

NATURE OF PERFORMANCE

Artist: Ariel Helyes
Curator: Barnabás Zemlényi-Kovács
Exhibition title: NATURE OF PERFORMANCE
Venue: cARTc Project Space
Open: September 08 – September 24, 2017

Excerpts from the press release:

The Austrian Heger & Dejanov sign a year-long contract with BMW (Quite Normal Luxury, 1999-2000). Andi Schmied poses as a Hungarian millionaire to gain access to penthouses in Manhattan, while documenting the otherwise inaccessible views (Private Views, 2017-). Douglas Gordon and Philippe Parreno are supported by FIFA to record the play of the football star Zinédine Zidane, subsequently publishing it on DVD (Zidane, a 21th Century Portrait, 2006).

What is common in these artists is how they were willing to adapt to the visual and structural logic of certain organizations and companies in order to enter places or gain information and materials not normally available for the public. Their critical position is not characterized by distance, but by the ambivalent identification with the infiltrated system.

Nicoles Bourriaud called such artistic practices 'corporate shadowing' in this book Postproduction.

(...)

The exhibition dissects the complex relationship between the language and the landscapes fabricated by the advertisement industry and hi-tech companies. The brand Jaguar Land Rover appears in a double position; as sponsor for the show and as the object of it. Consultation, meetings and later finalizing a sponsorship deal with the local branch of Jaguar Land Rover was an important part of the fieldwork leading to the show. The exhibited works – a montage video of commercials, where the passing cars was digitally removed, and the 'landscapes' cut out from worn giant building wraps taken from the streets of Budapest – were all agreed upon, and in the case of the latter, even provided by the company.

(...)

The stake of the show is whether one can build a fundamentally alien extension to a brand's immobile structure. A small-scale slippage. These works already had their potential existence in the visual system of Jaguar Land Rover, and now, through modification, they gained no new, autonomous elements. Yet the close exposition of the scenery, the colour and the formal vocabulary used for creating the alluring lifestyle-facade of the brand is obviously not part of the original commercial's intentions, thus opening towards a critical discourse. However, it does not stop their effectiveness for acting on the viewer, nor alienate it from the brand – as it was proven by the sponsorship agreement: the company does recognize itself in these new-old languages, placing

these 'neologisms' born inside the vocabulary of Jaguar in the grey-zone of representation, thus necessarily legitimizing them.

(...)

(Barnabás Zemlényi-Kovács)