

ARTFORUM

JANUARY 2007

I N T E R N A T I O N A L

"GLITTER AND DOOM"
GERMAN PORTRAITS FROM THE 1920s
WINTER PREVIEW 50 SHOWS WORLDWIDE
THE FILMS OF BONG JOON-HO



\$10.00



Monica Bonvicini, *Destroy She Said*, 1998, 2-channel video installation, 60 minutes, 2 projection walls. From "Arsels des Kinos" (Beyond Cinema).



projections from traditional movie screenings does not mean leaving out the movies themselves. Selections like Monica Bonvicini's *Destroy She Said*, 1998, and Pierre Huyghe's *L'Ellipse*, 1998, question the conventions of the silver screen, but they take up just as much physical space, if not more. Artistic critique of cinema also comes in much smaller sizes. The art of projection would have come across more clearly if the curators had included fewer monumental projections and left the same vast amount of space around them. Tucking Tony Oursler's *Criminal Eye*, 1995, into a corner of the lit entrance hall, like a meek usher, did not help. Adding Janet Cardiff and George Bures Miller's *The Paradise Institute*, 2001, would have.

Nevertheless, the curators review the lessons taught by Expanded Cinema and more or less forgotten until the '90s, when the moving image (video and then digital) was liberated from "video sculpture," a quaint yet bizarre medium that offered timid collectors sculpted TV sets to set off the video's endless reproducibility. Freed from the box, a projection can have as much singularity and volume as any sculpture, taking over a variety of surfaces in different ways. Underscoring this point, Pipilotti Rist screened her classic *Ever Is Over All*, 1997, as a mirror image of the original projection. Filming is not just about capturing images and telling stories—it is also about making a highly compact chronotope. Stuffing endless places and people into ninety-odd minutes onto one flat screen is a vertiginous experience for the body—a condition that the practitioners of Expanded Cinema attempted to correct by opening up the flatness of the silver screen to both actors and viewers.

—Jennifer Allen

OSLO

Knut Henrik Henriksen STANDARD

Knut Henrik Henriksen's show took as its inspiration a meeting between Le Corbusier and Albert Einstein that transpired in 1942. The architect availed himself of the opportunity to explain his work on the Modulor system, an attempt to locate the golden section proportional to the height of the average person. The human body could thus become the pivotal point of built space, promising an ideal basis for commodious, harmonic, universally standardized edifices. Einstein responded that if realized, the Modulor would make "the bad difficult and the good easy."

In his sculptures and installations, Henriksen often indulges a fascination with endlessly reproducible structures, even if only as models. Instead of master narratives, he offers material and formal displacements in which the malleability of space can be perceived viscer-

ally rather than logically. Implementing Le Corbusier's quest for a universal standard, *Scale of Proportions Which Makes the Bad Difficult and the Good Easy*, 2006, is an intervention in the gallery space, lowering its ceiling height to the French architect's paradigmatic 7' 4 1/2". The new ceiling—consisting of square white grooved Styrofoam panels mounted on a prosaic wooden frame—is in effect a horizontal sculpture that you look at from below. It is the exhibition's only work, a sort of Bauhaus-meets-Home Depot gesture: Henriksen's use of cheap standard materials from DIY shops injects the whole scenario with an inescapable sense of the economy and sensations of everyday life. As one stands in the gallery, the new drop ceiling feels more like an amputation of the space or a piston coming down on your head than a divine proportion, and it seems to squeeze your attention from the empty white cube out toward the street life ho-humming past the windows. So while the work does what Minimalist sculpture does best—namely, enhances a sense of scale, material, and perception by means of a kind of elated banality—it at the same time debunks or evades the mystique and sublimity of Minimalism.

Seemingly true to Le Corbusier's humanist intentions, the beholder becomes the protagonist in the transformed void of the gallery space. However, the paradox is that you find yourself in a place where objects are usually the focus, and instead of mastering the central perspective you become a pawn in a game of transparency turned opaque. *Scale of Proportions* is also a spoof on the metaphysical overtones of heroic modernism. From the outside at night, one can see how the space created above the drop ceiling makes for a kind of Platonic realm lit up by strip lights, while the lower part—the gallery space—wallows in darkness. This sharp divide between the realm of ideas and the material world is probably akin to the tristesse that confronted the



Knut Henrik Henriksen, *Scale of Proportions Which Makes the Bad Difficult and the Good Easy*, 2006, wooden beams and Styrofoam boards, 32' 9 1/2" x 24' 7 1/2"

inhabitants of many twentieth-century machines for living as they started to fall apart and became socially compromised housing projects. Teetering between function and dysfunction, aesthetics and morality, play and construction, Henriksen's works are meditations on how little it often takes to reconstruct or reimagine a corner of the world anew—or to put it out of whack.

—Lars Bang Larsen

LONDON

Pierre Klossowski/Hans Bellmer WHITECHAPEL ART GALLERY

While presented as separate exhibitions, these timely surveys of two of the most interesting artists in the orbit of Surrealism (though