

Olaf Breuning (* 1970, lives in Zurich and New York)

HOME 3 February – 30 April 2005

We are pleased to present Olaf Breuning's first solo exhibition at Galerie Nicola von Senger. The core of this exhibition is Breuning's video installation "Home," which is his most ambitious, elaborate, and impressive video project yet. Breuning acted as writer, director, producer, costume and set designer, location scout, composer, editor, and cameraman. The installation also lends its name to the new monograph "Home" (jrp | ringier) on Breuning's complete works.

"Home" is a double projection on separate screens. One shows the protagonist in the role of a narrator confined to a strange hotel room in black and white, while the other shows him traveling the world in colorful, non-sequential episodes. It seems apparent that the action of the color projection emanates from the mind of the narrator, whereby image and soundtrack may carry over from one screen to the other. The protagonist appears in different roles (as a homeless person, a cowboy, a tourist, etc.) searching for a home in many diverse environments. In a dowdy wild west scene, he is described as a "culture hopper" who has "traveled all around trying to find the reason why he don't fit in around." The very first scene, where the protagonist dreams of himself as a zombie, already suggests his problematic relationship with the world. In such "naturally" exotic locales as the Machu Picchu, or in such "culturally" exotic locales as the venetian-themed Venetian Hotel in Las Vegas, the settings are always subjected to the logic of consumer culture, which makes places resemble less themselves than their representations in travel brochures and the media. In this sense, the dreamlike-zombiesque effectively describes the whole world as somewhat unreal; it is essentially made of props. The hotelroom of the black and white projection has similar qualities. It is by definition a temporary residence, a liminal space that is neither here nor there. The narrator's uneasy and disoriented movement in this room, its temporariness, and its cacophonous décor all indicate the unfamiliarity of this space. However, the pseudo-victorian furnishings and faux art nouveau details serve as a fitting point of arrival, precisely because nothing seems to fit together, for a traveler who fails to "fit in around" anywhere else. This postmodern space of transit, which joins disparate cultural products and separates people from the outside world, points toward the lack of community and the dissolution of identity, toward the erosion of the hallmarks of being-at-home.

Gregor Staiger, December 2004

For additional information and pictures please contact the gallery: info@nicolavonsenger.com