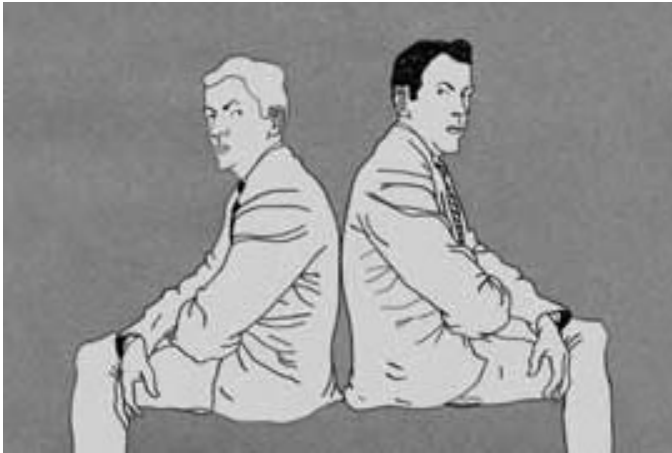


“Power Play” by Cecilia Lundqvist

Oct. 27th - Nov. 24th



PLAY_gallery for still and motion pictures is pleased to present a comprehensive one-man-exhibition of the Swedish video artist Cecilia Lundqvist. The artist, who took part in numerous international group exhibitions and video festivals, was awarded last year the second prize of the video exhibition series FAIR PLAY 2003. The prize was given to Cecilia Lundqvist's video "Absolutely Normal" for the precision and concentration of her graphical language as well as for the quality of the sound track in her work.

"My fascination for animation as a way of artistic expression revolves mainly around the fact that film is a form of time. This means that

during a certain time I am allowed to tell the things I would like to say, [...]. For me, animation is the ultimate way of expression. [...] For the animator absolutely nothing happens by chance, he/she has total control all the way. My films are personal, but in a distant way, perhaps because they are animations and not live film."

"Smile" is an animated video that reflects upon a standardized Orwellian society, and tells the story of one brave 16 years old girl who has the courage to be different. The "smiling girl is guilty of enjoying the almost sensuous opportunity to live better than anyone of them"—tells us the narrator – which makes "the people run out of patience having to protect the civilized people against someone who knew that life is comfortable". When the young woman does not agree to abide by the social order there is only one extreme measure the "people" have to take in order to eliminate the problem. The text told by a woman contributes greatly to the narrative of the work. The story is created using excerpts from an English language course, in which the original content has a totally different meaning. The images, as well, come from different sources, mainly advertising leaflets. For Lundqvist it is important to draw on existing materials from her nearest surroundings and to deconstruct them, using these fragments to create a new whole. By doing so the artist's goal is to visualize hidden meanings existing under the surface, but yet not completely visible.

"Powerplay" is another animated video, consisting of ten different scenes in which two men compete in emphasizing their manhood, using different attributes in a series of non-sense acts. In this work the artist comments on and clearly ridicules the stereotypes that the two characters embody in their man-to-man conversation. By doing so she creates a sharp satire of customs and attitudes that belong to her own often "macho-oriented" culture. The work is completed by another video, screened in a TV monitor across the room, which contains only one scene: a completely bored woman who watches the men performing their meaningless acts.

"Pancake" (2004) and "Emblem" (2001) focus on domestic violence without ever showing its most gruesome aspects. The objective of the video "Emblem" is to visualize the endless struggle of power of the man over the woman, a struggle often transformed into violence that becomes part of the normal daily routine. Colourful animations illustrate the rather monotonous life of the two characters and the chilling acceptance of the beaten wife of her husband's violent behaviour. "Pancake" is a series of drawings. The scenes are set outdoors and illustrate some of humanity's and society's most vicious problems. The issues explored by the artists become extremely powerful and frightening when illustrated in such a direct and simple way. In order not to show such acts of violence as happening mainly within the weaker and poorer classes of our society, Lundqvist draws her characters as belonging to the middle upper class.