

STUDIO10

56 Bogart Street Brooklyn NY 11206
Opening reception: April 11, 7-9 P.M.
Exhibition Dates: April 11 – May 4, 2014

Erik Moskowitz and Amanda Trager: The Story of Elfranko Wessels

For Immediate Release:

“The Story of Elfranko Wessels” is a multi-channel video installation. Its primary 16-minute video depicts a Brooklyn artist-couple’s failure to adopt a global worldview and practice. Literally ensconced within the self-referential tradition represented by their white-walled live/work loft, they invite a South African émigré, Elfranko Wessels, in for an interview. But Elfranko’s “otherness” disappoints; he is a white Afrikaaner with a slight stammer. Elfranko manages to tell a meandering story of escape from his confining, racist family and final arrival to the US, but by way of the occupying artist-couple — who have substituted their own singing voices for his plain speech. The artists’ attempts at portraying another subjectivity become increasingly outlandish and frenzied, always returning to their own sound and image. Finally, in what seems like a benign surrender on the part of everyone, Elfranko asks if he may stop speaking and the artists walk off into the sunset.

The video projection is divided into a grid by means of a unique Mirror Projector. The individual pieces of the video image move independently of one another to form new patterns; their specific movement choreographed through the use of algorithm. The effects of this kinetic sculpture emotionally intensify the dreamlike, operatic experience of the video.

Another element of the installation is a large webcam projection showing the artists’ Bushwick live/work loft in real time. The loft functions as a fourth character in the video as the performers engage in “serious play” within its confines. A room-sized semi-transparent scrim representing the artists’ living-room is hung in front of the actual location, creating a bizarre, vibrating double-space.

The artists’ loft and doubling scrim — as seen in the gallery’s webcam projection — is located nearby and may be visited during the opening hours of the gallery for the run of this exhibition.

Erik Moskowitz and Amanda Trager, Brooklyn artists, were born and raised in New York City. Their collaborative partnership began in 2008. Their work has been exhibited and screened at venues that include Centre Pompidou and the Jeu de Paume (Paris), The Showroom (London), the Reina Sofia (Madrid), Haus der Kulturen der Welt (Berlin), The Beirut Art Center (Beirut), Participant, Inc and the 303 Gallery (NYC). They are recipients of numerous grants and awards, including the NYFA Fellowship in Video (2008) and the NYSCA Distribution Grant (2009).

This piece would not have been possible without the extraordinary vision and expertise of Deqing Sun and his help in developing the Mirror Projector for use in this installation. Deqing Sun was born in Shandong, China. He holds an Electronic Engineering degree from Fudan University. He received his MPS from NYU’s Tisch School of the Arts ITP Program in 2013.

The single-channel video component of “The Story of Elfranko Wessels” premiered at the Rotterdam Film Festival (Tiger Awards competition, 2011) and won the Short Film Grand Prize at IndieLisboa (2011). Later that year it screened at FIDMarseilles (France) and Image Forum Festival (Japan tour). In 2013, it was included in an Artist in Focus retrospective at Centre Pompidou and the Pera Museum in Istanbul.

This work was made with generous support from The Concordia Foundation, The Outpost, and The ARTS Council of the Southern Finger Lakes. The painting, *The Greek*, was leant by the estate of Daniel Brustlein. Particular thanks go to Mike Clemow and Mike Kelberman for their help in the process of developing the mirror technology.

STUDIO10 is located at 56 Bogart Street (the Morgan Avenue stop on the L train) in Bushwick.
Gallery hours: Thursday through Sunday 1 - 6 pm or by appointment
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