

“Neurichten” (News) by Johannes Maier

Sep. 17th - Oct 23rd



PLAY_gallery for still and motion pictures in Berlin is proud to present the first comprehensive one-man-exhibition by the London based video artist Johannes Maier. Maier, who already took part in numerous international group exhibitions and video festivals, was last year awarded with the first prize of FAIR PLAY 2003. The jury acknowledged above all his poetic and at the same time self-reflective treatment of the medium video in his piece “ex.spectators”. The FAIR PLAY 2003 award gave the artist the possibility to work on a variety of projects throughout the year, which will be presented for the first time in this exhibition.

Apart from the award-winning video installation “ex.spectators”, Maier will exhibit two new pieces, which were developed specifically for this show. Starting point for both works is the realm of television production and of TV journalism, in particular the mechanisms of control and authorship. Thus, a documentary by BBC cameraman Darren Conway, who accompanied British soldiers during the last Iraq war as an ‘imbedded’ journalist, stands at the centre of the video “Facing”. In his film, Conway is reporting on the situation of his unit and on his own perceptions in the face of war. A year later, Johannes Maier confronted the journalist with his documentary. The resulting video piece, is the document of a very close and complex connection between the author and his film, between topicality and memory, between mediated authenticity and production.

The video “The Editor’s Cut” was filmed and cut in a BBC Newsroom in London. Protagonists are the picture editor Pete Millest and the correspondent Shaun Ley, both employees of the BBC. In a ‘close circuit’ situation, Millest is cutting a film that is being filmed at the same time of the situation, while Ley supplies a spontaneous and insignificant life commentary. Involuntarily and unforeseen, Johannes Maier is visibly losing control over the result of his own video work - up to the point, at which he turns to be a victim of non-authorized post production.

Beside these new videos, Johannes Maier has in the past year been working on an extensive artist book, which will also be presented at the exhibition opening. The book that is published by “Fine Arts Unternehmen Books” in their series “book by” does not only document the artist’s past works, but gives another viewpoint on the self reflective working method that is so distinctive in Maier’s work - albeit in another medium. The book launch will be presented by Edgar Schmitz and Ralf Christofori, who have accompanied this publishing project both as authors and participants.