

Press Release



Thierry Kuntzel

The Waves

INTERACTIVE INSTALLATION

1 February - 1 April 2007

Centre pour l'image contemporaine
Saint-Gervais Genève
5 rue du Temple
CH-1201 Genève
T +41 22 908 20 00
www.centreimage.ch
Direction: André Iten

Press Office

Laura Legast

laura.legast@sgg.ch

Tél +41 (0)22 908 20 62

Thierry Kuntzel

INTERACTIVE INSTALLATION

This exhibition will be showing *The Waves*, 2003
(interactive installation, color, sound)

The effect may take its own sweet time but it is gripping. Viewers, facing a screen on which a wave is shown surging forward and breaking, enter a corridor and walk towards the image, irresistibly drawn towards the swelling sea. Yet the closer they approach, the clearer it becomes that their own movement affects both the speed of the wave and the volume of the sound for the swell slows until it freezes into a black-and-white image while the sound fades to silence. Backing away, viewers then create the opposite effect.

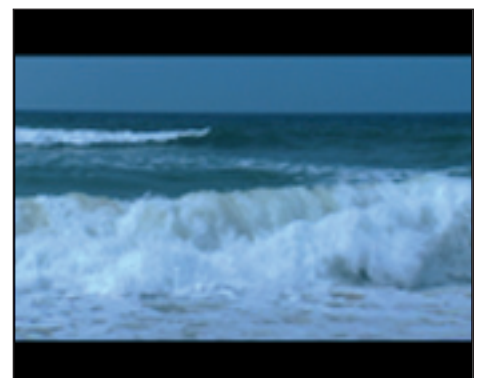
The change is gradual and follows the pace set by the viewers' stride, and this merging generates a certain fascination tinged with joy before a wave that is about to wash over us but which we control. The device also gives rise to a feeling of anxiety, the kind we get in a nightmare. Slowing down the image, far from reassuring us, paradoxically creates an effect of powerlessness.

The paradox in this case articulates a certain relationship to knowledge and probably to the other in terms of desire and temptation. In a marvelously poetic and effective way, it puts in play that attraction sparked by knowledge that is elusive, ungraspable, fleeting.

To suspend time. That tension between movement and stasis which is at work here lies at the heart of all of Thierry Kuntzel's art. His installations and videos speak of obliteration, renewal, coming together, the inexpressible as the limit of images, disorder. They explore the mechanism of film and motion pictures which the artist connects with the mechanism of the human psyche.

Isabelle Aeby Papaloïzos

Cover page illustration and opposite:
Thierry Kuntzel, *The Waves*, interactive installation, 2003



At the rear of a very deep room, an extremely large image along with the appropriate sound: the sea, or rather waves, to be precise. No beach, just a thin band of sky. Waves, in their staggered tiers: the nearly flat distance, the formation of the first swells, and then, in the foreground, the breaking wave. Movement and color, like an unstable monochrome, endlessly renewed, between black, blue, gray, green and gold (the sand dragged up by the passing rollers).

"Either the color green: of course yellow and blue can be seen, but if their perception vanishes from becoming small, they enter a differential relationship that determines the green. And nothing prevents yellow or blue, each on its own behalf, from being determined by the differential relationship of two colors that elude us, or two degrees of chiaroscuro... Or the sound of the sea: at least two waves must be perceived as nascent and different if they are to enter a relationship that is able to determine our perception of a third, which 'excels' the others and becomes conscious." Gilles Deleuze, *Le Pli*

In the installation what happens to the image and the sound generates a troubling relationship with viewers: while they don't determine this image and sound, which were recorded earlier, they are the ones who set, or upset the pace thanks to their position in the space. The waves slow down in keeping with one's progression towards the screen until they are immobilized in a still photograph devoid of sound. No literal fusion with the waves but a link or complicity with them: renewal of the oceanic feeling (illumination of melancholy). Mechanism, perception, return of almost the same, wash and backwash, impossible time: *The Waves* is a homage to Virginia Woolf (to her book that bears the same name), her writing, her invention of time, her person—that life that was forever on the point of drowning (which was how it ended in fact), between terror and ecstasy.

(PS: oddity of an exercise in the written presentation of what will only resemble an absence of language when shown)

Thierry Kuntzel

THIERRY KUNTZEL

Thierry Kuntzel was born in 1948 in Bergerac. He lives and works in Paris.

University studies in philosophy, linguistics and semiology. Thesis on "Film Work, Dream Work" begun under the direction of Roland Barthes.

Researcher at ORTF and at INA from 1972 to 1989.

Teacher during the same years (film semiology and textual analysis of film) at University of Paris I, IDHEC, and the American Study Center for Film in Paris, as well as at a brace of American universities, the University of New York at Buffalo and the Center for Twentieth Century Studies in Milwaukee-Wisconsin.

Since 1974, has created numerous monotapes and installations, which have been acquired by museums worldwide.

SOLO SHOWS (selected)

- 2006 "La Force de l'Art, un nouveau rendez-vous avec la création en France", *Hiver*, Grand Palais, Paris
"Thierry Kuntzel", *Lumière du Temps* (commissariat Raymond Bellour), Le Fresnoy, Tourcoing
"Retour", *Tampico, Here There Then, Tu, Memory*, Musée de Rochechouart, Limoges
- 2005 "Estados da Imagen, instantes e intervals (States of the Image - instants and intervals) - Lisboa photo
- 2005 *Tu*, Centre culturel de Belem, Lisboa
- 2004 "Eblouissement", *La Desserte Blanche*, Galerie du Jeu de Paume, Paris
- 2003 "Archives et simulations, Lisboa photo", *The waves* — Centre culturel de Belem, Lisboa
- 2000 "Thierry Kuntzel, Si lent", *Automne (Le mont Analogue), Automne (Eloge de l'ombre), Hiver, Venises*,
Galerie Yvon Lambert, Paris
- 1999 "Flashes", *Nostos III*, Collections de la Fondation Cartier, Centre culturel de Belem, Lisboa
- 1998 "Thierry Kuntzel, plasticien-vidéaste", *Le Tombeau de Edgar Allan Poe, Memory*, et programmation de
bandes vidéos, Maison de la Culture et école nationale des Beaux-Arts, Bourges
- 1997 "Thierry Kuntzel", *Le Tombeau de Michael Powell, Le Tombeau de Saussure et trois esquisses*,
Galerie René Blouin, Montréal
- 1996 "Thierry Kuntzel", *Tu, Le Tombeau de Edgar Allan Poe*, Musée de Rochechouart, Limousin
- 1995 "L'air du large", *Venises* — Biennale de Venise
- 1994 "Thierry Kuntzel, Trois tombeaux", *Le Tombeau de Henri Jameszs, Le Tombeau de Herman Melville*,
Le Tombeau de Edgar Allan Poe, Galerie René Blouin, Montréal
- 1993 "Thierry Kuntzel, rétrospective ", Galerie Nationale du Jeu de Paume, Paris
"Thierry Kuntzel, rétrospective", Musée d'art contemporain, Montréal
- 1991 "Projects 29: Thierry Kuntzel", *Hiver*, The museum of modern art, New-York
"Thierry Kuntzel", *Été, Hiver*, Ecole régionale d'art, Dunkerque
- 1984 "Rétrospective Thierry Kuntzel", Centre Georges Pompidou, Musée National d'Art Moderne, Paris
"De andere film, vidéos 1979 - 1984", Secession Museum, Vienne
Nostos II, Centre Georges Pompidou-Musée National d'art moderne, Paris
- 1983 "Video viewpoints", The museum of modern art, New-York
"Monographie Thierry Kuntzel", 2e semaine de la création vidéo, Grenoble

Thierry Kuntzel

1 February - 1 April 2007

PRACTICAL INFORMATION

Thierry Kuntzel

The Waves

Interactive installation

Show opening Wednesday **31 January 2007** starting at 6 pm

Show runs from 1 February to 1 April 2007

Tuesday - Sunday, noon to 6 pm

Contact us to schedule a time to meet or interview the artist.

Coming to the Center for Contemporary Images:

From 2 May to 24 June 2007

Jonah Freeman and Elina Brotherus

Press Office:

Laura Legast

laura.legast@sgg.ch

Tél +41 22 908 20 62

Centre pour l'image contemporaine

Saint-Gervais Genève
5, rue du Temple 1201 GENEVE
tél.: + 41 (0) 22 908 20 60
fax: + 41 (0) 22 908 20 01

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