

JULIAN ROSEFELDT

Deep Gold

16.02 – 29.04.2017

Deep Gold, (2013-14) is part of the anthology film *The Scorpion's Sting* (2013-14), that was initiated by the artist-duo M+M. Six artists or artist collectives were invited to work on Luis Buñuel's groundbreaking and at the time scandalous film *L'Âge d'Or* (1930). Rosefeldt's part, the B/W film *Deep Gold*, recalls a grotesque version of the 'Golden Age'. It functions as a fictional insert in Buñuel's original movie. The Spanish film-maker used the motif of *amour fou* to criticise the restrictions and conventions of the time: the Catholic Church, the political establishment, the bourgeois morality, the aristocracy... It is the final scene before the epilogue, in particular, that becomes a key moment for Rosefeldt's Project: he interpreted this episode as an early and provocative feminist manifesto.

Taking this understanding as a starting point for *Deep Gold*, his version shows a world full of lust and desire, in which a weak male protagonist becomes overwhelmed by an omnipresent female sexuality. Throughout the film he embodies a symbol of the constrained modern society Buñuel assaulted in the early twentieth century.

Rosefeldt intertwines his references to Buñuel with upto-the-minute news: Richard Wagner's music and a Dalí double encounter topless FEMEN activists, while wall posters with the Occupy-Wall-Street-slogan 'We are the 99%' hint at the parallels between the economic situation of the 1920s and that of today. The aesthetics of the film is akin to the original movie, but the moral and social standards in *Deep Gold* are those of the present: sexual revolution and the feminist movement reached their pinnacle long ago; promiscuity is reality and pornography is overall disposable.

Three of the four photographs were created in the context of film installation *The Ship of Fools* (2007), filmed at the Baroque manor Schloss Sacrow near Potsdam. Built during the Romantic period, Schloss Sacrow was temporarily inhabited by artists such as Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy; during World War II, it was home to a Nazi officer; in the course of Germany's division it was trapped in the death zone of the Berlin Wall and served as a training facility for watchdogs guarding the Berlin Wall, while nowadays it is declared as a World Heritage site and a destination for Sunday strolls. Rosefeldt combines the site – symbolising the metamorphosis and continuity of German national sentiments from the Romantic era (Caspar David Friedrich) through National Socialism, the division of Germany to nowadays. The work is a sceptical epitaph on German sensitivities and on the still problematic dealing with German identity. Characterised by an agitating immobility, the four tableaux vivants in *The Ship of Fools* visualise the risk of stagnation.

[Text summarised from Stefan Berg, Katerina Gregos and Lydia Korndörfer]

The Berlin-based artist Julian Rosefeldt (born in Munich in 1965) is internationally renowned for his visually opulent and meticulously choreographed moving image artworks, mostly presented as complex multi-screen installations. Inspired equally by the histories of film, art and popular culture, Rosefeldt uses familiar cinematic tropes to carry viewers into surreal, theatrical realms, where the rituals of everyday life absorb the inhabitants, employing humour and satire to seduce audiences into familiar worlds made strange.

Rosefeldt's works are showing internationally at museums and film festivals: His recent film work *Manifesto* (2015) was presented in solo exhibitions at the Park Avenue Armory Hall, New York (2016-17), the Hamburger Bahnhof – Museum für Gegenwart, Berlin (2016), the ACMI – Australian Centre for the Moving Image, Melbourne (2015) and many more. Past group shows include *Moving Time: Video Art at 50: 1965-2015* at CAFA Art Museum, Beijing (2016), *Wolfsburg Unlimited* at the Kunstmuseum in Wolfsburg (2016), *Zeitgeist: The Art of New Berlin* at the CCBB in Rio de Janeiro (2016) and *Conflict, Time, Photography* at the Tate Modern in London (2014). Collections including his works, amongst others, are Neue Nationalgalerie, Berlin, Saatchi Collection, London, CAC Málaga, Spain and the Museum of Modern Art, New York.

ADRIAN SAUER

Keys and Mirrors

16.02 – 29.04.2017

In his most recent work, *Klavier, Roma, 14.11.2016*, Adrian Sauer shows us how a very simple idea can be turned into a very complex aesthetic construct. The equation behind the work seems simple – 88 keys, 88 images. And in fact, it is the 88 keys of an ordinary upright piano that give the photographic series its outer structure. One key – either white or black – is at the center of each of the pictures. The distance between the camera and the keyboard has been set so that the keys appear in their actual size in the finished photos. But within the strict vertical composition, the lens captures not just the one key, but also its surroundings, such that across the series, the number of keys is unexpectedly multiplied.

Most of the 88 images encompass 11 – some 12 – keys; individual keys thus appear in differing positions 11 or 12 times in the neighboring pictures. The result is that in the photo series, the piano keyboard, about a meter-and-a-half wide, expands into a panorama more than 20 meters long, with almost 1000 keys. The series also uses barely perceptible phase shifts that convert the clear layout of the piano keyboard into a state of iridescence that defies the visual grasp. So it is precisely the clear conceptual order of the photographic-artistic orchestration that ultimately produces a complete dissolution of the visual and haptic practicalities of the keyboard.

From a distance, the series also resembles a barcode cut into 88 sections, with its information content evading any intuitive reading based on its form. Close up, however, the individual pictures are recognizable as high-precision photographic images, with the conditions under which they were created as readable as the specific objective existence of the keyboard. With the short distance between the lens and the subject, the head-on perspective that the camera position compels is most evident between the keys; towards the edges of the frames, more of their sides and, on the white keys, the beveling, becomes visible. In addition, above and beyond the keys, sections of the black varnished piano itself are visible, its curves reflecting a distorted version of the keys and the periphery.

This is the point at which the photo series enters into an explicit dialogue with the second exhibit – *Kupferwinkel*. That work is an angled folding diptych, completely covered in polished sheet copper. As an optical apparatus, it achieves the same effect that the photo series strives for – a constant shifting and multiplication of points of view and of objects. With that, the mirror turns the minimalistic gesture of the pictures into something performative.

With *Klavier, Roma, 14.11.2106*, the artist is unmistakably plugging in to subjects that have long occupied his attention – artistic design systems (*16.777.216 Farben*, 2010) and epistemic classification systems (*A–Z*, 2012). And here, just as he has in much of his previous work, he questions and dances around the boundary between analogue and digital. The fundamental binary of classic photographic representation remains inherent in the B/W barcode of the keyboard. And as a control element, the piano not only evokes associations with a computer keyboard, but given the workings of the musical mechanism, it also calls to mind the credo of transfer in traditional photography. Even amidst the digital, the phantasm of the analogue does not relinquish its grip.

Bertram Kaschek

Adrian Sauer (Berlin, 1976) studied Fine Arts and Photography in Leipzig. In Berlin, together with artist colleagues, he founded the artist-run gallery Amerika. He has exhibited in numerous group and solo shows in galleries and public institutions such as: *The Bauhaus #itsalldesign*, Tel Aviv Museum of Art, Israel (2016); *Photographie und die Dinge*, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden (2016); *Generika*, Freunde aktueller Kunst, Zwickau (2016); *Johannes Lehmann*, bautzner69, Dresden (2016); *Die Idee der Landschaft*, DZ BANK Kunstsammlung, Frankfurt am Main (2015); *Sedimente von Wirklichkeit*, Galerie für zeitgenössische Kunst Leipzig (2015); *Form und Farbe*, Klemm's, Berlin (2014), among others. He has also received several scholarships and grants in support of his work. Sauer's photo works are held in both public and private collections.