

Joep Van Liefland
Video Palace #34 - Le Discours des Medias
1 - 22 December 2012
Preview 30 November 7-9pm

'Media-entropy': a term, which refers to media formats in decay.

'Media-entropy' refers to the transformations of information, on a cultural level but also to the physicality of the media – video is bound to the body and the changes in infrastructure – video shops and rentals that are gradually disappearing.

The duchy is proud to present for the first time in Scotland, a solo exhibition by Dutch born installation and video artist Joep Van Liefland.

This exhibition will be Liefland's 34th Video Palace rendered in a different location and a different city. Appearing as a recently closed down, vacated shop, Van Liefland will present within the gallery space an installation to mimic a video rental store. Using film and installation and utilising the gallery's original feature of the converted shop front, this exhibition is one in a series of video palaces, a project that the artist describes as a fluid artwork with no apparent conclusion and one that has been in development for ten years.

The project is based on two activities:

1. The culmination of a video collection alongside the artist's own films in which Van Liefland uses the iconography of the video as an object of deconstruction. Van Liefland uses this as a tool to produce new meanings and as a means of reflecting upon the redundant medium of video to new to avant-garde commodities and the mechanically assembled - to pay homage to the media culture he represents.
2. Part archaeological study, part mapping of the history of video medium to release it from any nostalgic concerns. Van Liefland's work reveals a deep concern in the multifaceted existence of video: its technical development, distribution, content of films, its copy element, its different market segments, the stores and its contextual relation to contemporary art. In its 10th year, the project is further thrust into pertinence in a fast moving digital age and with the rows of dilapidated shop fronts in the area the gallery is located.

The Palace is not only an artwork in its own right; it doubles as a centre for quasi-commercial production. This takes the form of makeshift advertising that excitedly promotes the rental store's unalloyed pleasures, as well as a distribution centre for van Liefland's own video output.

Generally featuring the artist himself, titles such as Doggiedoggie, Splatter Orgasm, Men in Pain and Donald Judd Faces of Death make clear the kind of territories VP productions inhabit - spoof re-inventions of exactly the kind of archive material the Palace offers on its shelves. Yet despite the obvious irony in van Liefland's project, there's a serious dimension to his parody. Besides rescuing vintage footage from obscurity, his work charts the effects of what he terms 'media-entropy': the increasingly rapid decline of formerly cutting-edge mass-media technologies. It's a concern shared by artists such as Gregor Hildebrand and Mathieu Mercier, but van Liefland's approach to framing nostalgia begins with materials which were probably never well-loved, but to which he brings a new and eccentric appeal.

Video Palace is an omnipresence in the lineage of this artist's multi-faceted and idiosyncratic practice and becoming a signature that remains fresh and interesting because of differing context, a new venue and experimental format. Since the first Video Palace in 2003, Liefland has exhibited this project in Berlin, Paris, Amsterdam, Etienne, Vienna, Athens, Hamburg and Dresden and has had critical reviews in Frieze Magazine, Dazed & Confused and ArtForum.

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