



This catalogue was printed in conjunction with the exhibition

La Vitesse et La Pierre
1 November - 7 December 2013
Screen Space

All images of works courtesy of the artists

ISBN: 978-0-9875784-6-4

Published by
Screen Space
www.screenspace.com
+613 9012 5351

Ground Floor / 30 Guildford Lane Melbourne Australia 3000

SCREEN SPACE

La Vitesse et La Pierre

Igor Zimmerman | Frode & Marcus
Curated by Frances Wilkinson



Shot in deserted areas of the world that reflect the isolation of its characters, *La Vitesse et La Pierre* (2009) deals with themes of alienation and fragmented identities. Solitude links the two characters: Iris struggles to fit into society while Bernhard has lost control of gravity, and floats around according to his own internal logic. The Sahara desert becomes the physical representation of the barren landscape in Iris's head, while 'the blue man' runs endlessly across the terrain, on a never-ending journey with neither goal to reach nor end in sight. There is no satisfaction or relief for Iris, or for the self-created personification of her mind, Bernhard.

La Vitesse et La Pierre is a collaborative effort between Swedish film director Igor Zimmerman and self-described Scandinavian artistic-photographic-filmic duo Frode & Marcus. They wanted the filmmaking process to be an adventure, shooting the film in Stockholm, Sweden, Norway and the Western Sahara. Along the 3000 kilometres they drove through West Africa, they slept in the trunk of their car outside deserted towns, burned shoes in the desert and had long discussions with African border police about whether photography can be art (as explanation for having 30 kilograms of blue dye in their luggage).

The resulting film is the outcome of an experiment that explores the intersection of film and photography, a hybrid form that also comments upon the process of its production. Placed between these blurred boundaries, *La Vitesse et La Pierre* uses still images sequentially to tell a story, referencing the older technology of the film projector and its use of sequential slides. As the film runs, the gaps and missing information between each photograph in the sequence draw attention to its production process; the viewer becomes aware of each restaging that must take place between each shot. The stills present something immediate, and their stillness is significant to the film's meaning and characters, who are frozen in time in their isolation, "like a pile of stones". Contrasting this reference to older technology with highly stylised visuals and digital photography, *La Vitesse et La Pierre* is about changing technologies and converging media as much as it is about conveying a narrative.

Jean-Christophe Royoux has suggested that contemporary installation is a post-cinematic medium¹; that in the present, visual art takes place within a cinematically structured world. The convergence of art and film and their viewing spaces allow the gallery to become a new venue for cinematic experiments.² This convergence is apparent through the hybrid form that the moving-image can take,³ as it references multiple media and technologies. Many contemporary film and video artists deploy forms of narrative inherited from Hollywood cinema to make moving-image works,⁴ and the protagonists in *La Vitesse et La Pierre* can be viewed as characters in a painful modern Western. They are often seen jumping, floating or running, as outsiders with no way in.

Two general tendencies that appear within contemporary video installation can be seen in *La Vitesse et La Pierre*. The first tendency is the self-conscious use of professional editing techniques and mainstream media imaging, evident here in the work's appropriation of the highly stylised photographic techniques often seen in fashion photography.⁵ The second, more conceptually-defined direction, seeks to expose cinema and media cultures as constructed spectacles.⁶ *La Vitesse et La Pierre* makes this revelation by drawing attention to the production process. The film gives the viewer the knowledge that, between each shot, much time and effort is dedicated to constructing each scene, despite it only being shown for a fleeting moment before it gives way to the next.

La Vitesse et La Pierre is about convergence: the boundaries between the traditional roles of director, photographer and actor in this production are dissolved, as are the lines between film and photography, art and fashion. The result is a humorous yet melancholic, poetic and highly visual journey that uses an abstract narrative to comment on social conditions, as well as the processes of artistic production and technological change.

Bibliography

Frohne, Ursula. 'Dissolution of the Frame: immersion and participation in video installations' in Leighton, Tanya (ed.). *Art and the Moving Image: a critical reader*, Tate Publishing: London, 2008, pp. 355-370

Royoux, Jean-Christophe. 'Towards a post cinematic space-time' in Sara Arrheius, Magdalena Malm and Cristina Ricupero (eds), *Black Box Illuminated*, Propexus: Stockholme, 2003, pp. 107-120

Uroskie, Andrew V. 'Windows in the white cube' in Trodd, Tamara (ed.). *Screen/Space: the projected image in contemporary art*, Manchester University Press: Manchester and New York, 2011, pp. 145-161

Walsh, Maria. 'You've got me under your spell: the entranced spectator' in Trodd, Tamara (ed.). *Screen/Space: the projected image in contemporary art*, Manchester University Press: Manchester and New York, 2011, pp. 111-125

¹ Royoux, 2003: 107

² Frohne, 2008: 357

³ Uroskie, 2011: 146

⁴ Walsh, 2011: 113

⁵ Frohne, 2008: 359

⁶ Frohne, 2008: 360

Frode & Marcus met while travelling as young men and then later at college in London, before they began collaborating in 2007; Frode Fjerdingsstad is a Norwegian artist and Marcus Palmqvist began as a Swedish fashion photographer. Their collaborations weave surreal and abstract narratives with an underlying dark humour, contrasting older filming techniques such as VHS, with digital photography using highly stylised visuals influenced by Marcus' photography training. They have exhibited collaboratively across Europe, including Barcelona, Moscow, Rotterdam, London, Stockholm, Steinberg and at the Centre Georges Pompidou in Paris. They have also exhibited as part of Scope, New York and at the National Art Center in Tokyo.

Igor Zimmerman is a Swedish cross-disciplinary film director and self-described 'director of special projects'. He went to art school and studied graphic design and art direction but taught himself film-making by doing and by learning from people who influence him, such as director Paul Thomas Anderson and Spike Jonze. As well as films and interactive projects, he enjoys experimenting with different media, and creates sculptures and installations, including a Nike Sportswear sculpture. He has exhibited at the Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris, The Lincoln Center, New York and El Museo Guggenheim, Bilbao.

Frances Wilkinson