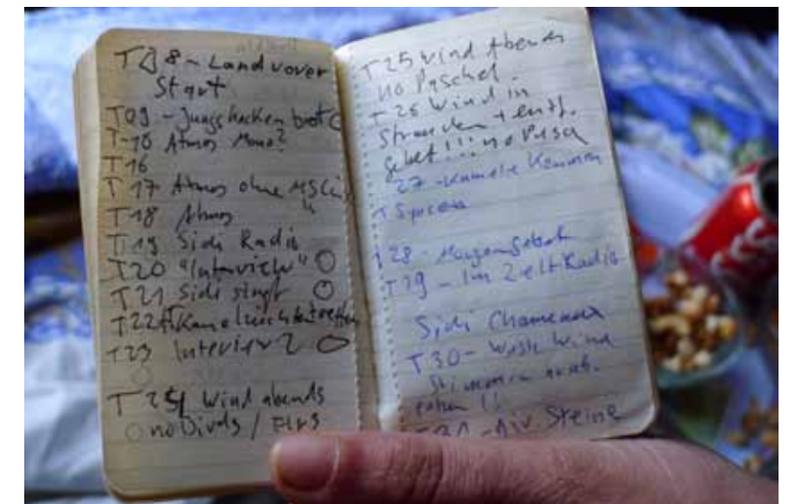




MARIO PFEIFER DOSSIER 2006–2013

KOW
BRUNNENSTR 9 D-10119 BERLIN
+49 30 311 66 770
GALLERY@KOW-BERLIN.COM



**CONVERSATION PIECE
[WESTERN SAHARA]
2012/13**

Conversation Piece [Western Sahara] (2012/13) is a multiple video installation within an architectural setting accompanied by a text installation. As the title suggests the project is set in one of the driest areas of the world – the Western Sahara, on Moroccan territory. In the dust we follow the life of nomads. As we get closer to their everyday-life and, we also listen to an exchange of views between the artist himself and a French speaking man.

In 2012 Pfeifer spent several weeks with a local nomadic family raising and care-taking a herd of camels. The living and working conditions are most simple and extremely limited. With his mobile device, an Apple Iphone4S, Pfeifer filmed their daily conversations and habits. Furthermore Pfeifer engages the locals to interview themselves about aspects they would find essential to their life.

Sidi, a Mauritanian guest worker, who is in charge of guarding the camel herd for the family is the only French speaking person around. In the presence of the camera, he and Pfeifer hold an in-depth debate about issues related to life, social behavior, astronomy, or politics. The conversations therefore share something fundamentally humanistic, even though it may reveal, that the protagonists come from different cultural backgrounds and economic situations.

The Western Sahara is, in certain online forums, titled as the "last colony of Africa". After being decolonized by Spain, it has been on the United Nations list of non-self-governing territories since the Moroccan demand in 1963. The localization of Pfeifer's project addresses one fundamental problem, the political status of the region and its immediate affects on nomad's culture, terrain claiming and the potential turn over of a region by militant extremists as experienced in North Mali.

Mario Pfeifer, Conversation Piece [Western Sahara], 2012/13

Video stills



Western Sahara Profile (2012) is a wall text, installed in proximity to the video installation. The written words form an aesthetic counter narrative to the moving images. Secondly, the analytical text, written by the artist, highlights - hinting towards the political context of the region - the current conditions in the Western Sahara. Pfeifer's points of departure for the text are riots and quarrels, which started in 2009 quickly spreading to the main cities in the area, but also examining the history of an autonomy movement in the last three decades if not longer.



Mario Pfeifer, Conversation Piece [Western Sahara], 2012/13

Video stills

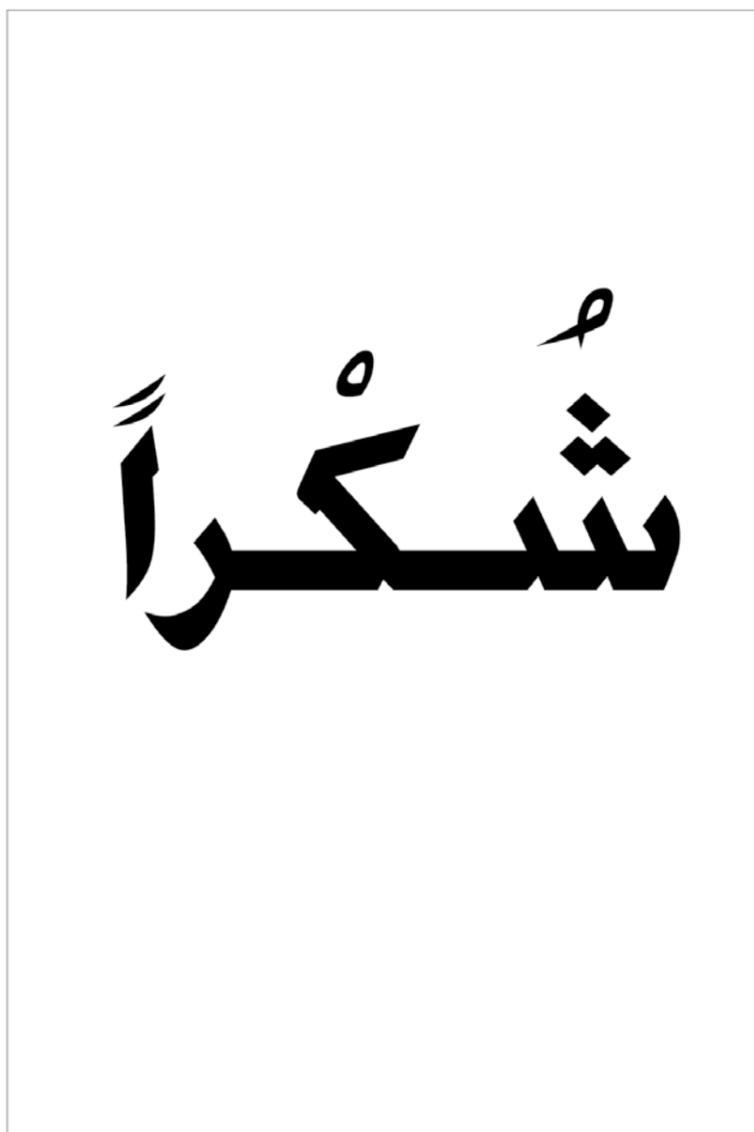


JAMAA 2012

In response to an invitation for participating in the 4th Marrakech Biennale 2012, **جماعة** was formed in Marrakech in 2012 by several individuals, both Moroccan and international. This statement (available in Arabic, English and French) — a short analysis of the proposed exhibition and a description of the artistic process — is part of what is essentially an intervention for the 4th Marrakech Biennale.

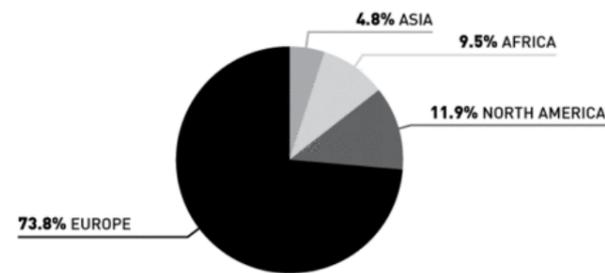
جماعة proposes an alternative to the Biennale's quest for a purely aesthetic, entertaining and amusing experience. Through a public poster project **جماعة** offers to a public of Marrakech insights into Biennale's proposals, statements, interviews and conversations, which were not always available or accessible to this public. Located outside of the exhibition, the posters display key words, phrases, notes and terms, which gave framework and idea to the aforementioned cultural event. **جماعة** actively asks the viewers to engage with the project through reading, interpretation, discussion and translation in order to negotiate the local context and cultural specificity proposed by the Biennale's organizers.

جماعة uses posters, an originally Western format for activating a public space, as well as advertising, and relies solely on language for the dissemination of knowledge and information. Despite of almost 50% literacy rate statistics for Morocco at large, the literacy rates in urban areas like Rabat, Casablanca, and, arguably, Marrakech, in recent years have risen above 90 percent, according to The State of the African Cities Report 2008. Thus, the poster project acknowledges not just a local public, but the nuanced issues of those who are in need of education, or those who might feel unaware or excluded by an exhibition of contemporary art defined through a Western discourse. With the act of translation of all its content into Darija and Classical Arabic, **جماعة** re-negotiates specific cultural and sociopolitical facets of the Biennale's communication, using the inherent properties of language such as ambiguity, negotiability and subtlety.



Mario Pfeifer, *Jamaa*, 2012
Collective poster, web and public communication project, 4th Marrakech Biennale 2012

Poster

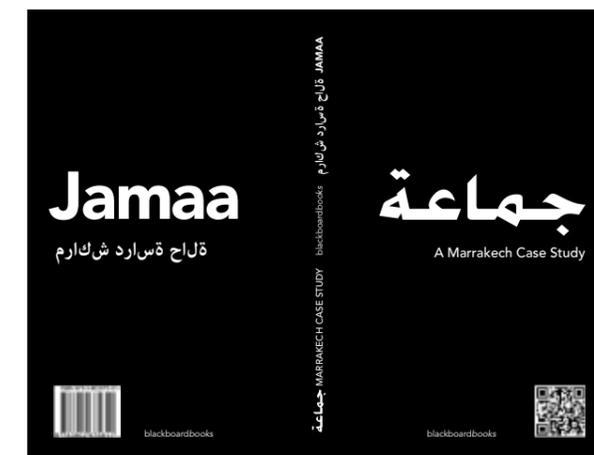


Mario Pfeifer, *Jamaa*, 2012
Collective poster, web and public communication project, 4th Marrakech Biennale 2012

Web blog: <http://jamaa2012.tumblr.com>

Posters at the entrance to 4th Marrakech Biennale

Jamaa: A Marrakech Case Study
edited by Mario Pfeifer and Nataliya Slinko,
published by blackboardbooks, 2013





Exhibition view, Weserburg, Museum für moderne Kunst, Bremen, 2010

CODE UNKNOWN_RESYNC 2010

The installation was first conceived for Weserburg, Museum für moderne Kunst Bremen. It analyses a key scene in Michael Haneke's film CODE INCONNUE (2000), in which another film is dubbed by the actors Juliette Binoche and Thierry Neuvic. Mario Pfeifer re-transfers this scene into an adapted script, giving the moving images a quasi-a-priori source text. This German version script—with an additional fictional establishing shot and end sequence referring to Haneke's usual strategies of opening and ending a film—is mounted full frame on the exhibition walls in a white cube setting. Within these wall texts ten posters display quotations by Michael Haneke—questions that he had drafted and published before the production of the film. In the following room, Haneke's film excerpts in the original French version with German subtitles are screened in a continuously loop. While the scene plays forward in normal speed first, it is later re-winded with high speed to start again. The image quality is rather poor indicating the image appropriation and carries a decoding software symbol referring to user practices of bootlegging films through freeware applications.



Mario Pfeifer, CODE UNKNOWN_ReSync
2010

Text: Mario Pfeifer

Exhibition views, Weserburg, Museum für
moderne Kunst, Bremen, 2010



Mario Pfeifer, CODE UNKNOWN_ReSync
2010

Exhibition views, Weserburg, Museum für
moderne Kunst, Bremen, 2010

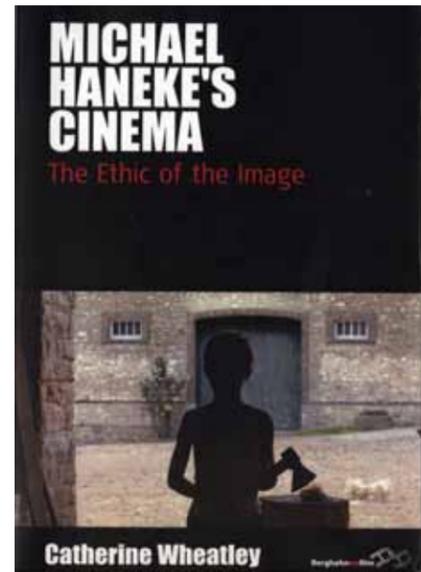
Credit Line

CODE UNKNOWN [Re_Sync]
Notes on a film excerpt
2010

Installation [Wallprints, Injketprints, Videoprojection] for Weserburg, Museum für Moderne Kunst, Bremen

Exhibition Design by Devin Dailey
Typography by Melanie Glass
Installation Documentation by Jens Weyers
Conceived by Mario Pfeifer

© 2010 Germany



Mario Pfeifer, CODE UNKNOWN_ReSync
2010

Catherine Wheatley, Michael Haneke's Cinema,
The Ethic of the Image, Berghahn Books, 2009

Exhibition view, Weserburg, Museum für
moderne Kunst, Bremen, 2010



Mario Pfeifer, CODE UNKNOWN_ReSync
2010

Exhibition views, Weserburg, Museum für
moderne Kunst, Bremen, 2010



Exhibition view, Frankfurter Kunstverein,
2010

**A FORMAL FILM
IN NINE EPISODES,
PROLOGUE & EPILOGUE
2010**

The Film describes a contemporary Asian Metropolis through an observational, anthropological approach of filmmaking. Each scenery in those nine episodes depicts landscape, architecture, interiors or humans from rural communities to factories, medical facilities or ancient and religious sites which all share miraculous beauty, a critical view on the cities development as well as cultural phenomenas and aesthetic explorations. Slowly establishing two characters, the film leaves its documentarian nature and progresses into a narrative, which purely follows two humans, sharing their movements in time and space letting us remember a cinema of love in the Asian context.



Shot on 35 mm in only single takes without repeating any action, the production of the film itself tries to be aware of its outsider position looking at a contemporary, vastly booming Third World Country and its cultural history of 5,000 years by simply capturing and re-enacting experienced situations. Trying to avoid a clear genre definition to this film, it is entirely shot on location in the city of Mumbai and its suburbia. Both performers, Gopal and Nandhini, work on regular day jobs and live in Bombay's suburbia -and have never participated in a film project.



Mario Pfeifer, A Formal Film in Nine Episodes, Prologue & Epilogue, 2010

Text: Mario Pfeifer

Exhibition view, Museum für Moderne Kunst Frankfurt, 2012



Mario Pfeifer, A Formal Film in Nine Episodes, Prologue & Epilogue, 2010

Exhibition view, Frankfurter Kunstverein, 2010

Credit Line

A Formal Film in Nine Episodes, Prologue & Epilogue
2010

35 mm film & HD-multiple-channel-projection
for exhibition space, colour, stereo, 50 min

Hindi, Tamil with English subtitles

Cast: Gopal, Nandani
Director of Photography: Avijit Mukul Kishore
Assistant Director / Research Assistant: Sujata Venkateswaran
Sound Operator: Suresh Rajamani
Casting: Mario Pfeifer, Sujata Venkateswaran, Parul Wadhwa
Production /Location Manager: Dhiraj Singh
Production Assistant: Parul Wadhwa
Supported by Kodak Mumbai
Produced by [blackboardfilms]
Conceived by Mario Pfeifer

© 2010 India / Germany



Mario Pfeifer, A Formal Film in Nine Episodes,
Prologue & Epilogue, 2010

35 mm film, colour, stereo, 50 min

Mario Pfeifer, A Formal Film in Nine Episodes,
Prologue & Epilogue, 2010

Production stills



Mario Pfeifer, A Formal Film in Nine Episodes, Prologue & Epilogue, 2010

35 mm film, colour, stereo, 50 min



Mario Pfeifer, A Formal Film in Nine Episodes, Prologue & Epilogue, 2010

35 mm film, colour, stereo, 50 min



Mario Pfeifer, A Formal Film in Nine Episodes, Prologue & Epilogue, 2010

35 mm film, colour, stereo, 50 min



Mario Pfeifer, A Formal Film in Nine Episodes, Prologue & Epilogue, 2010

35 mm film, colour, stereo, 50 min



Mario Pfeifer, A Formal Film in Nine Episodes, Prologue & Epilogue, 2010

35 mm film, colour, stereo, 50 min



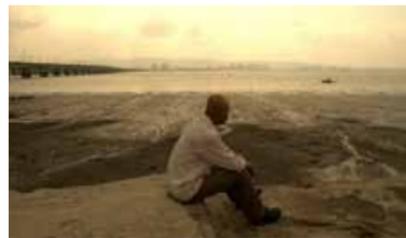
Mario Pfeifer, A Formal Film in Nine Episodes, Prologue & Epilogue, 2010

35 mm film, colour, stereo, 50 min



Mario Pfeifer, A Formal Film in Nine Episodes, Prologue & Epilogue, 2010

35 mm film, colour, stereo, 50 min



Mario Pfeifer, A Formal Film in Nine Episodes, Prologue & Epilogue, 2010

35 mm film, colour, stereo, 50 min

A Formal Film in Nine Episodes, Prologue and Epilogue - A Critical Reader, 2012

Editor: Goethe Institut Max Mueller Bhavan, KOW, Berlin, MMK Museum für Moderne Kunst Frankfurt am Main

Concept: Mario Pfeifer & Markus Weisbeck

Project Advisor: Ragnunath Vasudevan

Graphic Design & Typography: Markus Weisbeck

Book Research and Line Production: Eve Lemesle & Siddhika Lahori

Printing: Modern Copy, Mumbai, India

Published by Spector Books, Leipzig, Germany

Authors:

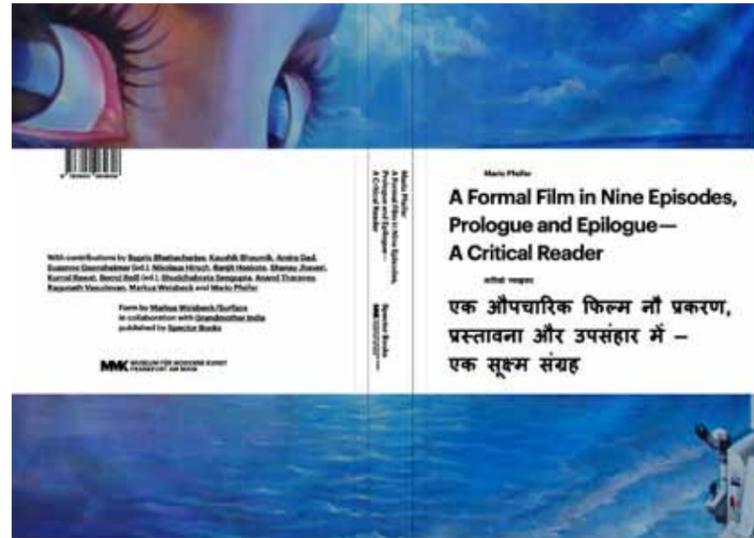
- . Susanne Gaensheimer (Director, MMK Museum für Moderne Kunst Frankfurt a.M.)
- . Amira Gad (Writer, Curator Witte de With, Rotterdam)
- . Ranjit Hoskote (Critic, Writer, Anthropologist, Poet & Curator, Mumbai)
- . Kaushik Baumik (Critic, Film curator, Director Osians Foundation, New Delhi)
- . Shanay Jahveri (Author of Outsider Films, Critic and Curator, London & Mumbai)
- . Nikolaus Hirsch (Architectural Theorist, Dean of Städelschule Frankfurt am Main)
- . Suddha Sengupta (Artist, Writer, Co-Founder of Raqs Media Collective, New Delhi)
- . Markus Weisbeck (Graphic Designer, Bauhaus Universität Weimar)
- . Bernd Reiss (MMK, Frankfurt)

This book is published to offer thoughts, reflections and further information on A FORMAL FILM IN NINE EPISODES, PROLOGUE & EPILOGUE, a multiple High Definition Video projection for an exhibition space and film projection for cinema. The film was entirely developed and produced in the Greater Mumbai region in May 2010, and post-produced in Germany in the same year. The installation was first shown at Frankfurter Kunstverein and Zollamt, MMK Museum für Moderne Kunst Frankfurt am Main, Germany in 2010. The film version world premiered at the London International Film Festival in May 2011.

The book is, based on the structural elements of the installation, entirely produced in the Greater Mumbai region with local printers and manufacturers. A research conducted by Pfeifer / Weisbeck in Mumbai to meet and discuss the nature of the publication project took place in March 2012 in collaboration with Eve Lemesle and Siddhika Lahori, who also organized a short term residency at Last Ship, Bandra.

The publication appears on the occasion of exhibitions at KOW, Berlin (2011), MMK Museum für Moderne Kunst Frankfurt am Main (2012), Khoj New Delhi (2013) and Project 88, Mumbai (2013).

Mario Pfeifer, A Formal Film in Nine Episodes,
Prologue and Epilogue - A Critical Reader,
Spector Books, 2013
ISBN: 978-3-940064-60-8



Mario Pfeifer, Edition: Episode / Ice Factory
2-teilig, gerahmte Farbfotografie + Publikation
(Collector's Edition)

Mario Pfeifer, Episode / Ice Factory,
Pigment-Inkjetprint auf Rochester Plus,
50 x 43,6cm (Fotografie: 33,8 x 26,6cm)
Passepartout, gerahmt in einem schwarz-
eloxierten Aluminiumprofil
Edition: 25+10AP

Mario Pfeifer, A Formal Film in Nine Episodes,
Prologue and Epilogue - A Critical Reader,
Spector Books, 2013
ISBN: 978-3-940064-60-8



**THE LOS ANGELES
RIVER-PROJECT
2009-2010**

"The Los Angeles River-Project" explores-in the format of a feature length film-the complex political discussion of the river's status and the environmental and social impact of being corralled into a flood control system over seventy years ago. The conflict is manifested by the river's unclear and unresolved definition. (...)

This film is an investigation into the urban landscape, and develops along this frontier of the socialized wilderness, taking into account technology and planning, the command of nature and its demarcation with the urban, as reflected through the stateless person who inhabits this denaturalized and destroyed environment. Despite these extremes the two protagonists with very different backgrounds and reference systems, meet at the riverbank; whilst the scientist Brent takes water samples and monitors the river's local wildlife, he encounters the homeless Marvin and begins to investigate his survival strategy.



Mario Pfeifer, The Los Angeles River-Project
2009-2010

Text by Mario Pfeifer

35 mm film & HD projection, colour, Dolby SR 5.1,
80 min



Mario Pfeifer, The Los Angeles River-Project
2009-2010

35 mm film & HD projection, colour, Dolby SR 5.1,
80 min

Credit Line

The Los Angeles River-Project
2009-2010

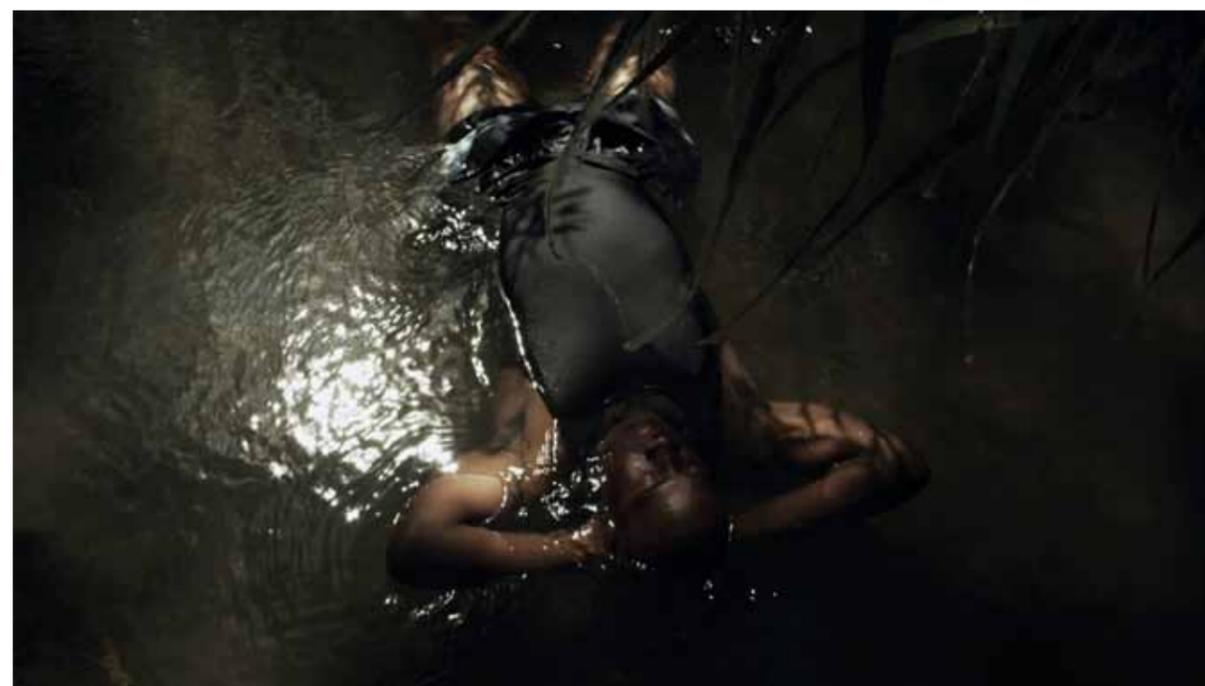
35 mm film & HD projection, colour, Dolby SR 5.1,
80 min

English



Mario Pfeifer, The Los Angeles River-Project
2009-2010

Production stills



Mario Pfeifer, The Los Angeles River-Project
2009-2010

Production stills



**RECONSIDERING “THE
NEW INDUSTRIAL PARKS
NEAR IRVINE, CALIFORNIA”
BY LEWIS BALTZ, 1974
2009**

"Reconsidering The New Industrial Parks Near Irvine, California by Lewis Baltz, 1974" revisits one of the industrial structures Lewis Baltz documented in his historic "New Topographics" from the outside and depicts the interior setting of a metal workshop with an eleven minute tracking shot. During this time, the 1974 book version has been reconsidered from back to front, each turning page a montage within the continuous 16 mm black and white footage. An interview with J.R. Billington, a company owner in this building for nineteen years, discusses the socio-economical situation in military manufacturing in Orange County in the 1980's and today.



Mario Pfeifer, Reconsidering The new Industrial Parks near Irvine, California by Lewis Baltz, 1974, 2009

Text by Mario Pfeifer

Production stills



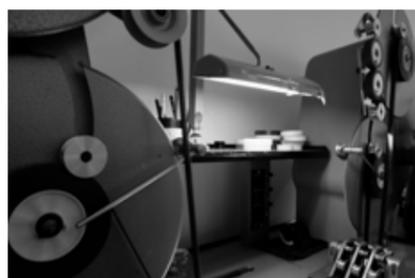
Mario Pfeifer, Reconsidering The new Industrial Parks near Irvine, California by Lewis Baltz, 1974, 2009

Dual 16 mm film installation, B/W, mono, 13 min

(...) In "Reconsidering", there is only one shot, an unedited piece of film, which unfolds before our eyes. There is no director's input, which might condense proceedings, but there is rather a clearly understandable structure, which operates along spatial vectors. And yet here too, the things glimpsed by the camera's proxy are a result of numerous considerations with regard to the totality of the pictorial framing, the movement of the camera, its standpoint. The constant tempo of the camera's movement is in step with the constant rhythm of the act of leafing through the book, which doesn't dwell on each page for the same length of time. Above all, the images of that building that the factory owner Billington is talking about remain visible for longer, as though they would illustrate his narrative. All of these aspects place the technical character of film as a medium in a relationship to the real world and construct a new, cinematic image. Viewed retrospectively, each decision involved in this process turns out to be intentional.

This liberation of the pictorial material from its aesthetic straightjacket posits a new interpretation, in which the focus upon the industrial buildings of the 1970s owes far less to town planning and ultimately social implications than to purely formal criteria. Pfeifer creates a subtext, which equips the familiar images with new insight and productively permeates what we have already seen at a decisive point. In so doing, we are dealing with no less than the question about what the photographic and cinematographic image wants to deliver and how we perceive the very thing that wants to be known as "reality". The production of image presents itself as an aesthetic process, which—and this is decisive—doesn't relate to reality in any congruent way, but operates within the context of its own dispositive, in parallel perhaps, but nevertheless always differently. Precisely because Pfeifer presents an abstract inventory of the building, his eye unveils itself as a thoroughly defamiliarized, alienated entity which is aware of the complexity of our life world and world of work in the era of neo-global liberalism.

This also becomes apparent by the latest when viewing Lewis Baltz's photographs in the mirror of Mario Pfeifer's "Reconsidering". The apparently objective portrayal of reality is the most robust critique of its self-assertion. Anybody who, like Baltz, doesn't even try to penetrate the surface of things to arrive at their essence, and who reveals reality as an illusion within the moment of its accurate registration, has long since left the ideological argument about realism behind. Be that as it may, the "reification of human relations" insists here upon an adequate visual expression.

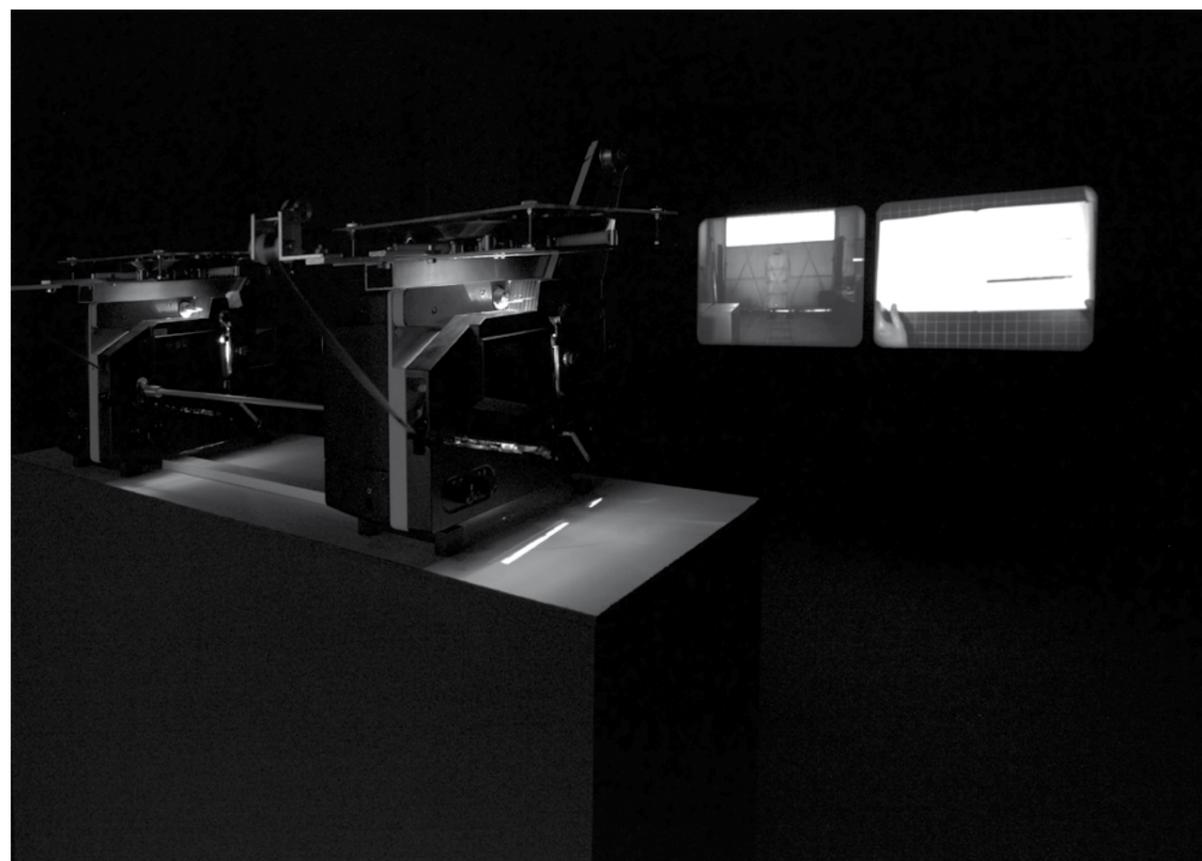


Mario Pfeifer, Reconsidering The new Industrial Parks near Irvine, California by Lewis Baltz, 1974, 2009

Text by Vanessa Joan Müller, in: Mario Pfeifer, Reconsidering1974, Sternberg Press, 2011

Lewis Baltz, The new Industrial Parks near Irvine, California, (a sequential work with 51 elements) 1974, gelatin silver print

Production stills



Mario Pfeifer, Reconsidering The new Industrial Parks near Irvine, California by Lewis Baltz, 1974, 2009

Exhibition view "New Topographics", Landesgalerie Linz, 2010

Credit Line

Reconsidering The New Industrial Parks Near Irvine, California by Lewis Baltz, 1974
2009

Synchronized dual 16 mm film installation with sound, B/W, 13 min

English

Voice Over: Leigh Ledare
In Conversation: Jim R. Billington
Cinematographer: Norbert Shieh
Sound: Wilson C. Busfield
Grip: Patrick Perez
Title Design: Devin Dailey
Shot on location in Irvine, California and The Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles
Produced by [blackboardfilms]
Conceived by Mario Pfeifer

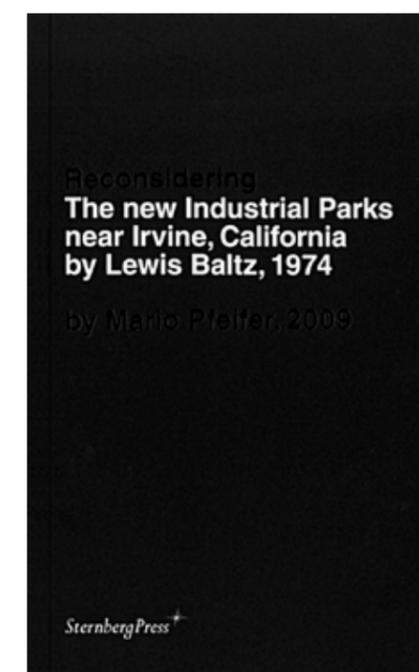
© 2009 USA / Germany



Mario Pfeifer, Reconsidering The new Industrial Parks near Irvine, California by Lewis Baltz, 1974, 2009

Exhibition view "Antirepresentationalism I. Politics of Redescription", KOW Berlin, 2009

Exhibition view "New Topographics", Landesgalerie Linz, 2010



Mario Pfeifer, Reconsidering The new Industrial Parks near Irvine, California by Lewis Baltz, 1974, 2009

Reconsidering
1611 S. Boyd Street, St. Ana, California, by
Lewis Baltz, 1974 [mirrored], 2011
Archival Inkjet Print on Monoprint Rochester
Plus, 60 x 80 cm, framed in matte silver gray,
Nielsen Classic 33 aluminum profile

Publication with texts by Chris Balashak, Lewis
Baltz, Vanessa John Müller, Mario Pfeifer,
designed by Devin Dailey and Till Gathmann,
Sternberg Press, 2011



**YET UNTITLED
[“PIECES OF NATURE“]
2008**

"Yet Untitled ['Pieces of Nature']" (2008) describes both performance and studio film production. Situated in a loose, self-reflexive narrative poised between the traditions of structural film, dance and theater, the carefully-choreographed film follows actors in what appears to be a casting process. Breathing, moving, and literally constructing the film before our eyes, crew members and the director himself are also revealed as actors, literally mirroring a photograph by Jeff Wall's famed photograph "Picture for a woman" (1979).



Mario Pfeifer, Yet Untitled ["Pieces of Nature"] 2008

Text by Amy Patton (excerpt)

Jeff Wall, Picture for Women, 1979, transparency in lightbox, 142.5 x 204.5 cm

HD-projection, 16:9, colour, stereo, 11'30 min

Pfeifer's recourse to the canon of classical genre painting and postmodern dia-positives, his transformation of art historical material into moving images and his psychoanalytically loaded meditation on spectatorship merge into moments of growing distance towards the notion of essence. Niklas Luhmann discusses this tendency as metamedialization, the interlacing of different realities and their perception as symbolic systems. The actor's speculations on their very roles, their relations among each other, their indirect communication with the director and last but of course not least the mirror wall—Pfeifer's delicate web of representational strategies foregrounds exactly this inter-mediality, the symbolic power that jostles our imagination and fosters the wide range of associations immersing in the very process of meaning making. But what cultural consequence is to follow? The ambivalent relation of the as highly as hermetically loaded studio space and its factual surrounding is becoming clear when Pfeifer closes his film with the shot of an actor leaving through the back door of the studio onto a real road. The notion of "the streets" and its oppositional model of agency contrasts intensely with the constructedness of an 'art-ificial' realm of image production. This provocative coda is the powerful critique of Pfeifer's piece. (...) Pfeifer's particular synthesis of the real and the symbolic, the representative and the sensuous ultimately manifest the philosophical depth of the piece without straightening out the paradoxical discomfort of his very medium.



Mario Pfeifer, Yet Untitled ["Pieces of Nature"] 2008

Text by Julia Moritz: A Better Articulation of Something Real. Simulation and Imagination in Mario Pfeifer's Yet Untitled ["Pieces of Nature"] (excerpt)

HD-projection, 16:9, colour, stereo, 11'30 min

Credit Line

Yet Untitled ["Pieces of Nature"]
2008

S-16 mm film transferred to HD, 16:9, colour
Stereo, 11'30 min

English and German with English subtitles

Cast: Evelyne Cannard, Simon Denny, Assaf
Hochman, Andrew Kerton, Anca Rimnic
Munteanu, Mira Partecke, Bastian Trost
Cinematography: Max Penzel
Sound Design: Thomas Wallmann
Montage: Mario Pfeifer/ Amy Patton
Sound Recording: Michael Klöfkorn
Light Design: Patrick Albring
Still Photographer: Eric Bell
Produced by Mario Pfeifer, Amy Patton
[blackboardfilms]
Conceived by Mario Pfeifer

© 2008 Germany



Mario Pfeifer, Yet Untitled ["Pieces of Nature"]
2008

Pieces of Nature, like Flowers in Water (after
Robert Bresson), 2011
C-Print, 81,6 x 92,4 cm

Production still

Three Films / Three Photographs - a critical
reader edited by Mario Pfeifer (ed.)
Published by Fotohof edition Vol. 181 in colla-
boration with KOW
ISBN: 978-3-902675-81-1

With contributions by Michael Ned Holte, Christy
Lange, Nicolas Linnert, Vanessa Joan Müller
and Vivien Trommer

This critical reader was conceived as a hindsight
of Pfeifer's first institutional solo presentation at
Nassauischer Kunstverein Wiesbaden, Germany
(2011). While the contributions discuss each
of the three autonomous projects, the graphic
design considers the color scheme and exhibi-
tion layout the works were staged in. Three
publications that were presented in the exhibition
are reproduced and discussed in the publication,
while Pfeifer shares two recent conversations on
his previous projects and publications with inter-
locutors across generations, of different fields
and practices.

In tandem with the exhibition Three Films/ Three
Photographs (Nassauischer Kunstverein, Wies-
baden, Germany 2011), this publication endea-
vors to provide a contribution to the discussion
of current debates and focuses thematically upon
the global, cultural and medial condition of a so-
ciety that—in the words of Zygmunt Bauman—
cannot stand still, but is perpetually modernizing.
[from the introducing essay by Vivien Trommer,
2012]

Mario Pfeifer, Three Films / Three Photo-
graphs - a critical reader, 2013





Exhibition view 'Antirepresentationalism III.
Issues of Empathy', KOW BERLIN, 2009

**UNTITLED
[“TWO GUYS”]
2008**

Pfeifer's Untitled ["Two Guys"] is as subdued, even muted, ambient, as Rize is vibrant, frenetic, loud. The makeup worn by Sami and Yeisen points back to its origins in South Los Angeles and Tommy the Clown's genetic coding, but is rendered nearly invisible—a faint glow—in the insistent blue light of the tenement.

Style is a recognizable accumulation of signs, more or less legible to both an internal and external audience of sign readers. "Subcultural styles are more usefully regarded as mutations and extensions of existing codes rather than as the 'pure' expression of creative drives, and above all they should be seen as meaningful mutations," notes Dick Hebdige in his important book-length study of music-based subcultures such as punk and reggae, written in 1979. Sami and Yeisen's look and gestures will be familiar to other fans of hip-hop, whether or not they pass the purity test. They are nothing if not meaningful.

Of course, hip-hop has been a contested style for decades, long before the subjects in Pfeifer's video adopted its signs; krumping emerged, somewhat acrimoniously, from dancers who ran afoul of Tommy the Clown and his "school," before finding a "meaningful mutation," dislocated by and through these young men eager to establish an identity in Berlin. In his study of subculture, Hebdige notes, "Some groups have more say, more opportunity to make the rules, to organize meaning, while others are less favorably placed, have less power to produce and impose their definitions of the world on the world."

6 Difficult as it may be to know these two guys, Sami and Yeisen, we can safely assume that they are not the rule makers. Their definitions of the world are borrowed, adapted, only provisionally made their own, much like the camera that follows them and then lets them escape from view.

Mario Pfeifer, Untitled ["Two Guys"], 2008

Text by Michael Ned Holte

Excerpt from What Key Be to Lock: On Untitled ["Two Guys"], 2012

HD-video 16:9, colour, stereo, 7 min



Mario Pfeifer, Untitled ["Two Guys"], 2008

HD-video 16:9, colour, stereo, 7 min

Credit Line

Untitled ["Two Guys"]

HD-video 16:9, colour, stereo, 7 min

Cast: Sami Moss Mardina, Yeisen Acosta Medina

Cinematography: Matthias Biber

Montage: Mario Pfeifer

Sound design: Thomas Wallmann

Light design: Manuel Kinzer

Produced by Jakob Schillinger, Mario Pfeifer [blackboardfilms]

Conceived by Mario Pfeifer

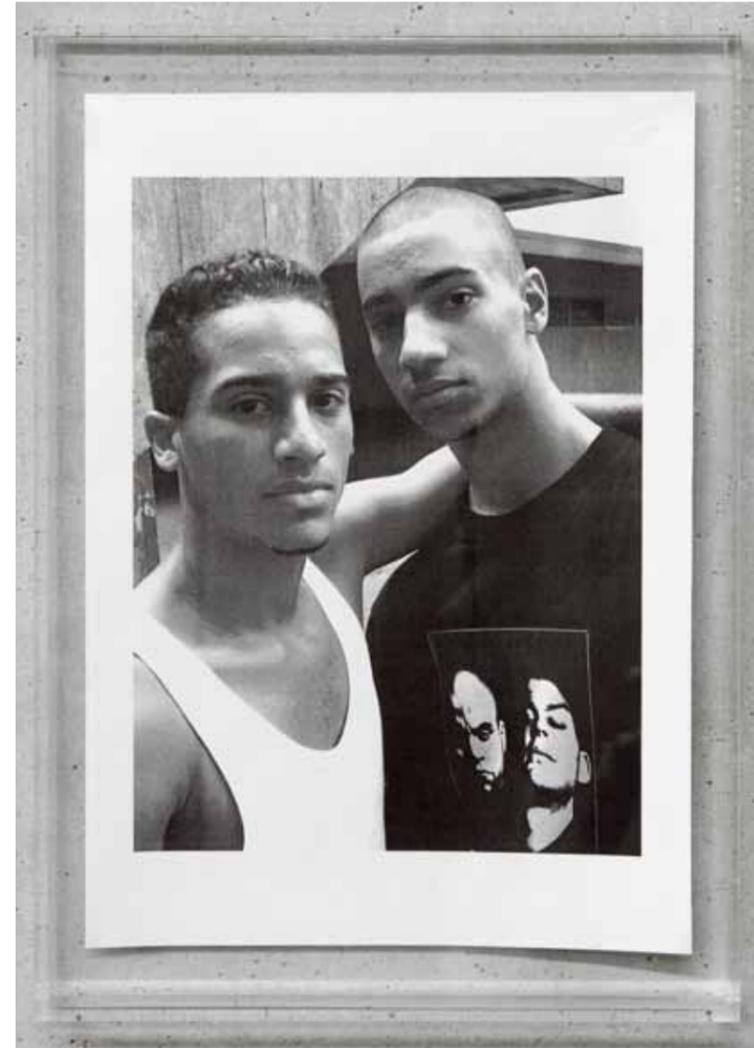
Funded by KulturAllianzen, Interflugs Berlin, Asta Berlin

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Mario Pfeifer, Untitled ["Two Guys"], 2008

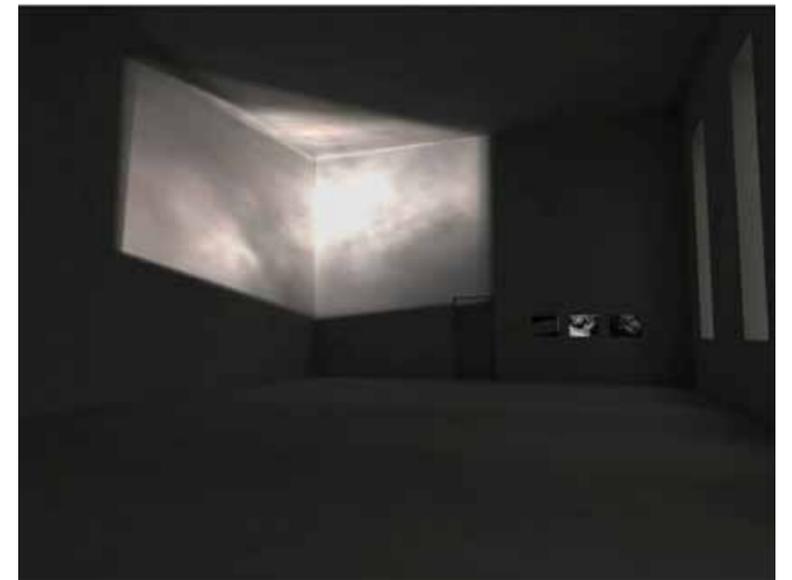
HD-video 16:9, colour, stereo, 7 min



Mario Pfeifer, Untitled [Sami & Yeisen], 2008

Untitled [Sami & Yeisen], 2011

Xerox print on paper, plexiglass, 34 x 24 cm



"Imperial" deals in different aesthetic formats about a media space of a city scape, its formal representation, narrative structure and questions the visible to the invisible, describes the uncanny and its beauty.

IMPERIAL 2002–2006

Mario Pfeifer was born in 1981 in Dresden, Germany. He studies at the HGB Academy of Visual Arts Leipzig (2003-2006), the University of Arts Berlin (2005-2007), the Städelschule Frankfurt (2007-2008) and the California Institute of the Arts (2008-2009). He is a Fulbright Scholar in 2008, further stipends bring him to Bangkok and New York. Since 2005 his home base is Berlin.

Mario Pfeifer
Dossier 2006–2012

Design: Alexander Koch

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