

KÜNSTLERHAUS STUTT GART

Press text

The Use of Every Sunbeam

Julian Antonisz, Anca Benera, Jakup Ferri, Ahmet Ögüt, Janek Simon

September 12–November 8, 2008

Opening: September 11, 7 pm

Hours: Wed–Fri 3–7 pm, Sat 11 am–4 pm

Starting point of the exhibition "The Use of Every Sunbeam" at Künstlerhaus Stuttgart is the artistic work of Polish filmmaker Julian Antonisz. Antonisz was one of the central figures in Polish experimental film of the 1970s and 1980s and is known for his inventive, self-built trick film devices. However, the artist has yet to receive recognition in an international context. The exhibition presents films by Julian Antonisz together with works by young, international artists. The title of the exhibition is taken from a note in the archive of Julian Antonisz.

In Communist Poland, Antonisz was a controversial figure. His economic use of materials and technical inventions in their sometimes absurd ingenuity resulted from an ironic observation of socialist reality. Instead of distanced criticism, Antonisz developed an affirmative position, based on the acceptance of what was actually in question. In this manner, his works analyzed the dominant discourse without having to dissociate themselves from it. In fact, the works subversively presented a poetic alternative in midst a socialist reality.

At Künstlerhaus Stuttgart the work by Julian Antonisz will be confronted with works by younger artists. The presented artists Anca Benera (Romania), Jakup Ferri (Kosovo), Ahmet Ögüt (Turkey) and Janek Simon (Poland) are part of a generation of artists from Central and Eastern Europe who have obtained international recognition over the past years. In their artistic practice, they utilize subversive practices that allow them to participate in and assimilate to the dominant social, ideological or political debates and yet at the same time subvert them. In this sense their works often react to the pressures of transformation, which have been weighing down on social contexts in Central and Eastern Europe since the fall of the Iron Curtain, and yet produce new alternatives but also new constraints.

With the group presentation of affirmative practices by Julian Antonisz and the invited younger generation, the exhibition questions how the potential for individual and critical expression is nonetheless possible in situations of collective pressure. The use of already existing forms such as quotations or indirect speech appears as a critical method aiming towards an open society with many possibilities instead of utopian alternatives.

Events in the context of the exhibition:

September 18, 7pm: **Polish School of Experimental Animation**, film presentation with Marcin Gizycki (Rhode Island School of Design, Providence, USA)

September 23, 7pm: **Conceptual and Post-conceptual Art in Eastern Europe**, lecture by Misko Suvakovic (University of Arts, Belgrad)

The exhibition is curated by Magdalena Lipska, a fellow of the Robert Bosch Foundation in the program "Cultural Managers from Central and Eastern Europe."

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