

Invited by Rosa

FETISH & FIGURE

Curated by Martha Kirszenbaum

OPENING TUESDAY, 16 JULY 2013

FETISH & FIGURE brings together six films and videos by artists and filmmakers that address both the fetishisation of objects and the exclusive relation between the representation of objects and the body. Exploring the theme of „tableau vivant“, this program challenges the presence of the human body that disintegrates, allowing objects to come to life on screen as the camera captures them. The proposed works share a common approach of feminine iconography constructed around sophisticated accessories – perfume bottles, enchanting jewelry and shimmering pieces of clothing – while questioning images of voluptuousness and consumption and, finally, reflection on human solitude, existential melancholy and physical disappearance.

A lavishly colored evocation of Hollywood’s mythical era, KENNETH ANGER’s (b. 1972, lives and works in Los Angeles) PUCE MOMENT (1949) appears to praise boredom and luxury as it crystallizes the filmmaker’s feverish obsession with the dream factory. From an oriental ballet of sparkling fabrics the a diva languorously perfuming her body before proudly walking her greyhounds in the sunset of the Hollywood hills, Anger captures something properly sublime in the declining yet golden Los Angeles seen in the dazzling narcissism of his only feminine movie through his play with movement, color and sound.

AGNIESZKA POLSKA’s (b. 1985, lives and works in Krakow, Poland) animations are visual collages made of images found in art magazines and newspapers from the 1960s, giving her videos a subtle documentary aspect. She often revisits Polish modernism through recycling old material and archival photographs into narrative and melancholic animated films, such as the enchanting THE PLUNDERER’S DREAM (2011), where a mysterious thief reveals the precious treasures hidden in a household’s everyday objects.

In her dual channel installation PREMIER RÊVE D’OSKAR FISCHINGER, (PART 1 AND PART 2) (2008), an homage to the avant-garde animator who famously worked on the Walt Disney’s Fantasia, ISABELLE CORNARO (b. 1974, lives and works in Paris) carefully arranged and lit compositions of objects related to cinema on neutral backgrounds that she then filmed with 16mm in both panoramic or close-up shots. Her framing and filming strategies distort scale and shifts the viewer’s perception of these objects: miniature perfume bottles adopt hieratic, sculptural poses; blown-glass paperweights transform into mysterious, luminous planets.

Combining and unsettling, wry humor with a low-tech, Pop sensibility, SHANA MOULTON (b. 1976, lives and works in Brooklyn, NY) creates evocatively oblique narratives in her video and performance works, where she plays a character with surreal interactions with the everyday world. As her protagonist navigates the magical properties of her dome decor, Moulton initiates relationships with objects and consumer products that are at once banal and uncanny. In THE GALATIC POT HEALER (2010), a woman is guided by messages in her medicine cabinet as she seeks to heal her broken ceramic pot. Her consumption of new-age objects and redemptive treatments amplifies the fragile economy of her body.

Interested in the mechanisms of the representation and illusion, ULLA VON BRANDENBURG’s (b. 1974, lives and works in Paris) practice is inspired by theater, science and the psyche. Her Film THE OBJECTS (2009) is a mise en abîme of an enigmatic theatre of objects. Von Brandenburg abandons actors in favor of a procession of props. The

camera moves through a looping series of chessboards, flutes, fans, mirrors and coils of rope, which dance away from us, suspended on pieces of string. As hypnotic and hallucinatory as these animated artifacts seem, the artist always reminds us of backstage mechanics, probing the distance between artistic ideals and lived experience.

In her 16mm film *THE LUNCH IN FUR / LE DÉJEUNER EN FOURRURE* (2008), URSULA MAYER (b. 1970, lives and works in London) stages an imaginary encounter between three female icons of the 1920s. Taking place in a modernist glass house, where haunting objects – a tape-recorder, a surrealistic chessboard, fur cover-up – become the characters in an enigmatic play, the film provides the viewer with a mysterious historical flashback. As it addresses the memories of the avant-garde, the dismantled narrative structure of the work conveys ritualized movements, and the subconscious fusion of dream and reality.

The program closes with an episode taken from the science-fiction American TV series *THE TWILIGHT ZONE*, entitled "The After Hours" (1961). A middleclass American woman gets lost in the apparently inexistent 9th floor of a large department store, and enters the twilight zone, where bodies and objects are confound and the thin line between humans and mannequins is crossed. Built around a captivating narrative, this episode investigates a deeper human anguish very present in popular culture of lost identity, living objects and inanimate bodies.

KENNETH ANGER, *PUCE MOMENT*, 1949, 16mm, 7 min AGNIESZKA POLSKA, *PLUNDERER'S DREAM*, 2011, HD video, 3 min 56 sec ISABELLE CORNARO, *PREMIER RÊVE D'OSKAR FISCHINGER (PART 1 AND PART 2)*, 2008, 2-channel, 16mm transferred to mini-dv, 3 min 14 sec SHANA MOULTON, *THE GALACTIC POT HEALER*, 2010, video, 8 min 32 sec ULLA VON BRANDENBURG, *THE OBJECTS*, 2009, super-16mm transferred to HD & Blu-ray, 5 min 37 sec URSULA MAYER, *THE LUNCH IN FUR / LE DÉJEUNER EN FOURRURE*, 2008, 16mm, 7 min 30 sec, *THE TWILIGHT ZONE*, episode „The After Hours“, 1960, 30 min

Approx. running time: 65 min

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Mit freundlicher Unterstützung des Büros für Bildende Künste/Institut français Deutschland.