's "Metropolis" is both a vision of the future and a document of the past. In Schweizer / von Wedemeyer's artistic adaptation, this utopia from the past becomes a lens through which to view the present: through the use of historic pictorial subjects, the interpretation of contemporary images is enriched. And it is precisely the link to a feature film that makes it possible to observe today's reality through a fictional lens. For the exhibition at the Frankfurter Kunstverein, Schweizer/von Wedemeyer bolstered their film "Metropolis. Report from China" with much film-historical material from the production of Fritz Lang's "Metropolis" and a host of photographs on the transformation of Chinese mega-cities. The installation comprises a long series of images, two contextualizing slide and video projections as well as a display case showing several apparently very rare photographs from the historic "Metropolis" film set. They show the legendary director doing such things as posing on set and instructing the actors. This valuable little collection allows us to glance one of the most important works of film history in its creation. The photographs are scratched and discolored, some seem to have been singed in a fire, and at first glance they seem to be the original prints from 1927. But in fact they are copies that were manually patinated to mimic originality; they are new prints that pose as valuable historical witnesses. Schweizer / von Wedemeyer's imitation of vintage prints, as presented here, can be interpreted as a reference to the many attempts of reconstructing the original cut of Fritz Lang's "Metropolis" undertaken for many decades, to the many versions that have been created in the process, and to the search for the greatest faithfulness to the original. But which original? In a video interview – also shown in the exhibition – with Enno Patalas, director from 1973–94 of the Munich
Film Museum, Patalas speaks about the difficult work of reconstructing the film.

There are numerous connections to be discovered between the works "Newlaville" and "Metropolis. Report from China," staged at the Frankfurter Kunstverein by Maya Schweizer and Clemens von Wedemeyer: the congruencies of cultural and political lines of tradition in China and in Western societal orders; the resulting search for or claim to originality and historical models; the utopian aspect of constructed environments and more. In both works, architecture appears as a backdrop or an arena of social power relations, if not as a sociopolitical actor itself, one who alternates between protecting and threatening people, between giving them work and taking it from them. A common shared perspective in
this exhibition emerges in the question of public participation in the forming of society.

Maya Schweizer was born in 1976 in Maisons-Alfort, France; she lives and works in Berlin. She studied visual arts and photography at the University of Aix-en-Provence, at the Leipzig Academy of Visual Arts (2000–2002) and at the Berlin University of the Arts, and took master classes with Lothar Baumgarten. Her works have been shown in such places as the Westfälische Kunstverein (2010), the Contemporary Art Center Vilnius (2009), the Kunstverein Braunschweig (2007) and at the 4th Berlin Biennale (2006).

Clemens von Wedemeyer was born in Göttingen; he lives and works in Berlin. He studied photography and media at the FH Bielefeld University of Applied Sciences and at the Academy of Visual Arts Leipzig, and took master classes with Astrid Klein. He has had solo exhibitions in such places as the Barbican Center, London (2009) the CGAC Santiago de Compostela (2008) and P.S.1 MoMA, New York (2006). He has also participated in numerous group exhibitions around the world, such as at the Museum of Contemporary Art Detroit (2010), the Deichtorhallen Hamburg (2010), the Institute for Contemporary Art, Berlin (2008) and for the Sculpture Projects Muenster (2007).

Curators: Holger Kube Ventura, Stefanie Spiegelhalder





Maya Schweizer, Clemens von Wedemeyer
Metropolis. Report from China, 2006
digital video, 42 minutes

Exhibition views: Metropolis. Report from China, Frankfurter Kunstverein, Frankfurt, Germany, 2011





Maya Schweizer, Clemens von Wedemeyer
Shanghai View, 2010
photomontage

Exhibition views: Metropolis. Report from China, Frankfurter Kunstverein, Frankfurt, Germany, 2011



Maya Schweizer, Clemens von Wedemeyer

Exhibition view: Metropolis. Report from China, Frankfurter Kunstverein, Frankfurt, Germany, 2011





Maya Schweizer, Clemens von Wedemeyer

Exhibition views: Metropolis. Report from China, Frankfurter Kunstverein, Frankfurt, Germany, 2011

CLEMENS VON WEDEMEYER

THE REPETITION FESTIVAL SHOW

March 5 - May 22, 2011

Kunsthal Charlottenborg, Copenhagen, Denmark

press release:

Kunsthal Charlottenborg is proud to present the first major exhibition in the Scandinavian region for the German artist Clemens von Wedemeyer. The celebrated young artist's work is characterized by its exploration of the rituals of cinema and documentary, and by its use of looping narratives and dizzying repetition. The exhibition takes the shape of a four-part film festival, digging increasingly deeper back into the artist's career. Every three weeks a new installation will open at Charlottenborg, including a key film work by the artist, as well as extra material – such as complementary videos and photographs. Four free posters – one for each main film – will accompany the exhibition. Please note that exhibition tickets will remain valid for repeat visits.

The Repetition Festival Show was originally curated by Tessa Giblin for Project Arts Centre, Dublin, and will travel to Fondazione Galleria Civica, Trento, in May 2011. The exhibition is accompanied by a book that is the first in a series of monographic publications produced alongside the exhibitions in Charlottenborg's North Galleries. The exhibition is supported by the Goethe-Institut, Munich.

Programme 1 (05.03 - 27.03)
Against Death/The Fourth Wall
In Against Death (2009) a man has seemingly become immortal after joining a tribal ritual. The film is part of von Wedemeyer's project The Fourth Wall (2009), an exploration of the myth of the Tasaday people – an apparently undiscovered tribe in the Philippine rainforest which came to international attention in the 1970s. At Charlottenborg Against Death is presented together with a large selection of material from The Fourth Wall. (Please note that the film is not suitable for young children).

Programme 2 (29.03 - 17.04)
From the Opposite Side
In From the Opposite Side (Von Gegenüber) (2007) follows a day passing in a train station in a small German town from a subjective camera eye. The film starts where it ends, and its looping nature leads the viewer to question its apparently documentary elements. From the Opposite Side was shot on location around an old cinema near Münster Central Station, and was shown in the latter cinema as part of Skulptur Projekte Münster in 2007.

Programme 3 (19.04 - 08.05)
Otjesd
Through a seemingly endless series of check-points and queues, Otjesd (2005) explores the rituals of migration as a looping circuit, in particular through its evocation of the border rituals of former Soviet states (as re-staged outside Berlin). The film is shown with a companion documentary, The Making of Otjesd.

Programme 4 (10.05 - 22.05)
Occupation
10.05 – 22.05.2011
Made with a large group of extras on a field in Leipzig, Occupation (2002) stages the ‘practicalities’ of location filming, including the methods whereby a film crew attempts to gain control of a crowd. The film is shown alongside its counterpart, The Making of Occupation.

An Interview with Clemens von Wedemeyer
By Rhea Dall & Andrea Viliani

What made you start working with film?
There are probably two things that led me there. The first is more classical or even banal: I started with photography and experimented with successions of images, which brought me to video editing... There might have been a second driving force, which was to investigate the whole powerful enterprise of cinema. From my point of view film is our main cultural arena, and it tends to rule over all other art forms. In one sense motion pictures can be seen as a mirror of how society deals with its image production.

Which filmmakers or artists have inspired you the most?
I usually adopt a cinematic grammar for my films from filmmakers that I like: Occupation (2002) refers to early cinema, such as Sergei Eisenstein and Fritz Lang’s first films; while the cinematic landscape in Otjesd (2005) was stolen from settings by Russian filmmakers like Andrei Tarkovsky; and Samuel Beckett’s Film (1965) inspired me for From the Opposite Side (2007).

What is your relation to the notion of the loop?
The loop, besides the multi-channel installation, is the biggest difference between the art space’s black box and cinema presentations... I like the loop format, as you can create a story-like situation that curtails itself and doesn’t need an end. A bad ending frustrates me most when I watch good films. Good films should continue forever... or have an ending that puts the entire film into question! I also like the loop format because it brings film closer to photography or painting: you can start watching at any time. And if you understand something different the second time you follow the film then the loop has done the best it can, by granting a second opportunity to watch and analyse - or even to negate what you just
believed.

What is the background to The Fourth Wall?
One theme I am very interested in is the ongoing question of our belief in images, the question of reality and fiction... When I first read about the Tasaday tribe I saw all these questions condensed in a historic, real event: the Tasaday were a group of 26 people found living in the rain forest of Mindanao, an island in the south of the Philippines. Before their discovery in 1971 their lives had purportedly been untouched by contact with other civilizations, and were unchanged since the Stone Age. In 1986, fifteen years after the Tasaday’s discovery, a journalist searching for the group managed to reach their now abandoned dwelling caves. He found the Tasaday nearby, now inhabiting houses, smoking cigarettes and wearing blue jeans. The question was whether they had been acting fifteen years before, or had just changed. Even today it seems to remain an unresolved question.

This text is an extract from a longer interview that appears in the publication produced to accompany Clemens von Wedemeyer’s exhibition at Charlottenborg. Rhea Dall is curator at Kunsthal Charlottenborg and Andrea Viliani is director at Fondazione Galleria Civica, Trento.







Clemens von Wedemeyer
Against Death, 2009
The Fourth Wall, 2009

Exhibition views: The Repetition Festival Show, Kunsthal Charlottenborg, Copenhagen, Denmark, 2011









Clemens von Wedemeyer
Against Death, 2009
The Fourth Wall, 2009

Exhibition views: The Repetition Festival Show, Kunsthal Charlottenborg, Copenhagen, Denmark, 2011







Clemens von Wedemeyer
From the Opposite Side, 2007

Exhibition views: The Repetition Festival Show, Kunsthal Charlottenborg, Copenhagen, Denmark, 2011





Clemens von Wedemeyer
From the Opposite Side, 2007

Exhibition views: The Repetition Festival Show, Kunsthal Charlottenborg, Copenhagen, Denmark, 2011







Clemens von Wedemeyer
Otjesd, 2005

Exhibition views: The Repetition Festival Show, Kunsthal Charlottenborg, Copenhagen, Denmark, 2011







Clemens von Wedemeyer
Otjesd, 2005

Exhibition views: The Repetition Festival Show, Kunsthal Charlottenborg, Copenhagen, Denmark, 2011







Clemens von Wedemeyer
The Making of Occupation, 2002

Exhibition views: The Repetition Festival Show, Kunsthal Charlottenborg, Copenhagen, Denmark, 2011





Clemens von Wedemeyer
Occupation, 2002

Exhibition views: The Repetition Festival Show, Kunsthal Charlottenborg, Copenhagen, Denmark, 2011

CLEMENS VON WEDEMEYER

SUN CINEMA

April 29 - July 2, 2011

Galerie Jocelyn Wolff, Paris, France

press release:

Notes about SUN CINEMA, Mardin, Turkey, 2010, by Clemens von Wedemeyer

Due to its once religiously diverse and multilingual (Arabic, Kurdish, Turkish, Aramaic...) population, the city of Mardin in southeastern Turkey is sometimes called “Little Jerusalem”. During recent decades, however, the region has been marred by the Turkish-Kurdish Conflict.

After about 25 years without a functioning movie theater, it was only last year that one, managed by a local cinema association, was reopened in Mardin’s old city. Every September, a film festival takes place. Visitors are more likely to attend when the screenings take place outdoors.

In an art project initiated by the British Council and in cooperation with architects from Istanbul, I designed an open-air cinema (to be run by the cinema association) for Mardin. For a long time I searched for an ideal site, a new, permanent location, specifically for the open-air cinema. I wanted it to be lodged between the city and the Mesopotamian plains below. Finally we found the spot: below the 16th century Koran school Kasimyie Medrese, on the western edge of the city directly above a ridge. It lies about a kilometer from the old town with, immediately behind the screen, the beginnings of the open landscape of the plains.

For me it was about creating an open (and opened) cinema, meaning one that could be experienced by many and, at the same time, in which the formal principles of cinema would become visible. “Sun Cinema” is composed of three parts: a free standing screen, an amphitheater, and the projector’s triangular base. The triangle symbolizes the beams of light of the projector. I also wanted to draw a connection between the cinema and the sun: in the morning the first rays of sunlight strike the front of the 6x12 meter screen, at which time one could enact a shadow play using one’s own body. In the evening, the setting sun is reflected back to the south by metallic mirror panels that cover the backside of the screen.

THE SUN AS ILLUMINATOR

This sun imagery refers to studies of light in ancient Arabia, which were concurrent with investigations of the human eye. In his book Florence and Baghdad: a West-Eastern History of Seeing, Hans Belting writes that investigations of the eye and the sun made by Arabian scientists in the Middle Ages led to the introduction of perspective in Western Europe during the Renaissance. Even older ties of this region to the sun are evidenced by solar cults and religions, which focus on sun and fire (Yezidi, Semsi, Zoroastrianism, etc.). In Mardin a room with a window facing the East was found under an ancient Aramaic cloister. Presumably, it had been used by sun or fire worshippers, such as the Zoroastrians. Tour guides present the room as a curiosity. Today, the local Christian and Moslem inhabitants might view these solar cults as heretical, yet aspects of these could have been integrated into these religions, for instance the eternal flame or the Ramadan tradition of fasting in rhythm with the sun’s visibility.

Cinema was preceded by shadow plays and the camera obscura before taking over as the dominant art form utilizing the absorption and projection of light. Alexander Kluge describes another connection between the sun and cinema in his book Geschichten vom Kino with the idea of a cosmic, universal cinema ("Kosmischen Universalkino"). He traces this concept back to an 1846 publication by the lawyer Felix Eberty, The Stars and the Earth. Kluge writes, "Eberty (…) rightly assumed, that a ray of light which left the earth on Good Friday in the year 30 A.D. continues to move out into the cosmos and away from us. Therefore the entirety of history is preserved in the path of light. The entire history of the world is therefore crossing the cosmos in the form of moving pictures (Eberty himself had never heard the term cinema)."

BEHIND THE SCREEN ONE SEES ONESELF

Not only does the rear side of the screen mirror the sun, but one can see in it one's own reflection. Other people's films are shown on the screen's front, but when one makes a step behind the screen during the day, one can view one's mirror image in the landscape or the sun reflecting off one's skin and clothing.

Notes:
In addition to the cinema building project, I shot a film about the city Mardin and the search for the site for the new cinema: Light&Space, 45 min, 2010.

The design of the open-air cinema was discussed with architecture students from the Technical University of Istanbul and realized together with the architect Gürden Gür.



Clemens von Wedemeyer

Exhibition view: Sun Cinema, Galerie Jocelyn Wolff, Paris, France, 2011



Clemens von Wedemeyer

Exhibition view: Sun Cinema, Galerie Jocelyn Wolff, Paris, France, 2011



Clemens von Wedemeyer

Exhibition view: Sun Cinema, Galerie Jocelyn Wolff, Paris, France, 2011



Clemens von Wedemeyer

Exhibition view: Sun Cinema, Galerie Jocelyn Wolff, Paris, France, 2011



Clemens von Wedemeyer
Sun Cinema Model, 2011
MDF, stainless steel
25 x 65 x 65 cm

Exhibition view: Sun Cinema, Galerie Jocelyn Wolff, Paris, France, 2011



Clemens von Wedemeyer
Sun Cinema Model, 2011
MDF, stainless steel
25 x 65 x 65 cm

Exhibition view: Sun Cinema, Galerie Jocelyn Wolff, Paris, France, 2011



Clemens von Wedemeyer
Sun Cinema Model, 2011
MDF, stainless steel
25 x 65 x 65 cm

Exhibition view: Sun Cinema, Galerie Jocelyn Wolff, Paris, France, 2011



Clemens von Wedemeyer
Sun Cinema Location, 2011
HD, Blue Ray, colour, stereo sound, 54’

Exhibition view: Sun Cinema, Galerie Jocelyn Wolff, Paris, France, 2011

CLEMENS VON WEDEMEYER

THE REPETITION FESTIVAL SHOW

November 25, 2010 – February 19, 2011

Project Arts Centre, Dublin, Ireland

press release:

The Repetition Festival Show brings together, for the first time in Ireland, four of Clemens von Wedemeyer's expanded film installations – Occupation, 2002, Otjesd, 2005, From the Opposite Side, 2007, and a selection of artworks from 'The Fourth Wall', including Against Death, 2009, in a single gallery room across an expanded period of time.

Still from Clemens von Wedemeyer, From the Opposite Side, 2007
The Repetition Festival Show presents a rich body of work, highlighting some of the recurring subjects and forms in his films and installations, while also declaring the breadth and diversity of his practice through the constant evolution of artworks.

For his solo exhibition at Project Arts Centre an exhibition apparatus is being designed to create a gallery installation which is both film festival and video installation in one: every three weeks a different film installation will open in the same gallery environment to bring, throughout the duration of the show, four of Clemens von Wedemeyer's most celebrated installations to Dublin. Emerging out of the artworks themselves, the concept for the exhibition draws on the constantly revolving scenarios we see in von Wedemeyer's films - looping temporally, physically, or narratively.

The Repetition Festival Show is accompanied by a free festival guide, which includes posters that delve into the history of movie advertising, designed by von Wedemeyer and Till Gathmann, as well as new texts written by Tessa Giblin, Saskia Vermeulen and Andrea Viliani. This is an extraordinary opportunity to see what amounts to a survey exhibition, expanded over time.

The Repetition Festival Show is curated by Tessa Giblin, Curator of Visual Art at Project Arts Centre, and the guide is co-produced with Fondazione Galleria Civica, Research Center on Contemporaneity, Trento.
The publication and exhibition are made possible by the generous support of the Goethe-Institut Irland. With thanks to Philippe-Alain Michaud and Centre Pompidou for making possible the loan of From the Opposite Side. With further thanks to Andrea Viliani, Galerie Jocelyn Wolff, Koch Oberhuber Wolff, Till Gathmann, and Marisa Baptista. Project Arts Centre is supported by the Arts Council and Dublin City Council.

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Clemens von Wedemeyer
The Fourth Wall, 2009
film, “Against Death”, 2009

Exhibition view: The Repetition Festival Show, Project Arts Centre, Dublin, Ireland, 2010-2011



Clemens von Wedemeyer
The Fourth Wall, 2009

Exhibition view: The Repetition Festival Show, Project Arts Centre, Dublin, Ireland, 2010-2011



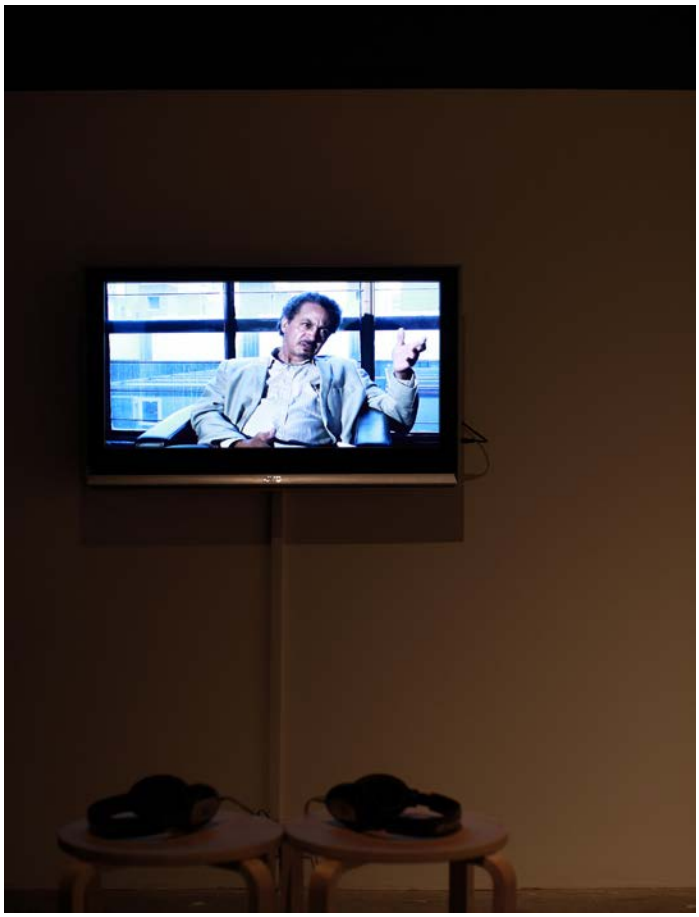
Clemens von Wedemeyer
Against Death, 2009
video exhibition view

Exhibition view: The Repetition Festival Show, Project Arts Centre, Dublin, Ireland, 2010-2011



Clemens von Wedemeyer
The Fourth Wall, 2009
newspaper, “First Contact”, 2010

Exhibition view: The Repetition Festival Show, Project Arts Centre, Dublin, Ireland, 2010-2011



Clemens von Wedemeyer
The Fourth Wall, 2009
video, “Interview”, 2009

Exhibition view: The Repetition Festival Show, Project Arts Centre, Dublin, Ireland, 2010-2011



Clemens von Wedemeyer
From the Opposite Side, 2010
poster and publication

Exhibition view: The Repetition Festival Show, Project Arts Centre, Dublin, Ireland, 2010-2011



Clemens von Wedemeyer
From the Opposite Side, 2010

Exhibition view: The Repetition Festival Show, Project Arts Centre, Dublin, Ireland, 2010-2011



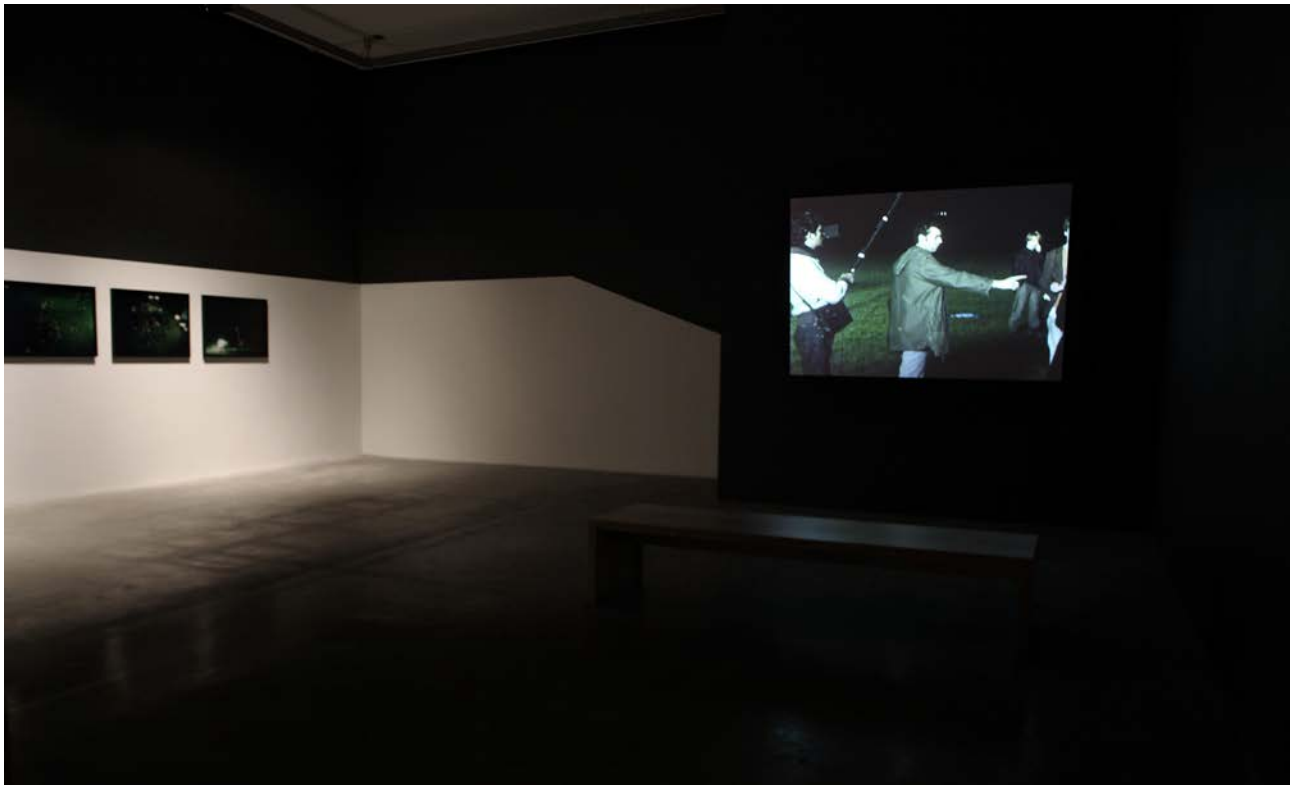
Clemens von Wedemeyer
Occupation, 2002
color photographic prints

Exhibition view: The Repetition Festival Show, Project Arts Centre, Dublin, Ireland, 2010-2011



Clemens von Wedemeyer
The Making of Occupation, 2010
poster and publication

Exhibition view: The Repetition Festival Show, Project Arts Centre, Dublin, Ireland, 2010-2011



Clemens von Wedemeyer
The Making of Occupation, 2002
video

Exhibition view: The Repetition Festival Show, Project Arts Centre, Dublin, Ireland, 2010-2011



Clemens von Wedemeyer
The Making of Occupation, 2002
video

Exhibition view: The Repetition Festival Show, Project Arts Centre, Dublin, Ireland, 2010-2011



Clemens von Wedemeyer
The Making of Occupation, 2002
poster and publication

Exhibition view: The Repetition Festival Show, Project Arts Centre, Dublin, Ireland, 2010-2011

CLEMENS VON WEDEMEYER

THE FOURTH WALL

January 23, 2010 - April 22, 2010

KOCH OBERHUBER WOLFF, Berlin, Germany

press release:

After its premiere at the Barbican Art Gallery London (The Curve), Koch Oberhuber Wolff was the second venue of Clemens von Wedemeyer's "The Fourth Wall", a project which negotiates the illusionistic nature of the authentic.

The centre of this extensive exhibition project is a historical incident around a group of contemporary cavemen: the "Tasaday", a tribe that was discovered in the Philippine rain forest in 1971. Western media declared its discovery a sensation. Apparently, the 26 members of this tribe were still living in a Stone Age, unaware of the modern world. However, already in the eighties, doubt arose as to the authenticity of this discovery which was soon suspected to be a swindle. Unquestionably, the news coverage and the photos of these "peaceful savages" have shaped the Philippines' image in the international media. This was much to the pleasure of Ferdinand Marcos' government, who discouraged any serious anthropological research within the country, but was always eager to please the media. Was the Tasaday story true? If so, was this tribe the prey of hungry western journalists? Or was this a hoax, staged to divert attention away from the Marco regime? The West's projection of a jungle paradise?

"The Fourth Wall", a notion used in theatre and introduced by Diderot (Discours sur la poésie dramatique, 1758), refers to an imaginary divide between stage and audience. This concept enables actors to appear as authentic, as if they were "amongst themselves". At the same time, the audience is made to believe that the stage act is "real". In his project for KOW, von Wedemeyer applies the notion of the fourth wall to anthropology as well as to photography and film – disciplines and media that have authorised themselves to adequately and authentically describe humankind and the conditions of life. This power, too, builds on the assumption of a fourth wall: a wall that is set up both by the audience's desire for an illusion of reality as well as by the willingness of art and social sciences to deliver such an illusion.

In his nine films and interviews, Clemens von Wedemeyer constructs and punctures such fourth walls. These both create and shatter the illusion that we are able to distinguish between images of "others" that are real and images that are merely images. It is an investigation into notions of representation and belief. Yet these works also look into the short time span of a "first contact" – be it the first contact between anthropologists and an isolated group of individuals, between actors and their audience, between the visitors and the works in the exhibition.

"The Fourth Wall" was commissioned by Barbican Art Gallery London and founded by Medienboard Berlin-Brandenburg and the ifa, Institut für Auslandsbeziehungen. The Barbican exhibition included the nine video works. The final version of the project, produced for the exhibition at Koch Oberhuber Wolff, also includes the photographic displays, framed photographies, vitrines and books, posters, a curtain and a sound piece.







Clemens von Wedemeyer
Wood, 2009
HD video loop, 6:30’

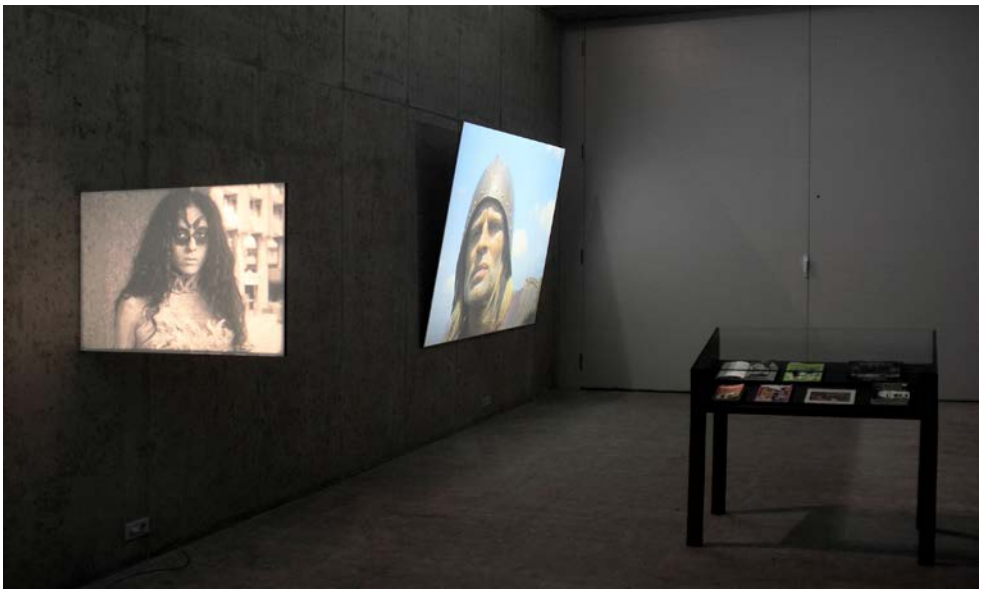
Exhibition views: The Fourth Wall, Koch Oberhuber Wolff, Berlin, Germany, 2010





Clemens von Wedemeyer
Intro, 2009
16 mm film loop, B/W, 3’
film stills

Exhibition views, The Fourth Wall, Koch Oberhuber Wolff, Berlin, Germany, 2010





Clemens von Wedemeyer
Intro, 2009
16 mm film loop, B/W, 3 min
film stills

Found Footage, 2008-2009
31 min

Exhibition views: The Fourth Wall, Koch Oberhuber Wolff, Berlin, Germany, 2010



Clemens von Wedemeyer
How to Re-establish the Truth About the Tasaday? Interview with John Nance, 2008 / Wikipedia, 2010
digital print on MDF 178 x 78.9 cm

Exhibition view: The Fourth Wall, Koch Oberhuber Wolff, Berlin, Germany, 2010



Clemens von Wedemeyer

Exhibition view: The Fourth Wall, Koch Oberhuber Wolff, Berlin, Germany, 2010





Clemens von Wedemeyer
Reception, 2009
3 channel video installation, 13’

Exhibition views: The Fourth Wall, Koch Oberhuber Wolff, Berlin, Germany, 2010





Clemens von Wedemeyer
Against Death, 2009
33', 35 mm film on Blue-ray

Exhibition views: The Fourth Wall, Koch Oberhuber Wolff, Berlin, Germany, 2010



Clemens von Wedemeyer

Exhibition view: The Fourth Wall, Koch Oberhuber Wolff, Berlin, Germany, 2010



Clemens von Wedemeyer

Exhibition view: The Fourth Wall, Koch Oberhuber Wolff, Berlin, Germany, 2010



Clemens von Wedemeyer
Vitrine 1 with books, detail, 2010
111.4 x 109.7 x 65.6 cm

Exhibition view: The Fourth Wall, Koch Oberhuber Wolff, Berlin, Germany, 2010



Clemens von Wedemeyer

Exhibition view: The Fourth Wall, Koch Oberhuber Wolff, Berlin, Germany, 2010

CLEMENS VON WEDEMEYER

October 25, 2008 - January 11, 2009

Centro Galego de Arte Contemporanea, Santiago de Compostela, Spain



Clemens von Wedemeyer

Exhibition view: Centro Galego de Arte Contemporanea, Santiago de Compostela, Spain, 2008



Clemens von Wedemeyer
Big Business, 2002

Exhibition view: Centro Galego de Arte Contemporanea, Santiago de Compostela, Spain, 2008



Clemens von Wedemeyer
Die Probe, 2008

Exhibition view: Centro Galego de Arte Contemporanea, Santiago de Compostela, Spain, 2008



Maya Schweizer,Clemens von Wedemeyer
Rien du tout, 2006

Exhibition view: Centro Galego de Arte Contemporanea, Santiago de Compostela, Spain, 2008





Maya Schweizer, Clemens von Wedemeyer
Metropolis. Report from China, 2006

Exhibition views: Centro Galego de Arte Contemporanea, Santiago de Compostela, Spain, 2008



Clemens von Wedemeyer
Eraserhead, 1977
film poster

Exhibition view: Centro Galego de Arte Contemporanea, Santiago de Compostela, Spain, 2008



Clemens von Wedemeyer
The Making of Big Business, 2002

Exhibition view: Centro Galego de Arte Contemporanea, Santiago de Compostela, Spain, 2008

CLEMENS VON WEDEMEYER

ACTORS & EXTRAS

September 15 - December 19, 2009

Argos Centre for Art & Media, Brussels, Belgium

press release:

In his installation entitled Basler Podest, another version of which was shown at Art 37 Basel, Clemens von Wedemeyer (Göttingen, Germany, 1974) has created a dramatic situation that disorients the viewer and plays with several formal conventions from the film and mass media worlds. At Art 37 Basel, Von Wedemeyer's Basler Podest appeared to be a plausible venue for real live interviews with artists, with the advantage that it was very close to the Art Basel bookshop. However, nothing could have been less true. This work too fits seamlessly into Von Wedemeyer's young oeuvre and refers — as do his films Rien du tout (in association with Maya Schweizer in 2006) and Otjesd (2005) — to the tension and the unclear dividing line between reality and fiction; also to the points of contact between art, cinema and documentary. Basler Podest also tests various notions of theatricality against life itself, while drawing the viewer fully into the process.

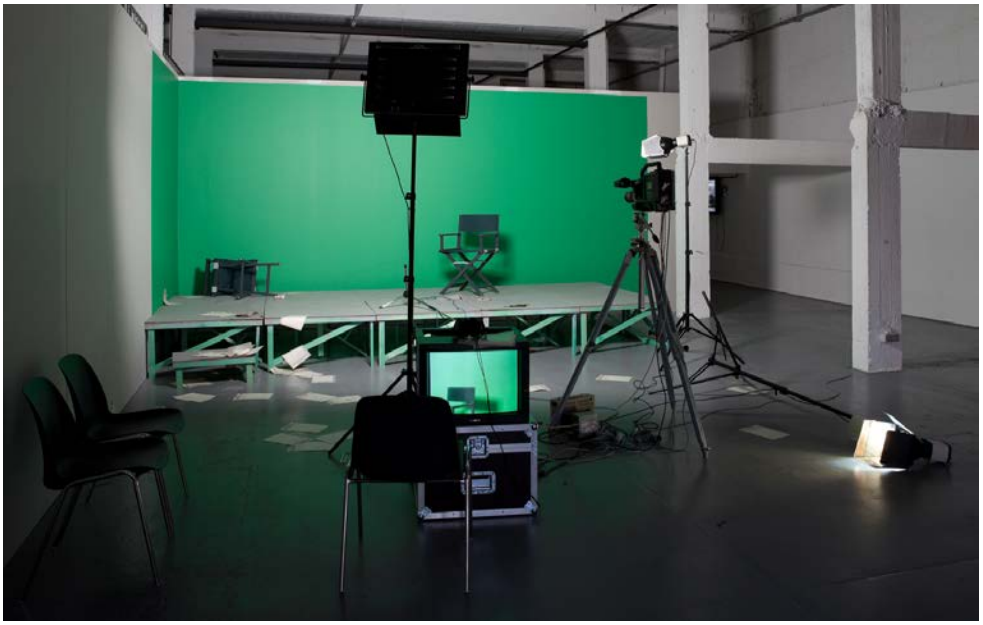
Basler Podest has indeed been constructed roughly like an interview set. But one where all sorts of things must only just have taken place. On a stage painted in fresh green and lit by a powerful spot are two empty chairs — one is standing upright, the other has tumbled into a corner. The scene is observed by a camera connected to the foreground. There stands a monitor that shows the live pictures of the chair captured by the camera. There are several other things in front of the stage: a set of chairs or lights on stands are two examples (one of which has also fallen over). A mass of wires, extension cables and sockets wind through the installation. And if one looks one discovers more details. For instance, pages (from a scenario?) are scattered here and there and dust floats about. A bloodstained handkerchief lies on the stage and drops of blood are spread around the installation too.

What is going on here? The viewer immediately asks this question when confronted with this abandoned, operational exhibition of events whose process cannot be imagined. Was a performance going on here? Or a fight? Perhaps the interviewee didn't like the question?

By means of these details and others, Von Wedemeyer elevates this 'interview situation' — this fictional television studio (where the characteristic blue screen is replaced by a 'green screen') — to the level of an imaginary thriller. After all, the mess and the blood suggest a confrontation, a fight with a serious outcome. The viewer can only guess at the precise motive: he struggles with the illusion of having access to the fleeting and barely tangible past. The fact that the artist trifles with the viewer's curiosity, impatience and thirst for knowledge, which he obviously wishes to quench, is just one aspect of this work.

The second important component that Von Wedemeyer plays on subtly yet with grandeur is the position of the viewer. The viewer observes this bizarre situation as an extra — one who will however never appear in view in this work. It is precisely his presence and his perception that are the key elements. They form the premise for Basler Podest's existence. The viewer is caught in the triangular relationship between the camera filming the chair, the monitor that shows what the camera sees, and the chair on the stage, empty and apparently waiting for him. The past may well have escaped the viewer, but it is still present here. The camera and the monitor are switched on: they are the witnesses to it, showing a continuous and unmoving picture of the fleeting presence which at the moment of filming is already the past. Just as in previous works, Von Wedemeyer again exhibits the story behind the illusion, while at the same time creating this illusion by showing his 'making of'. JP/IS





Clemens von Wedemeyer
Basler Podest, 2009
installation

Exhibition views: Actors & Extras, Agros Centre for Art & Media, Brussels, Belgium, 2009





Clemens von Wedemeyer
Basler Podest, 2009
installation

Exhibition views: Actors & Extras, Agros Centre for Art & Media, Brussels, Belgium, 2009



Clemens von Wedemeyer
Basler Podest, 2009
installation

Exhibition view: Actors & Extras, Agros Centre for Art & Media,
Brussels, Belgium, 2009

CLEMENS VON WEDEMEYER

THE INNER CAMPUS

2008

Dual screen installation

Video format: 2 x HD NTSC

16:9

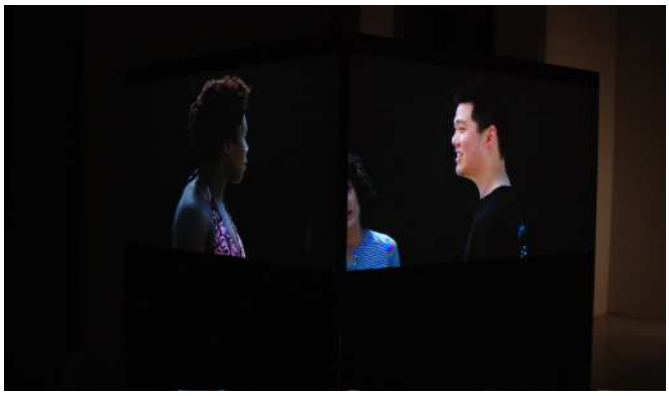
2 x 55 min

Clemens von Wedemeyer note about The inner campus:

This is a work which I finished for the open studio day in lorence, and which came out of my weeklong workshop with students at the Santa Barbara University (California). I am pretty happy about it. It's a work based on interviews and so describing the space of the campus: it's historical, actual and psychological aspects. Two screens show on the right side a talking head, directed to the left, on the right side directed to the left: two persons answer questions. We filmed it with 2 cameras in that way, that one view does not show background (the campus), but the straight view shows it from time to time. The installation is made of two synchronized players (best would be HD-players), and a wooden wall in 90° attached to each other (each 160x 210 cm) the quality of the sound installation is most important.









Clemens von Wedemeyer
The inner campus, 2008
dual screen installation
video format: 2 x HD NTSC
16:9, 2 x 55 min

CLEMENS VON WEDEMEYER

DIE PROBE (THE TEST)

2008

HD-video

12 min, loop

Die Probe (The Test) is a fixed plane on the wings of a political discussion. Twelve minutes of interlude during the politician discourse reveals itself for what it is- an authentic show. The observer can never access the heart of the action. Its viewing angle is limited, as preferred, because it gives the spectator a key to the event. The margin, a true meta-device, manages to deal with all.

Clemens von Wedemeyer loves this type of scene: ones with secondary acts, capable of capturing profound senses of certain situations. Die Probe is not his first creation in which he created and filmed the margin, as shown authentically on this stage.

Rien du Tout, created in 2006 at the CAC Bretigny, articulates itself around a similar principle. Filmed about the making of a film, everything seems to side with the unfolding perspective of the projectors.

All of these revelations take place off-stage. It's here where it regularly escapes what it chooses to show. Rien du tout is constructed around an audition for a fictional piece situated in the middle ages. If the spirit of the middle ages is hardly represented on the stage, it instead resurfaces far from the cameras. It springs from improvised situations, whispered fantasies or hazardous spills. Everything is failing; the cinematographic device is witness to a stolen vision, perceived as unbeknownst to the director. What is researched in vain on the stage, finally gives behind the scenes in a Warburg survival mode. (Nachleben)

Could Wedemeyer be redefining a genre, that of a "cinema of impatience?" In a business mired in the impossibility of representing, his work is surprising in its ability to serve meaning. His constrained writing creates situations that occur in themselves. Cleverly calculated, this idea seems to highlight one of the defining features from his origin of cinematographic art: his inability to return to a truthful manner. Each film rests on a work that has been cut and put back together. The film narrative is constructed from a necessary sham, registered in a media mechanism. And it is because of its artificial definition, that cinema was one of his obsessive subjects. What Wedemeyer exposes in the end is no other than the cinematographic artifice overflowing by the truth that haunts him.

With Die Probe, it's the miming politician that is targeted, decorticated, made naked, returned to its deconstruction, from the fallacy of theatre. This short fiction deconstructs his subject starting from the obvious: that of the spectacular nature of the electoral performance. In the manner of an actor, the political male repeats his text, takes care of his appearance, is applauded and then bows out. The politician and his advisor, frozen in their respected solitudes, are revealed by their actions and the deception of their condition.

But Die Probe does not rest there. The analysis continues to grow, when the fiction proves itself capable to take judgement on what it describes. The refusal of the politician's office in which he had been elected, functions as a questioning of the political spectacle within its own presentation. It is a rupture, a real crisis at the heart of the audition process, which reveals the truth. The decomposition of political reasoning is represented; the Meta treatment is included in the original narrative device.

Falsely real, truthfully artificial, this spectacular finale overflows the sphere of fiction in the same way as pornography, exposing a real rape to the spectator (that of the bodily integrity of extras).

In Die Probe, everything is reassembled. Yet the product of this double representation is real, since what is sought is unreal and a pointless delivery policy. The representation (the film) of a representation (the meeting) becomes the truthful restitution, almost documenting their respective significations. The cinematography illuminates the artifice of the politician, and vice versa. Failing, the politician is the commentator of a universe in which false is the main character.

False from the seams, Wedemeyer's films access the truth by their willingness to deconstruct the essence of the film artefact. Transformed by scalpel, his camera becomes an analysis tool able to expose the backside of the process.

Questioned in 1991 on his directorial process, Balthus mentioned a certain painting that, from Japan to Sienna, enforced not representation but identification. Finally, this is indeed what it might be.

Christophe Catsaros



Clemens von Wedemeyer
Die Probe (The Test), 2008
hd-video, 12 min, loop
video stills



Clemens von Wedemeyer
Die Probe (The Test), 2009
hd-video, 12 min, loop

Installation view at Deutsche Guggenheim, Berlin, Germany, 2008

CLEMENS VON WEDEMEYER

LE NUAGE MAGELLAN (THE MAGELLANIC CLOUD)

January 10 - April 9, 2007

Centre Pompidou, Paris, France

press release:

Inspired by a science-fiction novel from the Polish writer Stanislaw Lem, Le Nuage Magellan (The Magellanic Cloud) is the first thematic group exhibition to be presented in Espace 315. Juxtaposing the visionary projects of a Modernist architect with new works by six contemporary artists, Le Nuage Magellan looks at Modernism as a social project and an aesthetic code, mainly through its architectural and urbanistic expression. Echoing the projects of Oskar Hansen, works by Paulina Olowska, Michael Hakimi, Dan and Lia Perjovschi, David Maljkovic, Maya Schweizer and Clemens von Wedemeyer propose different strategies for apprehending Modernism and its impact on collective memory.

The Magellanic Cloud is the title of a novel published in 1955 by the Polish writer Stanislaw Lem. Set around the year 2300, it tells of an interstellar voyage to the Magellanic Cloud and successfully predicts a number of future inventions (such as the Internet) whilst at the same time depicting an ideal Communist society of the future.
The novel and its reception thus offer a basis for reflection on the possibilities and pitfalls associated with the introduction of historical references in contemporary art practice. The re-writing of history, futurological reasoning and analysis of modernism as a tool for understanding the present are just some of the strategies deployed in the work of the artists
represented in the exhibition.

Dan Perjovschi (1961) and Lia Perjovschi (1961) live in Bucharest. Obsessed with history, they are both cultural activists, translating and transforming the local artistic tradition, and stimulating a public debate on it. Running an open archive, publishing leaflets and periodicals, organising meetings, they animate Bucharest's art community. At the same time, their artistic practices are different. Dan usually works by placing his visual comments and jokes (cartoons, graffiti) directly on the walls of museums and galleries. Lia has recently been making maps and diagrams, which illustrate her personal version of the contemporary history of art, searching for connections and points of reference.

Clemens von Wedemeyer (1974), a German artist, uses classic cinematographic genres and images to create an interpretative framework for contemporary phenomena. In Silberhöhe (2003), he refers to Antonioni's Eclipse to emphasize a fundamental defect underlying the modernist project, culminating in the demolition of modern housing developments in the former GDR. In Metropolis (2006), which he realised with French artist Maya Schweizer (1976), Fritz Lang's anti-utopia constitutes a reference grid for reflecting on contemporary China. Metropolis will be shown in Cinema 1 only twice: on 9th and 25th of January 2007.

In his installations, Berlin-based artist Michael Hakimi (1968) processes architectural and urban-space landscapes into abstract forms, translating contemporary fears and the catastrophic atmosphere of the media news into fantastic and futuristic landscapes.

In 2006, Polish artist Paulina Olowska (1976) tried to revitalise one of Warsaw's emblematic, and then forgotten and defunct neon sign dating back to 1962. Olowska presented a plan of bringing this object back to the life of the house it was built on, and won the support of its inhabitants for it. To raise the required funds and to highlight the problem of Warsaw's dilapidating historical neon signs, she organised an exhibition that featured a collage of various neon signs and paintings conceptually interpreting their history.

Croatian artist David Maljkovic (1973) tries to go beyond the limitations of the historical discourse, proposing his own futurological perspective. In the work Scenes for the New Heritage III, made especially for this exhibition, he tries to invent new rituals that could revive the 1970s Freedom Fighter Monument, devoted to the memory of the former Yugoslavia's national heroes, the WWII communist partisans. Following Yugoslavia's disintegration, the common memory, and consequently also the monuments, lost their symbolic meaning. The new rituals are an attempt to imagine an alternative symbolic language that could transform the heritage of the recent traumatic past.



Clemens von Wedemeyer
Die Siedlung, 2004
video monitor (right)

Exhibition view: Le Nuage Magellan (The Magellanic Cloud), Centre Pompidou, Paris, France, 2007



Clemens von Wedemeyer
Die Siedlung, 2004
video monitor (right)

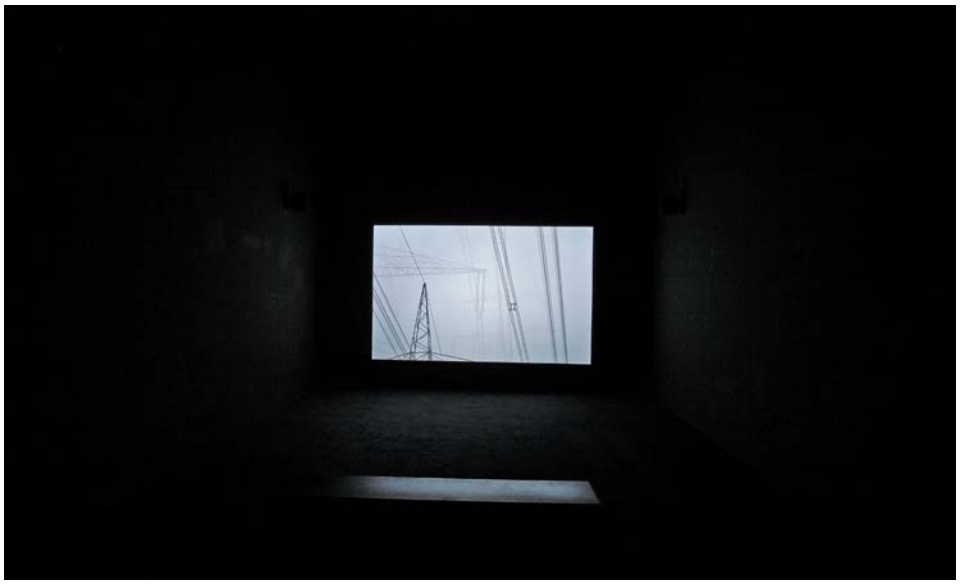
Exhibition view: Le Nuage Magellan (The Magellanic Cloud), Centre Pompidou, Paris, France, 2007



Clemens von Wedemeyer
Die Siedlung, 2004
video monitor (right)

Exhibition view: Le Nuage Magellan (The Magellanic Cloud), Centre Pompidou, Paris, France, 2007





Clemens von Wedemeyer
Silberhöhe, 2003

Exhibition views: Le Nuage Magellan (The Magellanic Cloud), Centre Pompidou, Paris, France, 2007

CLEMENS VON WEDEMEYER

VON GEGENUBER / FROM THE OPPOSITE SIDE

2007

38 min

film 35 mm on dvd

produced for Skulptur Projekte Münster 07

In the cinema...
The Metropolis cinema lies near the main railway station. Here a film is being screened that was shot in front of its very doors: passers-by walk through the station, police officers do their rounds, everyday things occur. The moving pictures on the screen indicate a subjective view, one hears breathing and steps: someone looks into the camera as if he knew us. Perhaps we can find out by the direction the onlookers then take and their glances through whose eye we are looking- perhaps. For this is not a documentary. Cinema determines, quasi as an autonomous body, the sight and hearing of the viewer. But this interior space remains connected to public space: once out side again, we compare the view of the film location at the station with the perspective presented on the screen:verified,distorted,or disappointed.

Cinemas are semi-public places. Here we are faced with and forced to deal with images: with images from afar and others originating from sources much closer to us. One projection space long before the inception of cinema was the simple camera obscura: a small hole was made in the wall of a darkened chamber facing a street or a square and closed with a lens.Through this lens images of the outside world located directly be hind the wall were projected onto a surface in the chamber. People standing outside in front of the wall could be seen. With the advent of cinema distant places or creations of the imagination could now be projected and watched. In the Metropolis the screen needs to be understood as a kind of partition,separating the audience from the surroundings. The façade of the Metropolis reminds me of Dan Graham's architectural model Cinema (1981]. Today Munster has only four cinemas: Cineplex, Stadt New York, Schlossthea ter, and Cinema (with the Kurbelkiste). There used to be more. No longer a cinema venue, the Metropolis, to be put up for compulsory auction (or demolished]. will now be populated by passers-by from the train station. Perhaps popcorn will be on sale and coffee brewed. The seats are sold, the old screen has yellowed. But the film projector is dusted off, for the last time in the Metropolis. Outside the screening times of the film, discussions, readings, flea markets, and other events will be held in the Metropolis. This is part of the project.

... at the station ...
The area is actually 'semi-public,' although this space owned by the German Railways is regarded as being public by passers-by and travelers. For the individual the station still offers a kind of refuge amidst a hap hazard crowd in an otherwise tidied-up city. But only for a short time, then it is in the interest of the German Railways to keep stays at the station in check, only permitted for the purposes of traveling or shopping. Encounters and conflicts still seem possible though. Passengers change trains, come into contact with others, including some they want nothing to do with

- public space as a volatile space of potential conflict. Here ‘station’ does not designate a building but rather a function. Its history is not directly readable from the facade or architecture, but rather from the discussions people have about it or its influence on their behavior. Demonstrations and rallies begin or end here. The relative unpredictability quite possibly frightens the operators of the station. That’s why the station is monitored and policed.The station building in Munster is to be torn down and replaced in the coming years. Munster’s residents want to get things right, at least that’s what one reads in the papers,and so everyone is looking forward to getting rid of the unpopular station. Will things improve? The changes will mean a redistribution of space; and passers-by and residents will have to find new routes.

... in front of and behind the screen.
K. is the camera’s eye, an amalgam of technical gaze and human movements - an autonomous gaze. Ver tov’s Man with the Movie Camera (1929) and Beckett’s Film (1965) influenced this approach and its stance, but 3D computer games also have a similar look. It’s not just about the actions of the performers, made up of scores of gestures, but also the gesture of the camera as a subject. It tries to hide, for its gazing eye changes the atmosphere and creates a unique situation in public space. The observed gaze into the camera with varying looks:who is a passer-by and who is part of the staged scene? Performers play the role of passers-by, and passers-by become performers... Ads were used to find the amateur and professional actors from Munster who play the various roles in the film.







Clemens von Wedemeyer
Von Gegenüber (From the Opposite Side), 2007
35 mm, 38 min, loop
film stills







Clemens von Wedemeyer
Von Gegenüber (From the Opposite Side), 2007
35 mm, 38 min, loop
film stills





Clemens von Wedemeyer
Von Gegenüber (From the Opposite Side), 2007
35 mm, 38 min, loop
Exhibition views: “Skulptur projekte münster”, Munster, Germany, 2007

CLEMENS VON WEDEMEYER

GETRENNTER MONOLOG (DIVIDED MONOLOGUE)

2007

Slideshow, 80 slides

Bringing to a Stand-Still
On Two Recent Works by Clemens von Wedemeyer
By Beatrice von Bismarck

Two people, one turned more to the right, the other more to the left, alternate in the series of slides Getrennter Monolog (Divided Monologue). Not regularly, from image to image, but rather in such a way that even after the camera is repeatedly focused on one figure, the other comes into view again, as in a cinematic shot/countershot. Their gestures, postures, and orientation create the impression they are related to each other, involved in a communicative, albeit silent exchange. It is, however, not just the soundlessness of the images that creates barriers between them but also the introduction of the language itself into the texts tersely set in white on black. They are self-reflexive sentences that interrupt the series of images and make the relationships between the figures their theme: “He says /, but he doesn’t mean himself but rather me. / It is for Him as an Other difficult to read my thoughts. Indeed,truly understanding me is nearly impossible for Him. / He should not always just look; he should assimilate himself with me as speaker. / We say and think the same thing. / After we have played the game;he should please take responsibility for himself again. / I am someone who has someone else say what he thinks and make others believe what he writes.” As easily assignable to either of the protagonists, these words force their way between them and direct their relationship to each other spatially. From addressing each other, on the one hand, to withdrawn reflection over one’s own position as a speaker, on the other, these lines of text open up a space that keeps the figures at a distance. The fact that one image follows the other, so that the actors are never seen simultaneously, thus plays into the impossibility of the genuine exchange of which the written sentences speak. Contact is made only indirectly.

For all that, the connections the textual images produce as a link between the actors are all the more dense, as they permeate the distance from the one to the other with pendulum movements that sometimes express the self -contemplation of observing one’s own role, task, or position, sometimes the reflection on the Other, and sometimes the unspoken stage directions for the Other, the expectations or criticism. This enables the text to place the characters in a spatial structure in which they can serve as representatives for a variety of different positions of a speaker as well as for their psychological, social, and aesthetic circumstances. The director, the listener, the critic, the deliverer of the text and its interpreter, the portrayer of Self and of Other, the speaker and the silent one are revealed in the dovetailing of the textual and the visual sequence as roles in the overlapping and intersecting alternation.

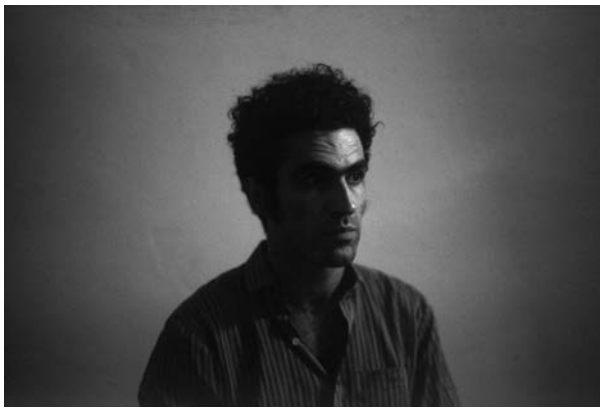
The way Wedemeyer thus turns our gaze to social conditions echoes Vito Acconci’s video Turn On of 1974, in which the camera is fixed on Acconci for more than twenty minutes while he speaks to the viewers, first to attract them and their attention, then reflecting on his own situation as artist in relation to the public, and finally brusquely rejecting those addressed. Whereas Acconci sketched the relationship between the artist and the public as an evolution that leads the examination of the conditions of artistic praxis into a proclaimed autonomy, Wedemeyer outlines a field in which the actors appear simultaneously and in dynamic relation with their various roles, positions, and actions. The linearity of the narrative dissolves in a plexus of movement that is discursively structured but nonetheless evokes associations of physical mobility. It is a plexus of movement that, if one follows Michel de Certeau’s definition, constitutes space by means of acts of connection and in turn keeps it flexible. (1)

In Getrennter Monolog Wedemeyer thus picks up on his earlier cinematic works in that they too are characterized by a structure around an interstice. (2) To that end, he involves language in different ways: in Otjesd it expands the frame of the event beyond the physical location in that the spoken texts employ widely separated countries of origin, expectations, and moods; past, present, and future overlap in the protagonists' explanations of Die Siedlung (The New Estate) in contradictory constellations. In Rien du tout (Nothing At All) text and frame of reference gradually fall apart and re-form in shifted relationships. Independently of the different ways it is employed, in all these cases language encourages a moment when the fictional and the real split apart. The discrepancy between the givens and the projections taken up by them acquires spatial form in Wedemeyer's works and turns out to be their true center. In the slide projection Getrennter Monolog the artist explicitly exposes language in this space-generating function. He lends it additional weight,causing it to take on the crucial responsibility of creating and articulating the interstice, while in the earlier works it could still cooperate with the camerawork and the moving action. In watching these images that have been brought to a standstill, the written word finds support for the associative power of its spatialdynamic only in the sequential form of the projected dialogue.

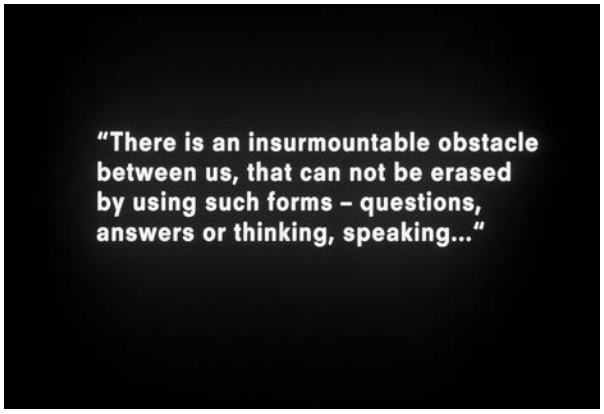
Like a bracket from one side, Getrennter Monolog thus frames Wedemeyer's praxis thus far, and Basler Podest (Platform in Basel) is its counterpart. The stillness of the slide projection corresponds to the bringing to a stand-still of the events in the installation at Art Basel in 2006. Whereas the former brought immaterial spatial arrangements to the fore, the latter focuses on the possibility of occupying their material manifestations in different ways. Remnants of a podium discussion are assembled: an elevated platform; chairs, some of which have been tipped over; a microphone stand; lighting accessories; a camera directed at the stage; and a monitor showing the image the camera transmits. Nothing else. The event that could have taken place here, or still could, is left out; the installation is deserted. A pure space of projection offers itself, in which every expectation of such potential arrangements could be fulfilled or already has been fulfilled. The visitors to the art fair make use of it accordingly, asking about its meaning and purpose- "What happened?", "Was there a fight?", "Did the interview not go well?" (3)-mounting the fragile rostrum only to break in with their ideas, in excessively clear metaphors, so to speak. The lack of the hoped-for information and the communicative exchange is reflected by the sheets loosely scattered on the ground, which bear the same texts that Wedemeyer uses in the slide installation. The space of interaction in both cases unfolds by way of stillness. Whoever is silent, controls speech, as Christoph Wulf has written. (4) Stripping the images of their sound and their nature as process-that is, bringing them to a standstill-is thus explicitly aimed at the potential of the cinematic moving image.



Clemens von Wedemeyer
Getrennter Monolog (Divided Monologue), 2007
slideshow, 80 slides

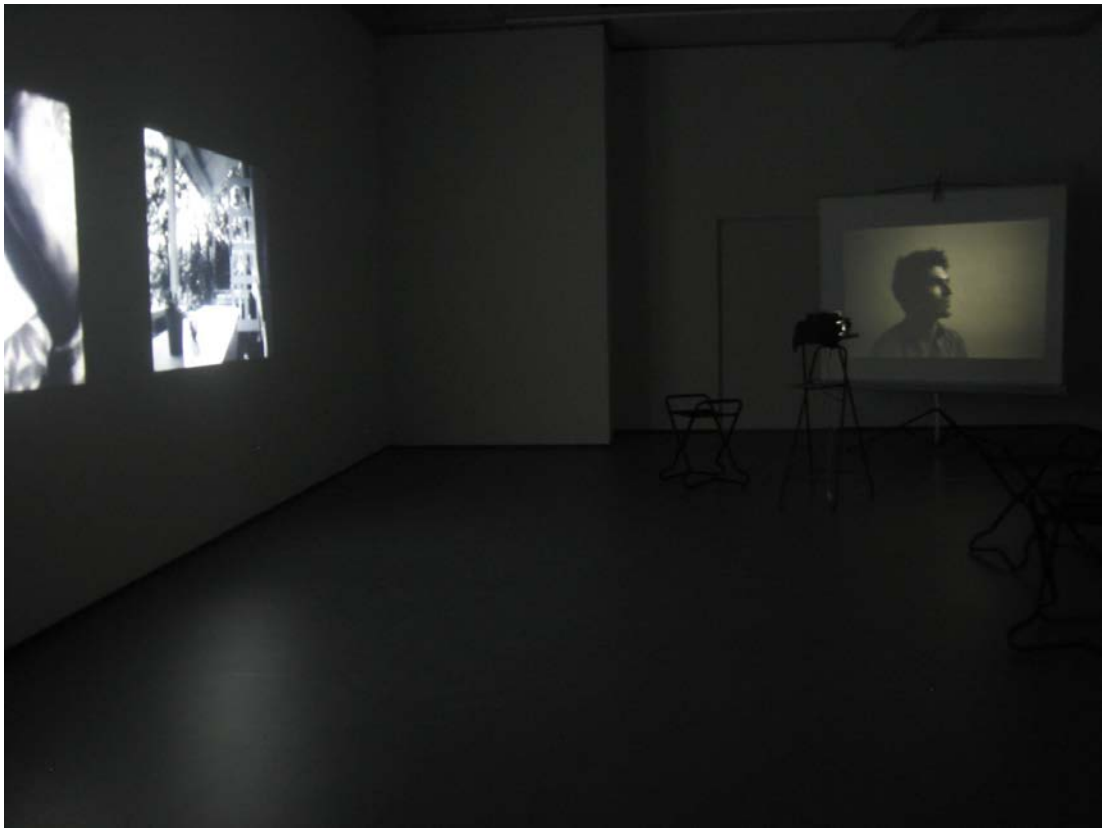








Clemens von Wedemeyer
Getrennter Monolog (Divided Monologue), 2007
slideshow, 80 slides



Clemens von Wedemeyer
Getrennter Monolog (Divided Monologue), 2007
slideshow, 80 slides

Exhibition view: In Moment, Skelleftea Konsthall, Skelleftea, Sweden, 2007

MAYA SCHWEIZER, CLEMENS VON WEDEMEYER

RIEN DU TOUT

2006

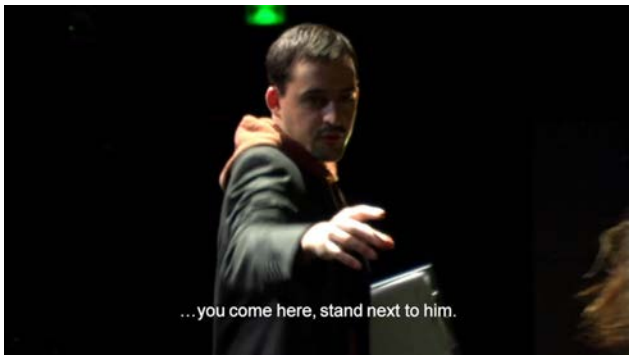
HD video / 35 mm / DVD, stereo, 30 min, 2006

Dialogues in French and German

English subtitles

In Rien du tout, realized in collaboration with Maya Schweizer, a director and her assistant attempt to cast and stage a play set in Renaissance France – only to find the tables turned on them. The film was shot in and around an Art Center and a school in the Parisian suburbs. Its sparse dialogue, inspired by Samuel Beckell's theatre works, compounds the sense of surreality imparted by von Wedemeyer's own staging.







Maya Schweizer, Clemens von Wedemeyer
Rien du tout, 2006
film stills









Maya Schweizer, Clemens von Wedemeyer
Rien du tout, 2006
film stills



Maya Schweizer, Clemens von Wedemeyer
Rien du tout, 2006
Exhibition view: 4th Berlin Biennale, Berlin, Germany, 2006

MAYA SCHWEIZER, CLEMENS VON WEDEMEYER

METROPOLIS. REPORT FROM CHINA

2006

video / DVD, stereo, 42 min

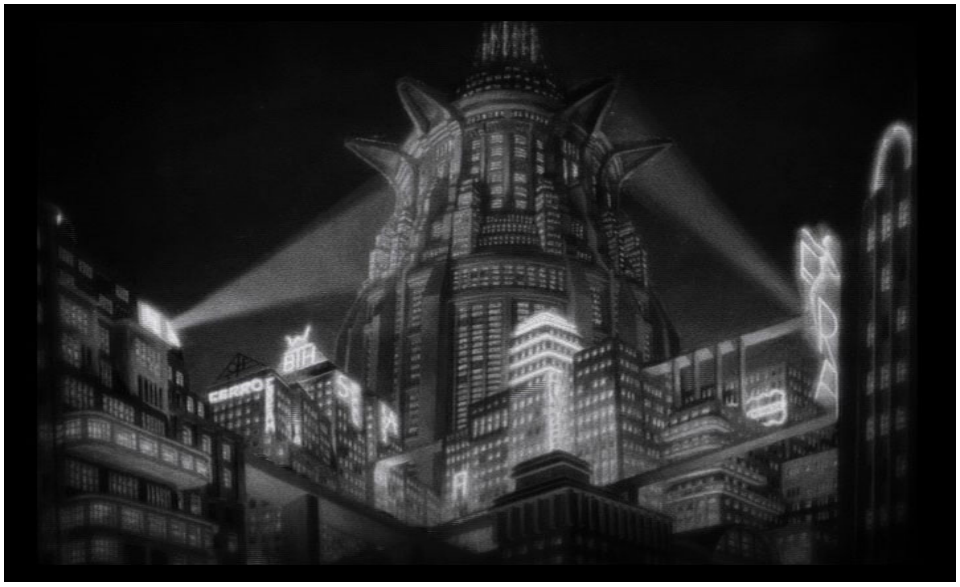
Film's spoken languages: German, French, English, Chinese

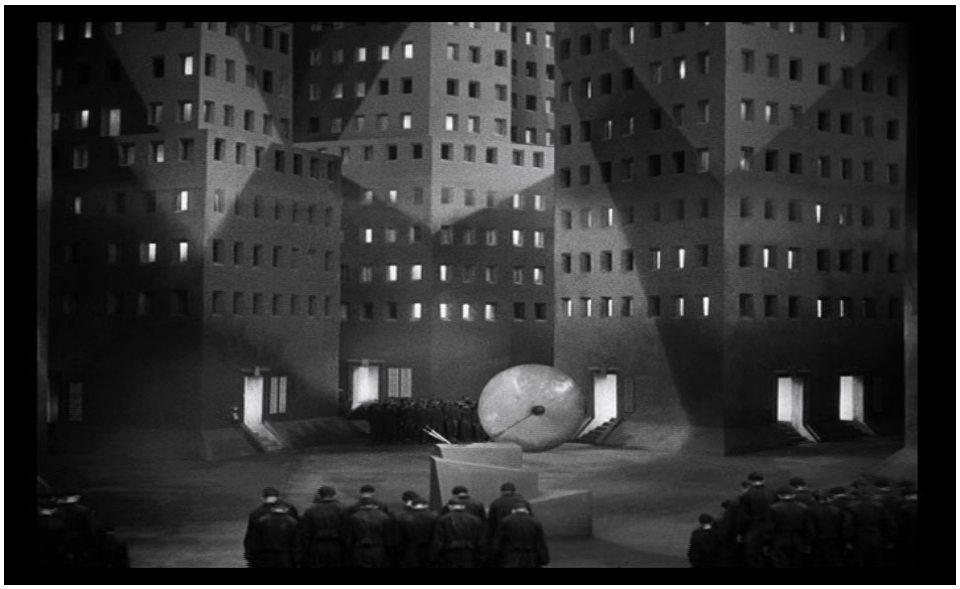
Film's subtitles: French and English

In 2004, Clemens von Wedemeyer and Maya Schweizer travelled to China in order to prepare a re-adaptation of the feature film Metropolis. These are the materials they collected during their research, the interviews they conducted, and the discussions they had with workers and architects of Chinese cities.

Based on a screenplay by Thea von Harbou, Fritz Lang´s Metropolis was produced by the UFA in 1927. The original version of this movie is considered to be lost. The film was reconstructed by Enno Palatas, the Murnau Foundation and the Munich Film Museum. In the year 2000, it was the first movie ever to enter the UNESCO Memory of the World register.

Synopsis of Metropolis by Fritz Lang (1927):
"Metropolis is a megalopolis, split in two distinct parts: the upper city, where the mighty and wealthy lead a life of idleness, luxury and entertainment, and the lower city, where workers live and perform the excruciating tasks necessary to keep the city functioning. Maria (Brigitte Helm), a girl from the lower city, tries to promote unity between the classes. She secretly takes some workers' children to visit the upper city. The group is pushed back by police forces but Freder Fredersen (Gustav Fröhlich), the son of the ruler of Metropolis, falls in love with Maria. Descending into the lower city hoping to find her, he sees a worker collapsing during his work and promptly replaces him. But the frenetic rhythm imposed by the machines is untenable and an explosion takes place; the monster machine devours the workers. Freder goes to see his father, Johhan "Joh" Fredersen (Alfred Abel), to inform him about the inhumane working conditions of the workers and to ask him to do something about this. Realising he is unable to convince his son about the benefits of this segregationist society, Johhan turns to the scientist C.A. Rotwang (Rudolf Klein-Rogge) to make him change his mind..."





Fritz Lang
Metropolis, 1927
film stills







Maya Schweizer, Clemens von Wedemeyer
Metropolis. Report from China, 2006
video, 42 min, 2004-2006
video stills







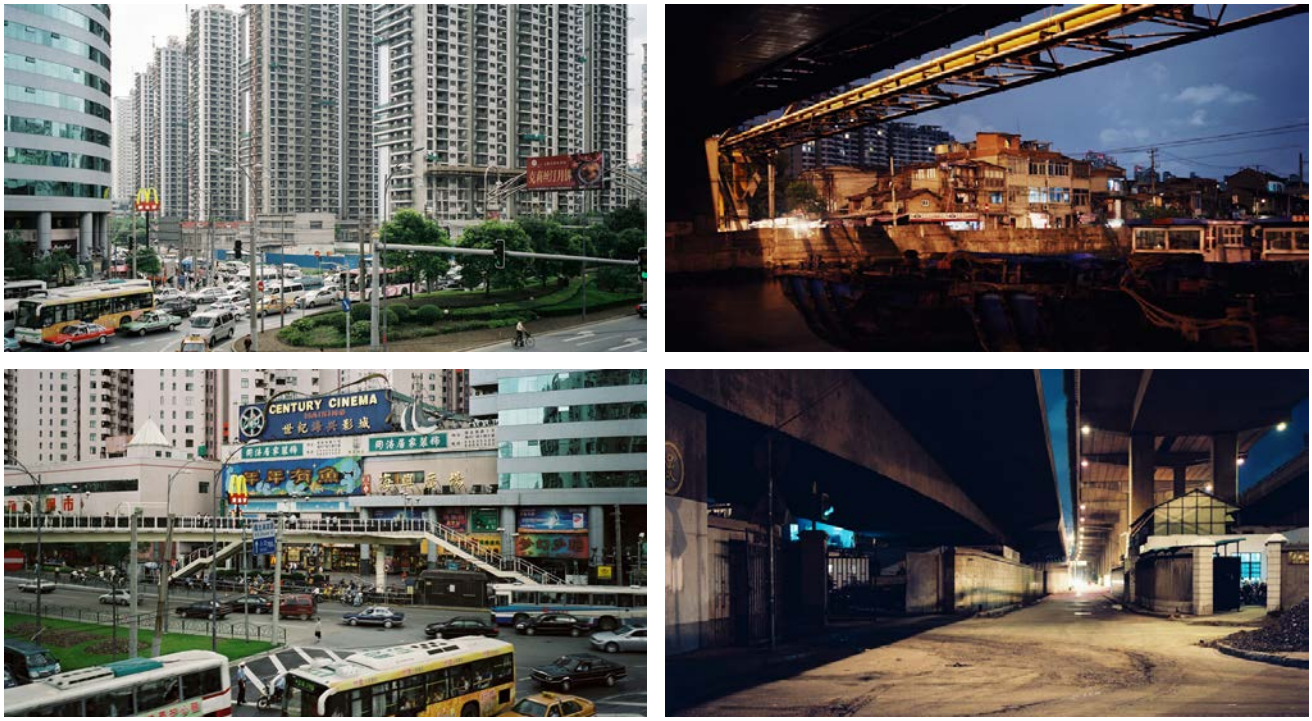
Maya Schweizer, Clemens von Wedemeyer
Metropolis. Report from China, 2006
video, 42 min, 2004-2006
video stills







Maya Schweizer, Clemens von Wedemeyer
Metropolis. Report from China, 2006
production stills



Maya Schweizer, Clemens von Wedemeyer
Metropolis. Report from China, 2006
series of 2 x 2 production photographs, 2004





Maya Schweizer, Clemens von Wedemeyer
Metropolis. Report from China, 2006
Exhibition view: Argos, Brussels, 2007

CLEMENS VON WEDEMEYER

March 4 - May 7, 2006

Kölnischer Kunstverein, Koln, Germany

press release:

In his first major solo exhibition Clemens von Wedemeyer shows works from recent years. With the selection of works he explores a direction while simultaneously establishing references to the architecture of the Kunstverein building, which is regarded as one of the outstanding architectural monuments of the 1950s and is devoted to art and cinema.

To exemplify his interest in cinema, Clemens von Wedemeyer shows his early cinematic work Occupation (2002). A large number of extras and a film crew come together at night in an unidentifiable location. The extras are confused by the film crews' unclear instructions, and the film crew, which is busy tiredly and fearfully exhausting all the means of cinema, reacts the same way. With Occupation Wedemeyer detached the audience, the film crew and the technical apparatus from its conventional (film) context, placing them in an absurd situation reminiscent of Beckett. The extras unwillingly and unwittingly become the main figures, the film crew operates like marionettes following an unwritten script. In the exhibition Clemens von Wedemeyer shows Occupation for the first time as a 35mm film in the cinema, the consideration of which was its starting point.

Extracting a situation and transferring it to a new context is also found in Wedemeyer's exhibition design. Transfered from the cinema situation to the exhibition space, the exhibition architecture designed by Clemens and Henning von Wedemeyer functions like the structure of a film. The exhibition walls serve as a division, as incisions between the different zones. "In cinema," says Wedemeyer, "the division (the cut) is crucial. Fiction results as a division between the areas."

The video work Silberhöhe (Silver Heights) appears to be removed from place and time, even though it is based on the scene of the Silberhöhe tower blocks in Halle, which were built between 1979 and 1989 for 40,000 residents and have lost over half the inhabitants since 1989. The camera follows the emotionally charged streets and looks into a model flat, where the credits from Antonioni's "L'eclisse" are running on a flickering television screen. By citing the camera work and editing technique of the concluding scene from Antonioni's film, the video transports the drama that does without people into the current situation of the decaying city district, thus creating a mental line between the two ends of the period of time, in which urban utopia was developed, built, lived and ultimately abandoned.

Otjesd deals with bureaucracy and waiting, telling of the fate of a young woman in the midst of a border region. Both films appear as though from an in-between world, in which the images do not allow surrendering to an illusion, even though they are far from documentary. This is more the way an absurd fairy-tale or dream is experienced.

In a space that Wedemeyer has inserted between the two projection spaces, it becomes clear how much fiction is needed to convey subjective realities. On display here are the genesis of the films, Wedemeyer's preoccupation with the open, not yet defined space at the urban peripheries in East Germany, research at the visa application offices in Berlin and Moscow, and observations of a real film crew.

The room opens up a view of the city of Cologne, thus also establishing an architectural connection with the apparently real of everyday life.

Finally, in the basement of the Kunstverein, another reference to Beckett shows up with Ohne Titel (Rekonstruktion) [Untitled (Reconstruction)] from 2005. What can be seen here is the ”false” reconstruction of a dance, which Clemens von Wedemeyer filmed during a rehearsal of the dancer and choreographer Alexandre Roccoli during his solo work at the Villa Arson in Lyon. Ohne Titel (Rekonstruktion) is virtually a study of movement in film, in which the space and the body are shifted in an elementary way into the center, taking on an immediate, physical presence through the subsequently developed sound (with Thomas Wallmann).

The film works Occupation, Silberhöhe, Otjesd and Ohne Titel (Rekonstruktion) were filmed by the cameraman Frank Meyer.





Clemens von Wedemeyer

Exhibition view: Kölnischer Kunstverein, Koln, Germany, 2006





Clemens von Wedemeyer

Exhibition views: Kölnischer Kunstverein, Koln, Germany, 2006



Clemens von Wedemeyer

Exhibition view: Kölnischer Kunstverein, Koln, Germany, 2006







Clemens von Wedemeyer

Exhibition views: Kölnischer Kunstverein, Koln, Germany, 2006

CLEMENS VON WEDEMEYER

RIEN DU TOUT (NOTHING AT ALL)

January 29 - March 18, 2006

CAC Brétigny, Brétigny-sur-Orge, France

press release:

Rien du tout (Nothing at all)

A Clemens von Wedemeyer production in collaboration with Maya Schweizer and their film crew.

Opening and casting of extras for the film on Sunday 29 January 2006 at 3pm. Shooting of the film from 5 to 11 February. Exhibition and projections of films by Clemens von Wedemeyer from 29 January to 18 March 2006.

Clemens von Wedemeyer was born in Göttingen, Germany, in 1974. He has been making experimental films and short
fiction films since 1998, winning prizes in many international festivals. He navigates between the worlds of cinema and contemporary art, and his filmography is representative of the new generation of auteurs whose artistic influences and ways of writing originate in photography and video as well as cinema and performance art.

The artist will be presenting a selection of his latest films, and for the duration of the exhibition he will be filming a new short film that refers to the idea of theatre in Samuel Beckett's 'Catastrophe'. This new project, co-produced by the
CAC Brétigny and the Berlin biennial, is based on the reality of the current situation in the French suburbs. The opening of the exhibition will be organised around the casting of the actors and extras to meet the demands of the screenplay. The finished film will be presented on the 24 March 2006 at the opening of the 4th Berlin biennial for contemporary art.

Films showing:
Big Business & The Making of Big Business
Video, 26 min, 2002
with: Frank Meyer (camera), Holm Taddiken (production), Prisoners of the Waldhein prison

Silberhöhe
35mm transferred to DVD, 10 min, 2003
with: Frank Meyer (camera), Holm Taddiken (production)

Die Siedlung (The Housing Estate)
video, 20 min, 2004

Otjesd (Departure)
16mm transferred to DVD, 15 min, 2005
with: Frank Meyer (camera), Margarita Breitkreiz, Victor Choulman

Clemens Von Wedemeyer is represented by the Jocelyn Wolff gallery in Paris. This project is realised in partnership with the Lycée Jean-Pierre Timbaud, Théâtre Brétigny, the Médiathèque (Public Library) and Ciné 220 cinema in Brétigny. The film is co-produced by the 4th berlin biennial for contemporary art, a project by KW Institute for Contemporary Art Berlin, funded by the German Federal Cultural Foundation.





Maya Schweizer, Clemens von Wedemeyer
Big Business, 2002 (left)
The Making of Big Business, 2002 (right)

Exhibition views: Rien du Tout (Nothing at All), CAC Brétigny, Brétigny-sur-Orge, France, 2006



Maya Schweizer, Clemens von Wedemeyer
Rien du tout, 2006
preparation

Exhibition view: Rien du Tout (Nothing at All), CAC Brétigny, Brétigny-sur-Orge, France, 2006



Maya Schweizer, Clemens von Wedemeyer
Rien du tout, 2006
preparation

Exhibition view: Rien du Tout (Nothing at All), CAC Brétigny, Brétigny-sur-Orge, France, 2006

CLEMENS VON WEDEMEYER

OTJESD

2005

16 mm / DVD, stereo, loop, 15min

The film dialogue is in Russian

Film's subtitles in English and German

THE MAKING OF OTJESD

2004

Digital video / DVD, stereo, 20 min

Film's spoken languages : Russian and German

Film's subtitles : English and German

A scene enacted in Berlin, featuring Russian immigrants in front of the German Consulate in Moscow : people have a queued up to obtain a visa. The German bureaucracy has a different entrance for each reason for travel. A young woman runs past the waiting queue an is stopped by an officer. Her bag is too large and must be checked in. She looks for somewhere to put it down.



Clemens von Wedemeyer
Otjesd, 2005
film stills



Clemens von Wedemeyer
Otjesd, 2005
production photo









Clemens von Wedemeyer
Otjesd, 2005
series of 7 production photos
c-print, 50 x 54 cm
2.5 cm wooden frame, glass







Clemens von Wedemeyer
Otjesd, 2005
series of 7 production photos
c-print, 50 x 54 cm
2.5 cm wooden frame, glass





Clemens von Wedemeyer
Otjesd, 2005
Installation view: Kölnischer Kunstverein, Koln, Germany, 2006






Clemens von Wedemeyer
The Making of Otjesd, 2005
video stills, 2006

CLEMENS VON WEDEMEYER

DAS BILDERMUSEUM BRENNT

2005

3 channel video installation

27 min (3 x 9 min, loop)

video on DVDs







Clemens von Wedemeyer
Das Bildermuseum brennt, 2004
video stills





Clemens von Wedemeyer
Das Bildermuseum brennt, 2004
video stills







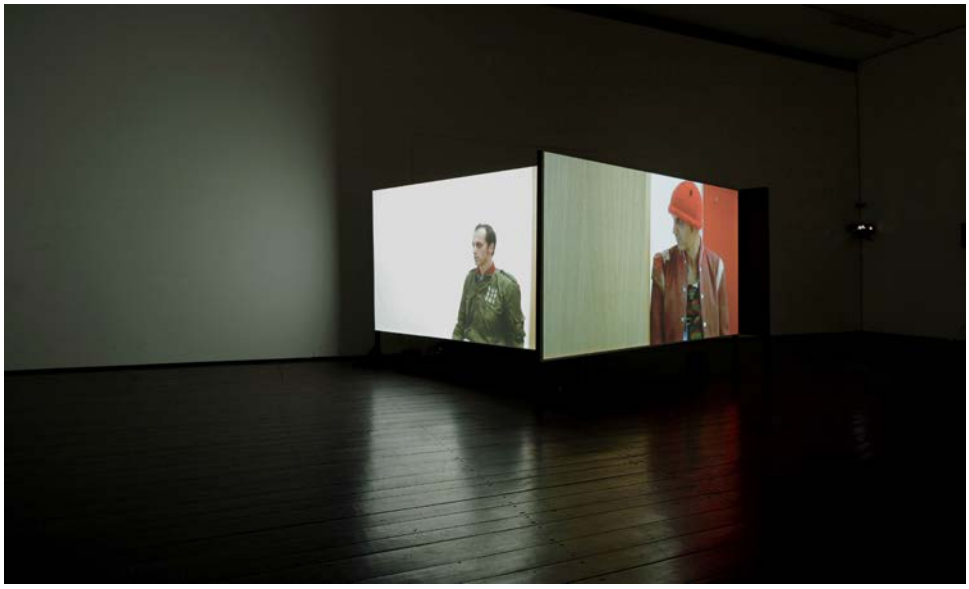
Clemens von Wedemeyer
Das Bildermuseum brennt, 2004
production shots







Clemens von Wedemeyer
Das Bildermuseum brennt, 2004
production shots





Clemens von Wedemeyer
Das Bildermuseum brennt, 2004
installation shot at Atelier Augarten, Vienna, 2005

CLEMENS VON WEDEMEYER

FIAC ART FAIR 2004

October 21 - October 25, 2004

FIAC (Foire Internationale d'Art Contemporain) Art Fair, Paris, France

press release:

For its first fair, Galerie Jocelyn Wolff is proud to present the entire project by Berlin artist Clemens von Wedemeyer entitled The Big Business Project.

Clemens von Wedemeyer creates projects where the central work is usually a film (35 mm or video), accompanied by a making of and photographs, and sometimes drawings or models. The gallery presented the project, Occupation, for its inaugural exhibit entitled Cinema Divisible in the same way. Thereafter during the winter of 2003-2004, this project was shown in Berlin by curator Harm Lux during the "Lautloses irren… " exhibit.

The Big Business Project Big Business > digital video > 26 mn > color > mono > camera : Frank Meyer > production : Holm Taddiken > sound : René Blümel

When Clemens von Wedemyer learned that the prisoners of Waldheim (a prison with a sinister reputation located between Leipzig and Dresden) spent their time building and destroying houses (construction material testing), he decided to make a film and a project with the prisoners where a house is built and then destroyed.

The Big Business Project is a remake of the eponymous film with Stan and Olie (1929): two sales representatives (Stan and Olie) try to sell Christmas trees in the middle of August. While trying to sale the Christmas tree to the owner of a
house, a series of misunderstandings take place between the owner and the sales representatives. In almost an automatic way, each undertake to destroy the other's property: Stan and Olie methodically destroy the house while the
owner destroys the sales representatives' vehicle.

This project was presented at the Landesmuseum in Munster (Cremers Haufen exhibit; curator: Maïté Vissault) and at the Cologne Kunstverein (curator: Ariane Beyn). It received the Marion Ermer Award.

The Making of Big Business
Script of The Making of Big Business, a film by Clemens von Wedemeyer presented at the FIAC by Galerie Jocelyn Wolff (Hall 5 / C8).

We are the members of a film crew producing a film together with prisoners: Laurel and Hardy are drawn into a fight with James Finlayson, in the course of which both a house and an automobile are destroyed.

For the shooting, the administration of the prison puts an idyll at our disposal. The film crew and nine prisoners find themselves towards the end of August between the old prison building and the outer wall amongst austere arrangements of flowers and tiny houses, built by the prisoners in the context of a work activity.

Big Business! Stan and Ollie go about selling Christmas trees in the middle of Summer. They ring at James Finlayson's House, who becomes angry send them away. A conflict starts, during which the house and the car of Stan and Ollie are being destroyed.

The silent film "Big Business" from Stan Laurel and Oliver Hardy was produced in the USA in 1929. It is summer and two men - you could call them young entrepreneurs - want to sell a Christmas tree. A conflict breaks out over the customer's unwillingness to acquire a Christmas tree in summer. The man's house and the car belonging to the two salesmen are demolished.

An automobile is confiscated by the court and made available to us. The car is prepared for us by prisoners in Torgau and transported to Waldheim per lorry. Included are the instructions on the best way to take it apart.

A house is built and painted, a piano is brought to the prison.

A prisoner reads from Pasolini's book "Accatone" (the small blue house in the background):

"They themselves live from pimping and theft. Even as Accatone falls in love for the first time, he sends the girl onto the street. Stella though, the daughter of a whore, is not suited to the trade, and so, for the first time in his life, Accatone himself goes in search of a job, which he is, however, not up to physically."

The Waldheim prison was built onto the former Waldheim castle, and this fact significantly influences its outward appearance today. The castle reportedly dates back to around 1200, while being first mentioned in official records in 1271... An Augustinian monastery was erected within the castle in 1404 before being closed again during the reformation. A new period began for the castle in 1716. In that year, the Saxonian prince August II had a prison, orphanage and poor house built within the edifice. In 1716 the prison had a population of 181.

The Waldheim prison houses male prisoners.

In one of the workshops, prisoners are kept busy constructing and then demolishing houses. As we visited the workshop, situated directly behind our film set, work was currently being carried out on a sample cell for the new wing of the prison. The purpose is to test out which pieces of furniture fit in which way into an 8 m2 space. The work is carried out according to the principles of the division of labour.

The director of the prison relates the daily timetable of an average prisoner.

"The prisoner is woken at 6 a.m., washes, cleans his teeth, eats breakfast. He gets picked up for work at 6:45, joins the other members of his workshop, leaving the detention area for the work area. Then the instructions are given on what work is to be done on that day. The prisoner works, like on the outside as well. Then there is a lunch break, at different times depending on the workshop that the prisoner is from, but usually at around 11:30. At 12 o'clock or 12:15 work is resumed. It depends on the workshop, but usually around 3 or 4 p.m. the prisoner is finished with work and is taken from the work area back to the detention area. Afterwards there is free time for leisure activities. Depending on where he is detained, each prisoner has the opportunity of going for an hour each day into the courtyard. There is an extensive treatment programme. Depending on what the prisoner is in for; it may be useful, for example, to take part in an anti-violencetraining, in the self-awareness group, self-confidence training, socialtraining, and there is a range of other programmes. In addition, there are many other leisure programmes. Sport is particularly important to the prisoners, and I think that's very sound. Especially since you're under an almost ines-

capable pressure here, because you're constantly surrounded by so many people and living together isn't always harmonious - so there are many different sports. The maybe more intellectually demanding prisoners can take part in a reading circle or something similar."

We build the house and busy ourselves with the car. After a week, the work in the sun being accompanied by Pasolini and Foucault...

"What is the minimum kind of space a person needs, what kind of architecture?"

I reckon architecture isn't important, and... At least, I don't how to answer that. I need a place where I feel at home.

(In the cell)

Normally a cell of this size is a one man-cell - it's 8 m2 - and you're entitled to it alone. It's your lawful right anyway, but it's actually not the square meters but the cubic metres - I mean space, air or whatever, but since there wasn't enough room, or isn't ...

How many square meters is that?

Square meters? 8 square meters. You can see for yourself, it's 2 meters wide and 4 meters long. And with all the furniture it's naturally pretty cramped. Yeah, there's not much room left. In a new building like in, for example, in Dresden it's fastidious, exposed, screwed down, there the table's screwed down, the bed's screwed down, wardrobes, shelves, everything, you can't move anything anywhere. You can't hang a picture on the wall like here, instead there's a bar for pictures, and pictures have to be attached to this bar, and they have to be attached in such a way that you can look behind them and they have to be loose.

Then you can only... according to regulations you can only have 10 letters in the cell, yeah... if you get more mail you have to bring it to your property in the storage. You can only have 20 pieces of music in the cell - cassettes, CDs or computer game cassettes, um... CDs. And you can only possess 3 plants and these plants can't be more than 30cm. The outside wall must be completely clear the whole time, there can't be anything on the windowsills. Yes... and that's against the law actually - according to the law the cell is your, your, your ...how should I say... not your property, but there you can be alone, yeah and only when there's reasonable suspicion then they can search the cell. But in reality it's totally different; there are arbitrary inspections of the cells, and essentially almost every day. Yeah, in Bautzen for example the prison director regularly goes making inspections personally and when he sees a plant, that's over 30cm high, then he gets a pair of scissors and cuts it off. And when you have 4 plants, then one of them is gone when you come back to the cell from work."

The prison guards keep their distance and decline to be interviewed. Too difficult to reconcile their existence on the outside with the more concentrated one inside, where you are forced to play a role. They observe us as well as the prisoners from a distance, strangely. They give us knowing tips on how to deal with the prisoners; who they believe they can see right through. In truth they understand them as little as we do. They oversee lives, which they themselves don't understand. We are constantly being observed. Are there any moments - when are we not under observation? Later, we become aware of furtive attempts at nearer contact.

Inside the institution we have an exceptional status. The relationship both to the prisoners and to the administration deviates from the the norm, in that there is little communication with the so-called free world.

We have total freedom of movement. We are blocking one of the main driveways to the prison, while engaged in

destroying the house and the car. We are creating a situation which is unaccustomed and which… changes nothing. Everything would have to be rethought from the beginning, but we are incapable. We grant ourselves and the prisoners a week of sunshine and in return are exploited by the administration: For the director and those responsible at the Ministry of Justice, this project can mean an increase in sovereignty: if the director can enter into contact with the outside and at the same time sustain the functioning of the prison within, then he acquires the right to make decisions in exceptional circumstances and is thus especially empowered under normal circumstances .

Director : “Regarding the decision of allowing you, as an exception, to carry out this work, a contributing factor was that we hoped to be able to occupy the prisoners in a sensible and mentally stimulating way; that we can do something in this way for public relations and that the security concerns, that one naturally always has when someone from outside
enters the prison and does something that deviates from the normal routine, that these security reservations are not so significant and can be ignored.”

The prison is an experiment. Additionally, the prisoners are responsible for reporting on this experiment and from their experiences in their cells, as soon as they have left them. The prison drifts into the field of imagination.

When the employees leave the institution, they separate - in the old way - their lives in prison, their profession, from their own private world. This divide is as large as the importance they attach to their profession. There are certainly employees who smuggle things into the prison, thus helping to maintain a culture of trade. The prisoners are their trading partners and this relationship between retailers and consumers is a compensation for the lack of other forms
of communication. Everyone preserves their fears. There are two fears; the fear of the prison and the fear of the outside.

Why not? Society wants to preserve its prison as a type of “black box”, as a place for the suppression of banal problems, as the idea of another life. But all films about prison are false, and this film is no exception. The film is also a mishmash of preconceptions. Perhaps it is about the consolation for the fact that nothing can be said that doesn’t equate to itself. Cinema and the prison function in a similar way. However, whereas in the cinema ideas are transformed into images and characters, the people in prison and their interrelations are transformed into ideas.

Although, this place is no less imprisoned. A prisoner reads: “Everything burned. The pale morning sun on the late summer day was like glowing lime. A burnt face raised the protruding chin, with two hollows in the cheeks from skinniness and a watery gaze and spoke: Scuccia, the world is about to end. Let me look at you all. I’ve never seen you during the day, only ever in the dark. What’s up, your women are on strike? And laughed a toothless grin. Who had he spoken to? A band of strizzi who were roasting in the sun in front of a small bar in Marinella. Among them war also Momoletto. The Scuccia replied to him: Momoletto, man, are you still alive? I always hear that work is suicide. Momoletto was small and short with a contemptuous gaze, always laughing like a jumping jack. Next to him, another was having someone pour mineral water into his hand and washing his face. That was Alfredino, a long beanpole, black haired with the flat-pressed nose of a Moroccan, and Vicietto, a teddyboy, elegant, suit with dots, a big tie with a big knot, and tiepin, with still no beard on him. Alfredino’s whole face, rubbed over with his hands, gleamed with mineral water. Alfredino, eh, you martyr, listen to a friend, throw in the work, the Metro Goldwyn Mayer club calls you too. And he tore open the mouth like a drain and roared, like the lion from Metro Goldwyn Mayer roars. Twice, three
times, the empty gaze cast into the void.” (Laughs)

That was a whole page --> Pasolini, “Accatone”



Clemens von Wedemeyer

Exhibition views: FIAC Art Fair 2004, Paris, France, 2004

CLEMENS VON WEDEMEYER

SILBERHÖHE

2003

35mm / DVD, loop, stereo

10 min

DIE SIEDLUNG (THE NEW ESTATE)

2004

Digital video / DVD, stereo

20 min

Subtitles available in English and French

Notes on the two film sketches “Silberhöhe” and “Die Siedlung”

By Ariane Beyn

Those who agree take the risk of a non-judgmental approach to reality. They agree with the fundamental absence of value of the real. Because primarily the real is nothing more than the immeasurable. It is that which is beyond measure. It eludes any attempt to structure or contain it through measuring its value. It is the Incommensurable par excellence.
Markus Steinweg (with Heiner Müller)

Can Clemens v. Wedermeyer’s films “Silberhöhe” and “Die Siedlung” (The New Estate) be adequately described by Heiner Müller’s category of the collusion between an artwork and its subject (or the real)? First, other more obvious parallels between the two films have to be drawn. So for example the geographical and social context of the locations of the two films: “Silberhöhe” was shot in a housing estate of the same name in Halle, a large scale housing project from the late 1970s, intended to provide new homes for 40,000 people. The setting of “Die Siedlung” is formed by the construction sites of a new housing development in a Leipzig suburb where a new estate consisting of a number of single and multiple family homes is being set up.

The two projects, which were completed in quick succession, complement each other perfectly, despite or maybe precisely because of their use of completely different aesthetic strategies. Both films are poignant examples of von v. Wedemeyer’s artistic interest in – almost criminologically – exposing different filmic and cinematic regions and genres. V. Wedemeyer achieves this by projecting different genres on top of each other and applying them in a different context (or outside the genre).

Both films can be classified as sketches. They don't attempt to dissect a topic throughout the course of a lengthy plot. Rather, a mental territory is mapped out while the film aesthetic is used to outline an intellectual landscape.

Filmed on video, "Die Siedlung" adopts the style of a documentary essay: the use of a hand-held camera, a narrator and the pragmatic video aesthetic contribute towards the documentary character. The fact that the author's voice comes from off screen and that an associative, unsystematic approach to structuring the film's plot and argumentative line is used, emphasises the film's essayistic qualities. In the voice-over text v. Wedemeyer uses very few words to reveal the historical layers of the place, which at the level of the rather prosaic images is only perceptible in fragments: traces of ammunition and tank tracks on the streets, a former Soviet army base, a housing estate, terraced houses, a new shopping centre which supposedly lies behind the shrubbery in the foreground. All of which serve to create the image of a barren wasteland whose present state is largely obscured, levelled out by the retrospective presence of the historical past (the Third Reich, World War II, Soviet occupation and the GDR) and the abandoned construction sites' projections of the future. V. Wedemeyer himself once referred to this palimpsest-like landscape of multiple exposures as "three sad landscapes" – an implicit reference to Godard's famous film essay "Allemagne Neuf Zéro" from 1991 that examines Germany's loneliness. Godard's "Denk-Bilder" (mental images) of East Germany shortly after the fall of the wall with their multi-layered references to literature and film history form an important point of reference for v. Wedemeyer's investigation fifteen years on. Nonetheless, the abandoned building sites and other impressions from this unspecific, yet typical patch of East Germany, fail to come together as a reliable portrait of the present. Instead, the traces of the frozen plans for the future and the presence of the past are what determines the picture of the "Here and Now" of the estate.

V. Wedemeyer's film sketch presents the viewer with a stage that reminds one of the deserted site of an expected showdown in a Wild West film. Only without the tense midday heat of the siesta break that, in a Western, usually precedes the final trial of strength. There are no power struggles here that might force decisions. In the protagonists of "Die Siedlung", the viewer encounters stereotypes of a social drama such as could be found in a fatalistic piece of popular theatre like those of Ödon v. Horvath: a potential house buyer and mother with her child, an estate agent, an unemployed man. The mother and child act as viewers in the image. The agent expounds upon the original layout to the two of them, but fails to mention that the construction process soon stalled and that the plans were only partially realised. On the edge of a little pond, a middle-aged man is basking in the sun. Not much of what he mumbles to the camera is intelligible, one understands that he is out of work and will soon depend on his mother's pension. While the agent represents a future projected primarily by urban planners and the construction industry, the unemployed man personifies non-development in East Germany, living as he does in the state of emergence that has become a permanent feature of life for this generation of East Germans. From him, the viewer learns that plans for a bridge, that was to cross the pond in order to connect the old housing estate with the new single family houses and serve as a romantic meeting point for young people, have been shelved. The two abandoned sets of stairs on opposing ends of the lake, leading without purpose into the water, bear witness to this plan.

Western, classical tragedy or popular play? V. Wedemeyer consistently adheres to the Aristotelian unity of place, time and plot, thus lending his film (with Fassbinder in mind) an almost minimalist, concentrated focus on the one hand, and an awkward, formalising distortion on the other, adding another potential dimension – that of an absurd apocalyptic parable – to the documentary mode of "Die Siedlung".

In "Silberhöhe" the 'dramatisation' of the documentary image is much more noticeable right from the start. The first shot, looking down a street of house fronts lined by glowing GDR streetlights in the midst of a night-time thunderstorm, discloses its identity as a homage to the famous sequence from the Antonioni film – which becomes apparent at the very latest with the pan to the interior of a flat and onto a TV playing the final sequence

of “L’Eclisse”. Antonioni’s closing image of the storm clouds gathering by night above the ultra-modern streetlights in a Roman housing estate and its distinctive soundtrack set the tone for “Silberhöhe”. In a similar form and sequence “Silberhöhe” sets a scene and outlines a dramatic point in time with an unobtrusive camera in quiet shots of deserted motorway junctions, truck parking lots, nearby factories, electricity poles, cranes and close-ups of partly snow-covered streets in haphazard progression. In terms of the time of day, v. Wedemeyer’s portrait of the Silberhöhe estate takes off where the Roman predecessor ends: in the middle of the night. The light gradually increases, indicating a time-span that extends into the early hours of dawn, until the nightshift returns home and the postman sets out on his tour across the housing blocks. The film’s build up of tension is to a large degree achieved through the cinematographic effect created by applying the sensitive 35mm film material to the particular lighting situation by night or early dawn and to the particular setting of the quasi-documentary urban landscapes. The documentary take on the present-day situation in “Silberhöhe” gains dramatic effect through the aesthetic of the celluloid image, through a focus on a sequence of uncommented shots and through playing with the cinematic reference.

In the second half of “Silberhöhe”, the film’s focus increasingly shifts to construction sites and abandoned, stripped down and half-demolished housing blocks. Here, decay, inherent as an unspoken threat in the smooth surfaces of the modern industrial age in Antonioni’s film, is already a thing of the past. In accord with the complimentary pair “Allemagne Neuf Zéro”/”Die Siedlung”, the crisis of industrial modernity, portrayed by Antonioni as a site of desolation in the face of fundamental threats (stock exchange crashes, nuclear war), is already history and can be read in the ruins left behind by the failed utopias of changing political systems. However, just as life goes on at the site of the action in the closing sequence of “L’Eclisse”, mechanically moving towards the apocalyptic crisis despite the absence of any protagonists so life goes on in “Silberhöhe” too, in and around the ruins. Demolition and abandoned buildings do not only talk of crisis and destruction but also hint at gradual processes of change. Even if “Silberhöhe” lacks any traces of development in the sense of progress and trust in the future, the film’s end, a repetition of the opening shot of the streetlights and the thunderstorm – now intelligible as a filmic reference – can be read as a recurring scenario rather than a vision of a fundamental threat.

To come back to the introductory question: v. Wedemeyer takes the risk of referring to reality when he uses the documentary genre to look at a real, present-day subject. His artistic strategy, however, is merely to pretend to be making sense of the real, as for example when he seems to provide information about the location, the time of day or the genre without really disclosing anything concrete about that place, time or genre. Rather, these things are dealt with in limbo, and then re-contextualized through other ‘players’ (places, times, and genres). This artistic position requires a collusion between the artwork and the real that Müller discusses. The productive risk of denouncing the security of judging the real and instead exposing oneself to the real as something immeasurable, therefore becomes the central strategy of these films by v. Wedemeyer.









Clemens von Wedemeyer
Die Siedlung, 2004
video stills



Clemens von Wedemeyer
Die Siedlung, 2004
production shot









Clemens von Wedemeyer
Silberhoehe, 2003
series of 7 film stills







Clemens von Wedemeyer
Silberhoehe, 2003
series of 7 film stills

CLEMENS VON WEDEMEYER

CINEMA DIVISIBLE

October 3 - November 8, 2003

Galerie Jocelyn Wolff, Paris, France

press release:

At the center of the Cinema Divisible exhibition stands Occupation, a film production and a project, presented in its complete form by German artist and film director Clemens von Wedemeyer (Berlin) at the occasion of his first gallery solo show. Occupation, (2002), Film 35 mm, color, 8 Minutes 200 extras are standing in a dark meadow, framed by a rectangle marked on the ground. They are waiting for instructions from a film crew surrounding them. The crew is going to shoot a crowd scene at night. From the first minute on the situation unfolds in an absurd, self-generating logic: with a cause that remains invisible: information and instructions become independent, actions lead nowhere, misunderstanding takes its form. While the atmosphere on the set becomes tense, the film crew tries to control of the situation by using all the technical and formal tools that cinema has to offer – up to the point where the shooting and its actors get completely out of control.

Interview with Clemens von Wedemeyer by Alexander Koch (Gallery)

Alexander Koch: Is cinema divisible?
Clemens von Wedemeyer: Cinema knows dozens of techniques and theories of the cut. In Occupation, while investigating my own fascination for cinema, I tried to place the cut somewhere at an unusual point in the “system of cinema”: between the cinema theater and the public, as well as between the circumstances of an actual situation of film shooting and the memory of all the historical films (that as a film maker I always keep in mind). I isolated the public, the film crew and the technical equipment from its usual context and put in an absurd Beckett-like situation. Just like a laboratory preparation, but one that is almost impossible to control.
AK: How do the film, the making-of and the photographs interact in the exhibition?
CVW: Starting from this, these three levels of observation tell three different stories about the construction (or the condition) of cinema as spectacle (Debord’s terminology), between erratic experience, deconstruction and chaos. The actual film shows the shooting of a film. The making-of doubles this perspective by showing the shooting of this shooting – that is sometimes not less absurd than the process in the movie itself. So in fact, it has the same theme: a film crew producing a crowd scene at night. But this time there are the “real” persons acting, not the actors. The photographs put the object of observation into another esthetic perspective.
AK: Your work is situated in an interspace between cinema and art. What is the aim of this practice?
CVW: This specific form of investigation, this multiplication of perspectives, is what I am searching for my projects. I’m interested in the differences and distinctions that are created by this manner of working. Art and cinema are two different languages that are related. I am interested in both of these languages. Together they allow me to invent a practice that opens a new territory of research.
AK: Occupation is also an appropriation and a performance of typical and archetypical stylistic devices in cinema, like a Genre painting towards a common Grammar of the spectacle.
CVW: I began with a teaching book that described technical and psychological devices and tools of the spectacle that we know from the cinema screen. I used elements from several film languages: Eisenstein’s for example, or a possible camera movement from Godard. These are tools of seduction, ones that have power on our sight, on our body. They are based on the memory of something that we are supposed to have seen somewhere before… With Occupation the viewer gets a chance to become conscious of his role as an extra in this social spectacle. The cinema screen is a mirror. But below the reflection is a dark lake in which we swim... and down in that lake the recollection of all films and their effect on the viewer. This is what interests me most: to get a look inside that lake that is under the cinema screen.

Clemens von Wedemeyer was born in Göttingen in 1974. He studied Visual Arts at the Hochschule für Grafik und Buchkunst Academy of Visual Arts in Leipzig. His experimental films include: Mass (1998), Sand (2000), Big Business (2002) and Silberhöhe (2003). For Occupation he was honored with the VG BildKunst Prize 2002 at the Munich film festival. Occupation (2002), Film 35 mm, color, 8 minutes A film for 200 extras and a film crew, played by Julia Berke, Jörn Knebel and Berndt Stübner, Marco Albrecht and Oliver Kraushaar.

Director: Clemens von Wedemeyer
Camera: Frank Meyer
Music: Matthias Pintscher
Sound: Niels Loewenhardt
Production management: Holm Taddiken
Production: [*.*] Sternpunktstern
NEWS ABOUT CLEMENS VON WEDEMEYER
Film projection of Big Business (September, 24, 2003 at 9:30 PM) at the Radical Architecture III, processing uncertainty exhibition at Museum für Angewandte Kunst, Köln, Germany (Curators: Bernd Kniss, Christopher Dell).

Informations : www.procunc.net (19 - 26 September 2003). Film projection of Occupation for the Lautloses irren, ways of worldmaking, too exhibition Postbahnhof am Ostbahnhof, Berlin (Curator: Harm Lux)
Informations : www.lautlosesirren.de (29 November 03 - 02 February2004)





Clemens von Wedemeyer
Occupation, 2002
35mm, 8 min, loop

Production photo, 2002
c-print, 50 x 85 cm»

Exhibition views: Cinema Divisible, Galerie Jocelyn Wolff, Paris, France, 2003

CLEMENS VON WEDEMEYER

OCCUPATION

2002

film, 35mm

8 min

stereo / format 1:1.85, sound

MAKING OF OCCUPATION

2002

digital video

12 min

English subtitles

200 extras agreed to participate in the shooting of a scene whose motive was the very situation in which they found themselves: A film crew, played by members of the ensemble of the leipzig municipal theatre, is filming a crowd scene whose denouement is unknown. Standing in a marked off rectangle the size of a movie screen, the crowd of extras is being given one contradictory order after another.







Clemens von Wedemeyer
Occupation, 2002
film stills





Clemens von Wedemeyer
Occupation, 2002
film stills



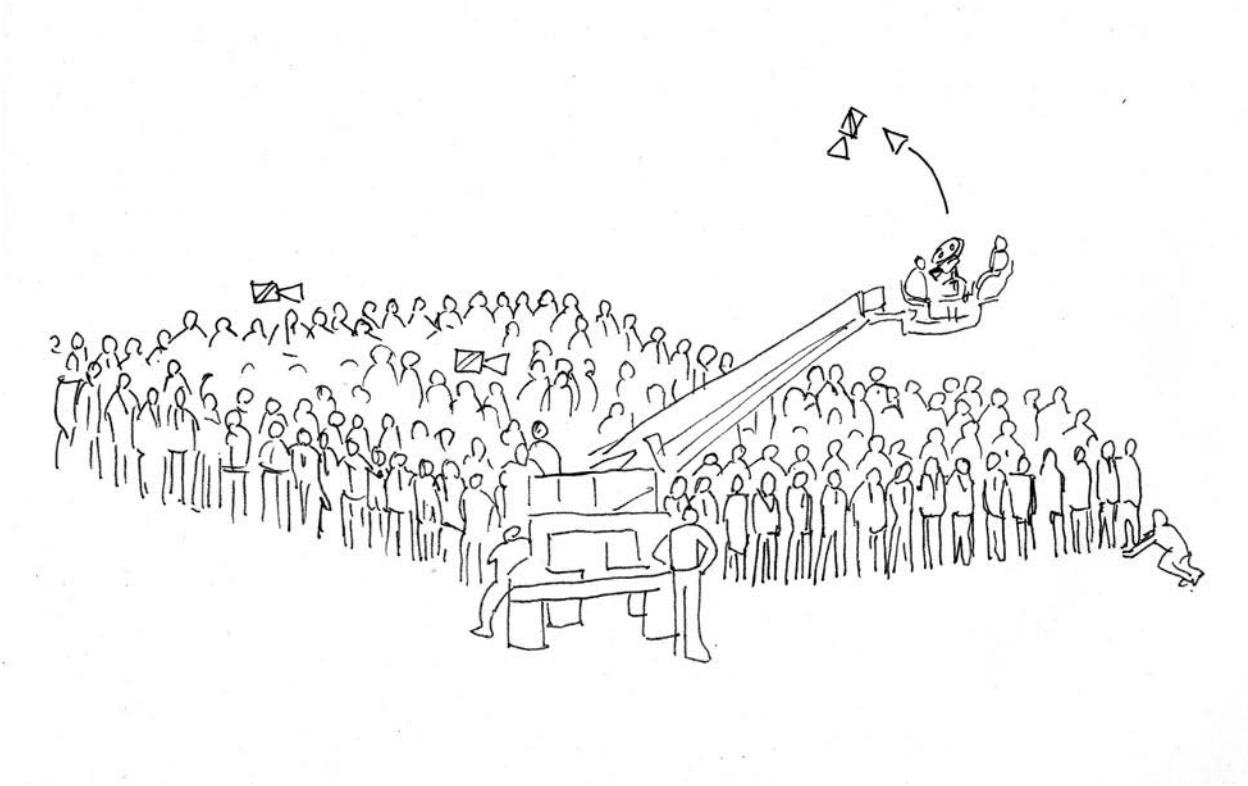




Clemens von Wedemeyer
Occupation, 2002
35mm, 8 min, loop, 2001-2002
production photos, 2002
c-print, 50 x 85 cm



Clemens von Wedemeyer
Occupation, 2002
Installation view: Kölnischer Kunstverein, Cologne, Germany, 2006



Clemens von Wedemeyer
Occupation, 2002
sketch for Occupation, 2001





Clemens von Wedemeyer
The Making of Occupation, 2002
video stills

CLEMENS VON WEDEMEYER

BIG BUSINESS

2002

digital video on DVD

24 min, stereo

MAKING OF BIG BUSINESS

2002

digital video

25 min, stereo

German and English version

The Big Business Project is a sculptural film installation: one film projection (the story) and one video on monitor (the social context).

Big Business is a remake of Stan and Olie's slapstick shot in the prison of Waldheim, Germany, where prisoners have to build and destroy houses.

The actors of the film are real prisoners, they act out the story of two bad businessmen trying to sell to a third one, Christmas trees in the middle of summer. A series of misunderstandings take place between them, each undertake to destroy the other's property.



Clemens von Wedemeyer
Big Business, 2002
video stills






Clemens von Wedemeyer
Big Business, 2002
video stills






Clemens von Wedemeyer
Big Business, 2002
video stills






Clemens von Wedemeyer
Big Business, 2002
video stills



Clemens von Wedemeyer
Big Business, 2002
video stills






Clemens von Wedemeyer
Big Business, 2002
series of 8 production photographs
c-print, each 60x48









Clemens von Wedemeyer
Big Business, 2002
series of 8 production photographs
c-print, each 60x48






Clemens von Wedemeyer
The Making of Big Business, 2002
video stills

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