

## Tourism

Ayo Akingbade, Theo Burt,  
François Curlet, Klara Lidén,  
Josiane M.H. Pozi, Dani  
ReStack, Rachel Reupke,  
John Smith, Angharad Wil-  
liams, Constantina Zavitsanos  
03.09.–16.10.2021

*Tourism* is a video exhibition that plays with the shifts in temporalities that open up between the architectural space of the exhibition structure and the filmic space. The technique of video montage serves as a possible form of critical engagement with the contradictions between mental and physical space - through the use of the camera, computer-generated images, sound and appropriated media. Therefore montage ultimately becomes the curatorial principle within *Tourism*.

*Tourism* at Stadtgalerie presents the second iteration of an exhibition project that began in the spring at Kunsthaus Glarus. The video works presented in Bern guide the viewers through the adapted structure of the rooms as a sequence. On the facade of the Stadtgalerie building an installation by Angharad Williams blocks the windows; again a sequence in the form of large scale images, leads around the space outside whilst mocking the exterior of a generic “wine shop”. Movement becomes the principle of this exhibition, both spatially as well as in the works themselves. Forward and backward, change and transformation, growth, walking or dancing. Which predetermined or unpredictable paths do our heads, genitals, torsos, legs, arms and its appendage, the wallet follow?

*The Kiss* (1999) by JOHN SMITH can be understood as the beginning or as a parenthesis of the sequence of works cycling continuously through the exhibition spaces. *The Kiss* renews this sequence at regular intervals in the first room of the exhibition. Another lily blooms, only to be destroyed again. What’s created is the impression of a repetitive industrial process: an automated production line where one lily after the next appears to grow only to be mechanically destroyed. At the end of the video, the glass shatters under the pressure of the camera, confronting the seductive image of the flower with the technical conditions (camera lens, projection apparatus, and video screen) that allow it to bloom again. It seems

as if we’ve been watching, in Smith’s words “the forced development of a hothouse flower.”

The moonwalk is a dance step that creates the impression of the legs moving forward while the person performing it is actually moving backward. In *The Myth of Progress (Moonwalk)* (2008), KLARA LIDÉN moves in reverse at an incremental pace through the empty streets of Manhattan as cars rush past her. With her eyes focused on the spot where she started, the artist’s body defies the forward stride, the pulse of the city, the promise of progress. The détournement of the moonwalk—she performs it so slowly that the trick is revealed—liberates this twentieth-century dance step from its element of self-control, the perfected mastery of the self that Michael Jackson embodied as a performer.

Two seemingly unrelated pieces of music and a pair of indecipherable letters, one personal and one bureaucratic, provide the basis of CONSTANTINA ZAVITSANOS’ structuralist video *Girl, there’s a better life* (2017). The texts presented cross perpendicularly, rendering them intentionally unreadable as the two songs *Nightshift* (1985) by The Commodores and *We Gotta Get Outta This Place* (1965) by The Animals fade up and down in volume at random points throughout. The title quotes a line from The Animals’ track, perhaps an ironic motto for what lies beyond the abstraction of words and emotive lyricism. Here, editing constitutes a form of resistance to meaning, or a deliberate problematizing of language’s accessibility and intention.

According to legend, the Pied Piper of Hamelin lured the town’s children to their deaths. He did this in order to punish residents for failing to pay their debts after he had rid the city of mice and rats. In the guise of a businesswoman—portrayed by an actor in an exaggerated, penetrating manner—the contemporary pied piper in FRANÇOIS CURLET’S *L’Agitée* (2018) propels working commuters through crowded subway tunnels. Playing Van McCoy’s 70s disco classic *The Hustle* on her flute like a good-humored advertising figure, she seems oddly a part of but also like a foreign body in the forward-moving crowd of people who ignore her.

The Elephant & Castle shopping center was constructed in the early 1960s on what was previously a central target site of German air raids in London during the Second World War. As part of expansive post-war reconstruction, the shopping center at the time of its building was the first covered shopping mall in Europe and was later neighbored by iconic brutalist housing project the Heygate estate.

The last day... *Deadphant* (2020) by *AYO AKINGBADE* was made the final weekend the mall was open to the public in September 2020 before closing permanently, marked for demolition. The center was host to a thriving community of independent shopkeepers and their patrons, Akingbade's seemingly spontaneous portrait documents the quotidian ambience as it recedes out of reach forever.

Shot with Super8 film and handheld, the contrasted filmic style in relation to contemporary prosumer video technology produces a melancholic veil through which Akingbade's automatic, matter-of-fact composition emerges. The feeling of the recent present is symbolically forced into yesteryear. One reason for looking at the present with outmoded technology could be to question the destructive force of "progress" as defined by city planners and property developers. These speculations repeatedly replace functioning local economies full of interpersonal reliability. The building is now being replaced with "luxury flats" and a new milieu of retail opportunities, albeit more expensive, corporate and impersonal.

For *DANI RESTACK*, the camera serves as an extended part of her own body, an instrument for transforming experiences into tangible material. In her video *Tin Pressed*, montaged footage shot during her daily life creates new realities that transcend her own existence and revolve around multiple focal points. In her work, people, animals, and the environment are interrelated in myriad ways, ranging from affinities to differences, and are imbued with desirability, beauty, longing, and violence.

\*The video contains depictions of violence.

"Do you feel you are passing for normal?" "Do you often go blank in conversation?" In *RACHEL REUPKE's Questionnaire* (2021), two talking figures in the form of heads cutout of patterned fabrics play a game of question and answer. The uncomfortable questions and awkward answers of the childlike, comic characters with adult, female voices create a bizarre dialogue that unmasks normative and diagnostic categories, ranging from normal to pathological. Rachel Reupke is interested in emotions and their political and social meanings. In her videos, emotional norms and how they control "images" of a standardized and economized society create an aesthetic, narrative field of tension.

In *1* (2021) the camera of her iPhone accompanies the artist as protagonist step by step in the taxi, when checking into a Holiday Inn hotel and when looking for the pool. Covertly filmed from below and filling almost half the frame at all times throughout, *ƒOSLANE M.H. POZI* takes us on a tour

through a convenient consumer environment in turn producing pure cinema. We watch as she responds to her surroundings seemingly in real time. In the spirit of *cinéma vérité*, Pozi uses the medium of video in such a way that the distance between object and subject, between camera and filmed dissolves. The apparatus and instructions of *Dogma 95* come to mind as commonplace experiences become a narrative; a desirable adventure.

*THEO BURT's Automatics Group Remixes / The Videos* (2017–2020) fills the entire technical setup of the exhibition; producing an immersive multi-room installation consisting of five synchronized projections and multi-channel audio.

... *The Videos* reduce a group of five commercial music videos to flows of data by erasing temporal information within the makeup of the digital files, reorganizing the original sequence of events. Burt refers to these as "Remixes," but rather than imposing popular, subjective compositional techniques they function on what might be referred to as the atomic level with a non-hierarchical form. All the material of the music video is maintained, but radically disrupted and rearranged through bespoke processing techniques. Here an entirely new aesthetic stream emerges. While formally austere, the results sit somewhere between ambient music, plunderphonics, the Deep-Dream neural network program, cybernetics, and color field painting, or a strangely, beautiful counter-productive, reverse-engineered AI.

Full-bodied etc. Wine! A cult drink. Wine is not a spiritual substance. It wasn't extracted from the atmosphere. It brings out the peculiarities of a particular place, history, topography in whose soil the grapes thrive, ripen, and age, and from which they derive their distinctive note. For hundreds of years, wine has been doing what art can do so well today: enrich a place and real estate with history, tradition, and good taste. Unique occurrence, experience, journey, seduction: Arles, Somerset, Bordeaux, Tuscany, Engadin, Berlin, Gstaad. Artist *ANGHARAD WILLIAMS* covers the ten windows of the Stadtgalerie with printed PVC advertising banners, stretched on frames and set into the window recesses. On the exterior facade, the artist's images create the impression that a generic «wine shop» now occupies the Stadtgalerie. Inside, the advertising banners darken the spaces, creating the conditions for a video exhibition.

Curated by Luca Beeler, Richard Sides and Judith Welter

CONSTANTINA ZAVITSANOS

*Girl, there's a better life, 2017*

CAPTIONS FOR AUDIO:

0:00-0:17 [crossed sound]

0:17-0:23 [singing]

*Gonna be some sweet sounds  
Coming down on the nightshift*

0:23-0:33 [crossed sound]

0:33-1:01 [singing]

*In this dirty old part of the city  
Where the sun refused to shine  
People tell me there ain't no use in tryin'  
My little girl, you're so young and pretty  
And one thing I know is true  
You'll be dead before your time is due*

1:01-1:06 [crossed sound]

1:06-1:22 [singing]

*Gonna be a long night  
It's gonna be all right  
On the nightshift  
You found another home  
I know you're not alone  
On the nightshift*

1:22-1:26 [crossed sound]

1:26-1:40 [singing]

*At the end of a long day  
It's gonna be okay  
On the nightshift  
You found another home  
I know you're not alone  
On the nightshift*

1:40-1:44 [crossed sound]

1:44-1:50 [singing]

*Gonna be some sweet sounds  
Coming down on the night shift*

1:50-2:09 [crossed sound]

2:09-2:11 [singing, utterance]

*Mmmhmmmm*

2:11-2:21 [sound fades out]

DESCRIPTION OF VIDEO:

0:00-0:04

Black screen

0:04-1:35

Unreadable, and occasionally partially readable, crossed black text on a white background—pans, scrolls, zooms, loads, renders/fails to render. The textual image rotates between horizontal and vertical orientations; trails and flashes of prismatic color appear on occasion.

1:35-1:43

Textual image bleeds various opacities of prismatic color.

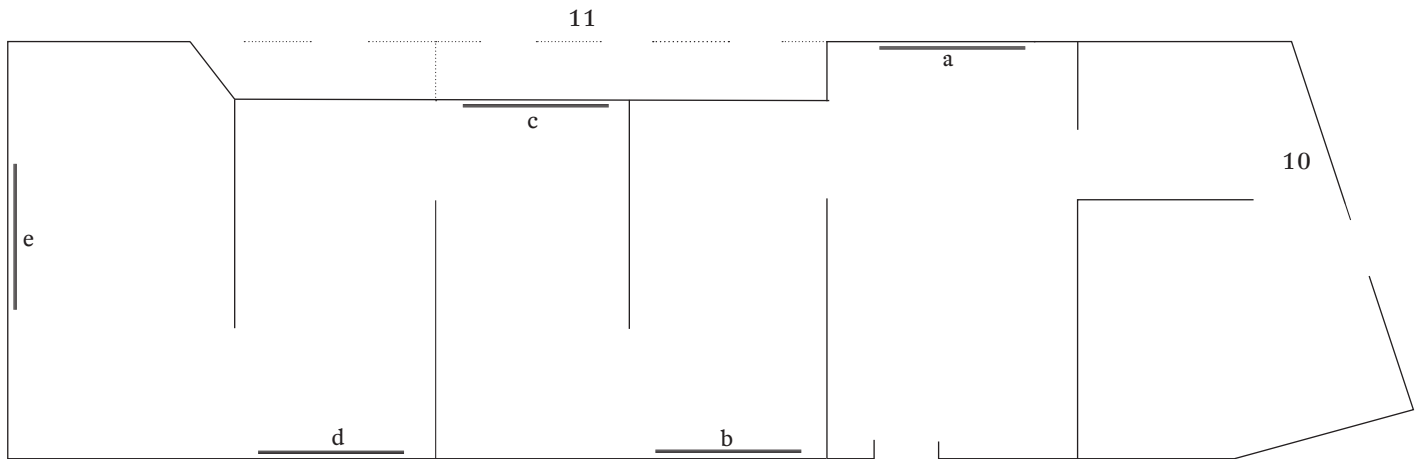
2:02-2:03

Flash of textual image at full saturation of prismatic color.

2:03-2:21

Black Screen

**FLOORPLAN  
TOURISM**



**1a**  
John Smith  
*The Kiss*, 1999  
HD video from 16mm, sound  
Collaboration with Ian Bourn  
4:31 min

**2b**  
Klara Lidén  
*The Myth of Progress (Moonwalk)*, 2008  
SD video, sound  
3:30 min

**3c**  
Constantina Zavitsanos  
*Girl, there's a better life*, 2017  
HD video, sound  
2:21 min

**4d**  
François Curlet  
*L'Agitée*, 2018  
HD video, sound  
2:34 min

**5e**  
Ayo Akingbade  
*Deadphant*, 2020  
HD video from Super8 film, sound  
3:00 min

**6d**  
Dani ReStack  
*Tin Pressed*, 2011  
HD video, sound  
6:29 min

**7c**  
Rachel Reupke  
*Questionnaire*, 2021  
HD video, sound  
3:06 min

**8b**  
Josiane M.H. Pozi  
*1*, 2021  
HD video, sound  
13:25 min

**9abcde**  
Theo Burt  
*Automatics Group Remixes / The Videos*, 2017-2020  
5-channel HD video, 10-channel sound  
4:30 min

**10**  
François Curlet  
*L'Agitée*, 2018  
Poster, M/M (Paris)  
176 x 120 cm

The videos are being shown in sequence.  
(total duration 43:26 min)

outside facade:

Angharad Williams  
*The wine shop or principles, what good are they?*, 2021  
digital print on PVC

*Events*

Thu, 02.09.2021, 4-10pm  
Opening of Tourism

Thu, 16.09.2021, 8pm  
*Terre Thaemlitz Deproduction*  
(2017)  
Screening in co-operation with  
Brand-New-Life

Sat, 16.10.2021, 4pm  
Guided tour with the curators

*Upcoming*  
George Steinmann  
*FUTURE NOW*  
30.10.–11.12.2021

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Opening hours  
Wednesday–Friday  
2–6pm  
Saturday  
12–4pm