

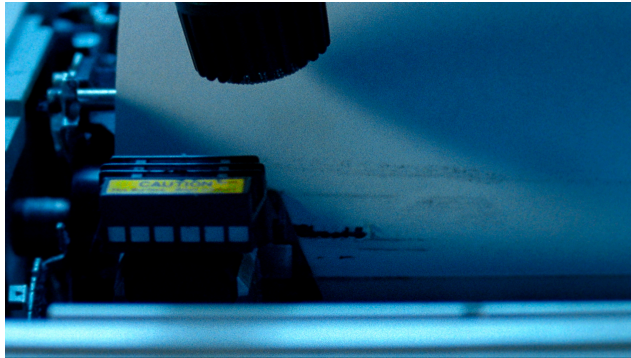
Mika Taanila

Memoria esterna

RITA URSO Artopia Gallery
 Via Lazzaro Papi 2, Milano

Opening 23 March 2017 at 7:00 p.m.

23 March | 27 May 2017



Mika Taanila, *Optical Sound* | 2005 single-channel video-installation, 6 minutes

RITAURSO Artopiagallery is pleased to present **the first solo show in Italy by Mika Taanila** (Helsinki, 1965), one of the artists representing the Nordic Pavilion at the next Venice Biennale.

Archive, memory, and an archeology of the future are the essence of his film, photography and documentary work. The artist and filmmaker studied anthropology before devoting himself to cinema, and the desire to explore the history and forms of reality has always been present in his work. A poetics of reality in which archive materials, obsolete media such as VHS tapes, found footage, photographs, images from TV and contemporary advanced film techniques are precious sources for reflecting on the ways in which technological devices, and their obsolescence, have redefined the mediascape.

The exhibition, entitled *Memoria esterna* and curated by Lorenza Pignatti, presents six photograms realized without the aid of a camera, taken from the series *Black and White Movies* (2013). Taanila has chosen some titles from a collection of classic black and white films (from 1924 to 1995), recorded on VHS, of which the artist recalled violent scenes which he then enacted on the VHS tapes themselves. The “remains” of the videocassettes were then collected, placed on photosensitive paper in a darkroom and exposed to the light directly. Further experimentation is featured in the film *Optical Sound* (2005), in which, by means of sophisticated filming techniques, Mika Taanila has documented the work of antique dot matrix printers that are transformed into unexpected low-tech musical instruments by [The User]. A hypnotic symphony that seduces the listener with its abstract and apparent imperfection, in which the new emerges from the old, to then return to its obsolescence.

Mika Taanila (1965) lives and works in Helsinki. Filmmaker and visual artist, his works have been exhibited in important international group shows, including Aichi Triennale (2013), dOCUMENTA (2012), the Shanghai Biennale (2006), the Berlin Biennale (2004), Manifesta (2002) and the Istanbul Biennale (2001). His solo shows include balzer projects, Basel (2016), Kiasma Museum of Contemporary Art di Helsinki (2013-14), Museum of Contemporary Art St. Louis (2013), TENT, Rotterdam (2013), Galleria Heino, Helsinki (2010), Badischer Kunstverein, Karlsruhe (2008), Dazibao, Montréal (2007) and Migrosmuseum, Zurich (2005). Taanila's films have been featured at more than 300 international festivals and special events, including the Toronto International Film Festival, IFFR Rotterdam, the International Short Film Festival in Clermont-Ferrand, Karlovy-Vary Film Festival, Midnight Sun Film Festival, CPH: DOX IDFA in Amsterdam and the Oberhausen Kurzfilmtage. His films have been shown in Italy at Pesaro Film Festival in 2005 and at the Milan Film Festival (2016), at the latest edition of I BOREALI, Nordic Festival and in the 2015 edition with a retrospective about his work at the Oberdan cinema in Milan. In 2015 he was given the Ars Finnica award. Mika Taanila is among the representatives of the Nordic Pavilion at the 57th International Art Exhibition, the Venice Biennale.

Lorenza Pignatti is an art historian, curator and essayist. She is a professor at the New Academy of Fine Arts (NABA) in Milan, she has taught at the University of Urbino and Bologna, and at the Academy of Applied Sciences and Arts at SUPSI in Lugano (Switzerland). She has curated a retrospective of the Spanish film director Pere Portabella for the Pesaro Film Festival, and an homage to the filmmaker and artist Mika Taanila for *I Boreali Festival* in Milan. Her writing has appeared in several books and catalogues and she has worked for *La Repubblica*, *Il Manifesto*, *Il Corriere della Sera*, *Art Review*, *Artribune*, *No Order: Art in a Post-Fordist Society*. She has edited *Mind the Map: Mappe, diagrammi e dispositivi cartografici*, (Postmedia Books) and co-edited (with Franco "Bifo" Berardi and Marco Magagnoli) the book *Errore di sistema: Teoria e pratiche di Adbusters* (Giorgio Feltrinelli Editore, Milan).

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Artworks on show

First floor:

Black & White Movies

2013, 60 x 72 cm (framed: 75 x 87 cm)

Artworks based on black & white movies from 1924-1995, recorded on VHS video cassettes, then destroyed by methods suggested by each movie and made into photograms.



1. Roma, città aperta



2. Strait-Jacket



3. La Haine (Hate)



4. Faster Pussycat, Kill! Kill!



5. White Heat



6. Häxan (Witchcraft Through Ages)

Second floor:

Optical Sound

2005, single-channel video installation, 6 minutes, music by [The User], produced by Kinotar