

Alexandra Navratil

The Eternal Return of Difference

17.06.08 > 20.09.08

Opening: 17.06.08, 20h.

Àngels Barcelona presents the first solo exhibition by **Alexandra Navratil** (Zurich, 1978) and will show a selection of the artist's recent work, including two videos, as well as photographs drawings.

Navratil's work uses cinematic strategies and techniques in an attempt to question the structure and production of the time-based medium, and to investigate the parallels between cinematic time, economical rationalization and passivity. She employs some of the techniques of structuralist / materialist filmmaking, which understands a film as a record (not a representation, not a reproduction) of its own making. However, Navratil extends the formalistic approach by introducing elements from a range of cinematic genres. Her work displays a strong element of repetition -that includes difference- in order to emphasize inanity and lethargy. This practice is influenced by a Deleuzian concept of time.

Elements, occurrences and places are repeated or change slightly over time. All action is non-directional and without any consequence or result; it never exceeds the warm-up stage, like a practice for an event that never takes place or that yet has to arise. Props, identities and structures are undefined and shifting in settings that reveal pseudo-apocalyptic environments of a post-romantic idea of cinematic landscape.

In the film ***The End of High Pastiche*** (Video loop, 2008) a burning model of an assemblage of monuments of various architectural styles, spins endlessly around its axis in a void space. It rotates in a nightmarish loop, becoming a parody of postmodernism itself, a postmodernism that includes the notion of its own critique and the destruction of its own spectacle.

In ***Movie-Goer*** (Video, 2007) a man stands alone in an ice-skating rink while a machine circulates around him, cleaning the ice. In spite of his passivity, the man manages to interrupt the continuous work and to force a kind of resistance upon it. The music plays from four different loudspeakers and therefore creates a distorted soundtrack for a landscape where the romantic idea of nature has been replaced by a leisure-centre and where the spotlight replaces the moon. The long duration of the video stands in contrast to the spectators' expectation.

The photographs, ***Everything You Rearranged/ Everything You Left the Same (The Rain)*** and ***Everything You Rearranged/ Everything You Left The Same (The Forest)*** (2008) reveal technical devices employed by cinema in order to deconstruct the illusion of romantic scenery, which has been created by a collective cinematic memory composed by a variety of genres related to landscape (Road-movie, Horror-Movie, Romance, etc.). In *The Rain* this occurs by applying a rain-generator attached to the car to create rainfall for inside shots and in *The Forest* by reproducing the suggestion of a forest inside a film-studio.

Navratil's work has been shown individually at the Frederic Marès Musuem (2008) and the Mies van der Rohe Pavilion (2007) in the context of the LOOP Video Art Fair, Barcelona. She has been selected for the "Swiss Art Awards" in ArtBasel (2004, 2008) and for the "Generación 2006" prize by Caja Madrid. She has participated in ARCO'07 and ARCO'08 with Caja Madrid and Àngels Barcelona, respectively. Her work has also been shown in collective exhibition in various museums and institutions such as: Jeu de Paume (Paris, 2007), MUSAC (León, 2007), Mimar Sinan Fine Arts (Istanbul, 2007), Kunghee Uni Museum (Seoul, 2007), CASM (Barcelona, 2005), CaixaForum (Barcelona, 2005), or Canal Isabel II (Madrid, 2004), among others.