

Current exhibitions

8 April to 3 September 2017

Auto Vision: Media Art from Nam June Paik to Pipilotti Rist



Painting electronically, capturing movement in a new way, abstract experiments with light, manipulation of images from the mass media: The Kunsthalle Bremen has an outstanding collection of media art from the 1960s to the present. These include the seminal work *Writing through the Essay 'On the Duty of Civil Disobedience'*, 1985/91 by John Cage or the installation *Room for one colour and windy corner* by Olafur Eliasson, 1998 and Diana Thater's *Dolphins*, 1999. Numerous works by the father of media art, Nam June Paik, including the *Video-Synthesizer*, 1969/92 or *Three Camera Participation Video*,

1969/2001, demonstrate the importance of the collection.

This comprehensive exhibition presents a survey of the rich collection of the Kunsthalle Bremen and art's exploration of film, video and electronic media since the 1960s - from early one-channel videos to total sensual experiences in immersive installations. The exhibition includes the early *Back Gate Cologne* by Otto Piene and Aldo Tambellini from 1968, works by the artists Peter Roehr, Wolf Vostell, Peter Campus, Jan Dibbets, Gary Hill and Manfred Mohr as well as contemporary positions by artists William Kentridge, Jean-François Guiton, Mariko Mori, Simon Starling and Pipilotti Rist.

Fig.: Diana Thater, *Dolphins* (Detail), 1999, Kunsthalle Bremen - Der Kunstverein in Bremen, Photo: Roman Mensing

KUNSTHALLE BREMEN

DER KUNSTVEREIN IN BREMEN

Peter Campus, *Death Threat*, 2000

(*1937 in New York City, USA)

Peter Campus schuf bereits in den 1970er Jahren erste Videoinstallationen, er gilt als einer der Pioniere der Videokunst. Während seine frühesten Arbeiten sich mit der Thematik der interaktiven Selbstbegegnungen beschäftigen, sind die späten 1970er und 80er Jahre von seinen Porträts mit Sofortbildkameras geprägt. Erst Mitte der 1990er wendet er sich wieder dem Medium Video und neuen Motiven wie Erinnerung, Landschaft, Vergänglichkeit oder Verlust zu. In dieser Arbeit reflektiert er die Vergänglichkeit des eigenen Lebens: 2000 erkrankt er an Krebs. In überlagerten Bildsequenzen zeigt sich der Künstler selbst als Beobachter seiner Umwelt. Immer wieder ist das Video mit alltäglichen Tonaufnahmen aus der Natur untermalt: Vogelgezwitscher oder der Lärm eines Flugzeuges. Als Verweis auf ein mögliches zeitnahes Ende radiert er sich aus einzelnen Bildszenen aus, so verschwindet der Künstler Stück für Stück aus seiner Umgebung. Als gewalttätiger Akt wird am Ende eine reife Tomate zerschnitten, der Ton des aufsetzenden Messers auf dem Teller wirkt bedrohlich. Diese Arbeit erscheint wie die Verfilmung eines Gedichtes: Campus versinnbildlicht, wie nahe sich Leben und Tod sowie Allgegenwärtigkeit und Vergänglichkeit stehen.

Peter Campus, *Death Threat*, 2000

Peter Campus, who created his first video installations in the 1970s, is considered one of the pioneers of video art. While his early works deal with an interactive self-awareness, the late 1970s and 1980s are characterized by his portraits taken with instant photo cameras. Only in the middle of the 1980s, he turned back to the medium of video as well as to new motives such as memory, landscape, transience and loss. In this video, Campus is reflecting on the transience of his own life: in 2000 he was diagnosed with cancer. In image sequences superimposed over each other the artist presents himself as a distant observer of his environment. Again and again, the video is underlined with a sound-track of the everyday life in nature: singing birds or the noise of an airplane. As a reference to a possible end, which is coming soon, he is erasing himself from several scenes, disappearing bit by bit from his environment. At the end of the sequence a seasoned tomato is cut into pieces in an act of inherent violence, the sound of the knife touching the plate emanating a sense of threat.

This work appears to be a film version of a poem: Campus symbolises how close life and death as well as total presence and transience can be.