

Jutta Pohlmann and Dirk von Lowtzow
LOITERING WITH INTENT: The Apprentice

October 04 - November 15, 2008
Opening on Thursday, October 02, 2008 from 8 p.m. - 10 p.m.

While still at the dawn of its career as an iconic cipher, this plant made an appearance in "Palme", a poem by Paul Valéry from 1919, as a being of perfect calm. Despite all bowing with fullness, despite quivering in lovely agreement with the elements, the tranquil curve of its fronds waving downwards has a higher-order effect. Why sink down? For nothing. According to Roland Barthes the most scandalous way - without intentional use.

The title of this exhibition leads to a similarly scandalous economy. It was, identical to that of Peter O'Toole's memoirs, the second part, simply adopted as it was. In this way, the range of themes revolving around the uncriticized honoring of saints and that of a critical Orientalism also assumes a role in the exhibition, only it all becomes more complicated, and thus more uneconomical. When, in the film "À la Menthe", Dirk von Lowtzow in the role of the traveler to the East pauses for a number of minutes, with all the natural pathos belonging to this action - though not fully, still taking a few sips of mint tea - to direct his gaze into the distance, more precisely on the port of Tangier and that which is behind it, while in the foreground a palm tree bends over in the wind before his eyes as an aesthetic schism or split in the screen and the panorama fragments into shaky quadrants, then the camera shows this traveler from the perspective of the parrot sitting on a shoulder, or better, of the monkey on his back. His undeniable passivity is designed to make him mistakable for a machine, if only he were to give something, any sort of impression, be it even just a trace of an emotion.

Here, port scenes, teatime and palm trees preempt, as seemingly rudely obvious motifs, a possible, real embarrassment, if the disparate worlds of in part now tired cultural-mythical materials were to be grouped together under the heading Tangier and approached once again, perhaps with the intention of refreshing them after all. In contrast, "À la Menthe" chooses the path of deliberate emphasis of a more appealing exhaustion, namely that of opposing the compulsory service of portraying and copying. This occurs in three long, structural ways, namely, a very short pan shot, the background noise on the soundtrack and a song during the credits.

In turn, the song entitled "Thrown out of Drama School" is the reverse of the film images, as a pastoral-romantic, suggestively exaggerated fantasy about being an outsider and rebellion, loosely in the form of a poem possibly credited to a hallucinatory Peter O'Toole. It leads away from and finally back to the truck, the tape recorder, the wrought-iron chairs, the transportation crates, the comma, the scarf, the boxes, the apprentice, the sparrow.

Peter Abs
Translation: Jeremy Gaines