

## At Night. Between Dream and Reality

### Sammlung Goetz in Haus der Kunst

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The night has a magical quality. It is the time when people come to rest, when they retire to their homes to sleep. Yet the night is also populated by the restless, the sleepwalkers, the night owls and criminals, many of whom are searching for something - perhaps themselves - because many things seem clearer at night. In 14 stations, the exhibition takes visitors on a journey through the night, that time between dreams and reality. On display are films, videos, installations and photographs from the Sammlung Goetz that reflect different facets of a nighttime foray.

The prelude to the show is the installation "Kathmandu Dreams" (2009) by Janet Cardiff / George Bures Miller. A black dial telephone, reminiscent of those produced in the USA between 1937 and 1955, sits on a wooden base. By picking up the receiver, the visitor can listen to Janet Cardiff's dreams, which the artist relays in whispers. She speaks about her mysterious encounters with animals, early childhood memories and erotic experiences, which, in this condensed form, result in a surreal story.

The tour through the galleries, which are furnished with dark gray carpet and shut off from the halls by felt curtains, spans an arc from moonrise to sunrise. At the beginning of Christoph Brech's video "Dark Cloud" (2004), the viewer looks upon a cloudy night sky. After a few moments, the darkness clears and releases the view of an orange moon bobbing slowly up and down. Only the roar of a boat engine is audible. After a few moments, the darkness clears and reveals a view of an orange moon shining through dense clouds. For this work, the artist attached a video camera to the railing of a cargo ship and filmed the night sky during the boat's crossing from Hamburg to Toronto. The movement of the rising moon and the clouds in the sky are joined by the slow rocking of the ship.

The film "Journey into Fear" (2001) by Stan Douglas leads the viewer into the interior of a freighter. The film's title refers to the eponymous 1943 spy film by the American director Norman Foster and its 1975 remake. In Stan Douglas's version, the viewer immediately enters a looped dialogue scene between a cargo inspector and a pilot aboard a ship. Even after watching the scenario several times, however, the story remains puzzling, as it

has different dialogue variants, which Douglas created using a randomized generator. Doubts are mixed with alleged certainties, leaving in the end more questions than answers.

The story in the video "Single Wide" (2002) by Teresa Hubbard / Alexander Birchler is similarly enigmatic: Using a pickup truck, one night a young woman situated at a turning point in her life breaks through the wall of a typical American home. This film is also constructed as a loop, the different readings of which depend on at what point in the narrative the viewer begins watching. Like Stan Douglas, Hubbard / Birchler use narrative elements in their videos, as in a movie, while simultaneously deconstructing them. In "Single Wide", space and time no longer serve to structure the context of action, but rather reflect the psychological condition of the protagonist.

Time seems frozen in a fateful moment in Sam Taylor-Johnson's "The Servant" (2007). The video shows a man dressed in a black coat with a raised collar as he prepares to light a cigarette with a Zippo lighter before the front door of a house. Through the brightly lit window, the viewer's gaze falls on the house's interior, where a woman stares blankly out into the darkness. The viewer knows nothing about the two protagonists, the situation's origin or its further development.

The interpersonal relationship in Hans Op de Beeck's film "The Thread" (2015), which tells the love story of an aging punk couple using almost life-size hand puppets sitting on a moonlit park bench, also appears to be a fragile construct. Although fiction is recognizable as such, the story captivates the viewer. Jochen Kuhn also reveals staging strategies in his film "The Silent Makubra" (1980). Using photographs, scissors and a brush, he deconstructs the cinematic illusion and explains the plot. "The Silent Makubra" is a 1920s silent movie and detective story, in which the avenger Makubra is hired by a husband to assassinate his unfaithful wife, who works nights in a bar.

The black-and-white photographs by Ed van der Elsken, which the artist took in Paris in the early 1950s, look like film stills. They are part of his 1956 photo book "Love in Saint Germain de Près", in which the artist tells a fictitious story using authentic photographs which depict the life of a group of predominately homeless teenagers, for whom the late-night cafes and streets of Saint Germain de Près have become home. The images reveal a yearning for love, caresses and recognition in a rough world.

The exhibition ends with Paul Pfeiffer's "Morning after the Deluge" (2003), inspired by William Turner's eponymous painting. For this film, Pfeiffer assembled images of sunrises and sunsets, taken on the beach in Provincetown, Massachusetts, in such a way that the sun is always visible as a full disk and always placed in the center of the frame. After a tour of the lowlands of human existence, people's desires, doubts, questions, hopes and disappointments, this overwhelming natural spectacle has become

something comforting. Thus, "Morning after the Deluge" provides an assurance that even the darkest night ends with a sunrise.

Works by Christoph Brech, Olaf Breuning, Janet Cardiff / George Bures Miller, Thomas Demand, Stan Douglas, Ed van der Elsken, Teresa Hubbard / Alexander Birchler, Jochen Kuhn, Sam Taylor-Johnson, Hans Op de Beeck, Clement Page, Paul Pfeiffer and Andro Wekua

With

Christoph Brech, Dark Cloud, 2004

Olaf Breuning, Ugly Yelp, 2000

Janet Cardiff/George Bures Miller, Kathmandu Dreams (#6), 2009

Thomas Demand, Hof/Yard, 2001

Stan Douglas, Journey Into Fear, 2001

Ed van der Elsken, Paris, 1952 und/and 1954

Teresa Hubbard/Alexander Birchler, Single Wide, 2002

Jochen Kuhn, Der lautlose Makubra, 1980

Andro Wekua, Neighbour's Yard, 2005

Hans Op de Beeck, Border, 2001

Hans Op de Beeck, The Thread, 2015

Clement Page, Sleepwalker, 2005

Paul Pfeiffer, Morning after the Deluge, 2003

Sam Taylor-Johnson, The Servant, 2007

Curated by Cornelia Gockel