Repulsion

Keren Cytter

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Keren Cytter's artistic practice has gained an outstanding international recognition in the past three years. Since completing her post graduate studies in the studio program de Ateliers in Amsterdam, Cytter held solo presentations at Galleria d'Arte Moderna e Contemporanea, Bergamo (2006), Kunsthalle Zurich, Zurich (2005), Frankfurter Kunstverein, Frankfurt am Main (2005), Stedelijk Museum Bureau, Amsterdam (2004), and an upcoming solo project in Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam (2007). Keren Cytter is also the author of the novels: The Sunset of Yesterday (Shadurian, Tel Aviv, 2003) and The Man Who Climbed Up the Stairs of Life and Found Out They Were Cinema Seats (Lukas & Sternberg NY-Berlin, 2005). Keren Cytter has just been awarded the Baloise Art Prize at the "Art Statements" sector of Art 37 Basel. Keren Cytter's first feature film NEW AGE will be released in The Netherlands in winter 2007.

Repulsion consists of three short films, and is based on the Roman Polanski's Repulsion from 1965. In the original film the main character, played by Catherine Deneuve, works at a beauty salon in London and lives with her sister. When the sister is away on a trip to Italy with a boyfriend, Catherine murders her pursuer and throws him in a bath full of water. Her landlord comes for the rent and tries to sleep with her, but she kills him too rolling his body inside a carpet. When the sister returns, she finds the two bodies and Catherine unconscious under a bed. On the floor there is an old family photo with a girl that looks demented.

After seeing Polanski's film Keren Cytter "decided to make three short movies that focused upon the protagonist and the two supporting characters. The interaction between the three characters would create tensions that led to a cruel death at the end of each movie. The characters would change parts – the killer in one movie would be the victim in the second, and the witness in the third, and vice versa. This way the three short movies would serve as three layers of one movie that had no plot. [She] recalled the actions and objects from the original movie that had left the deepest impression on [her] and decided these would be the actions presented in [her] three short movies."
The movies don't tell any story, and the actions of the characters are arbitrary. The actors change their roles in each movie, thus creating a perfect symmetry. The movies are meant to describe the feelings of disgust, alienation and claustrophobia. They focus on a girl, who when left alone suddenly becomes engulfed by feelings of uncontrollable repulsion, suffocation that clouds all reason, and paranoia – those feelings slowly drive her away from life.