



Michael Bryntrup, *Films*
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Dances of Death were originally improvised performances on altars of churches and cemeteries. In the XVI century they encountered - unprecedented glory due to « the three Cavaliers of the Apocalypse » (war, starving and plague) a decimated population adopting them as a familiar spectacle. Staged in sarabande, the performance took the form of a verbal exchange- between the characters arranged into hierarchical order: from the pope to the emperor, - the cardinal to the king, the peasant to the child... Each one in turn, dancing with Death, the silent actress and supreme arbitrator. Arranged thus, these representations were the first attempt to show an image in movement, due to their principle of rapid succession.

Tabu V (1998) a diary in motion, subtitled “wovon man nicht sprechen kann” (About Which One Cannot Speak) quotes directly Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus of Wittgenstein, for who which one can't speak « one must remain silent ». The film assembles, around the graphic representation of a pulsing heart and fragments from the year 1997. Pages blacked by writings, pictures and collages succeed one another second upon second on the cinematic ribbon. There is also the list of lovers, an extract of Cain and Abel, A Moral, adaptation that Bryntrup made in 1994 of Cain and Abel story, his self-portrait as an unruly Chinagirl... Here the Silent in which Act Up saw death, is reconsidered in the light of the Wittgenstein moral. This year, Bryntrup is sick and the reason for the pain is not explicit: is it question of a viral problem or rather chirurgical? The commandment « thou shalt not kill » is here a direct reference to the first biblical murder, Cain killing Abel, but it is also, echos sickness, the murder by contamination of a lover, a brother or a twin: of an alter ego. The super positioning of voice, textures, and the visual and lexical registers, confine the taboo to an inaudible cacophony – suffocation. A taboo stays a taboo notes Bryntrup, the diary is a mirror in front of which one can't say everything; and if one cannot speak, one in return can make a film.

And death? Is a muse and a partner, inhabiting his pictures as the moon inhabits the sun: uncontrollably attracted, he dances with it and the film is the means to confront face to face, motion and darkness, the ghostly and light, time which conserves and eternity that deploys.

Michael Bryntrup is a German filmmaker born in 1959. He lives and works in Berlin.

M.C

<http://chinese-girl-film.blogspot.com>

Film programme

Musterhaft – das Ende, ein Intermezzo

1985, 8', col., sound, Super 8 on dvd

Die Statik der Eselsbrücken

1990, 21', n&b, sound, 16mm on dvd

Die Botschaft – Totentanz 8

1989, 10', col., sound, 16 mm on dvd

Tabu V (wovon man nicht sprechen kann)

1998, 13', n&b and col., sound, 16mm on dvd

<http://www.brynntrup.de>

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