

JESPER JUST

**An exhibition of the Ursula Blickle Foundation
March 4 – April 15, 2007**

The Danish artist Jesper Just (*1974, Copenhagen) primarily works with the medium of short film and is currently considered one of the most interesting positions in the field of moving pictures.

Love, longing, desire, and contempt are the major themes of the short films directed by Just. They are characterized by staginess and sensuousness and at the same time marked by a distance to what is being depicted. The film protagonists express strong feelings through minimal gestures or passionate outpourings of emotions. At the same time, they always remain inapproachable since no further details are given about the events leading up to the scene or a greater context. What the viewer is left with is the impression of a very intense moment that seems to be completely detached from all connections. Just's filmic works pay homage to an uncompromising surrender to emotion – no matter how hopeless the prospects of reciprocation may be.

In addition to one new work, the exhibition at the Ursula Blickle Foundation presents a selection of recent films whose structure reveals great diversity. The more one attempts to interpret or analyze Just's work, the more complex they become and the more obscure the content seems to be. Just's protagonists, their conduct, and relationships are fraught with psychological traps, which the artist consciously incorporates into his plots. Viewers are confronted with scenes, which they are not prepared for, in fact, it is as if they have been suddenly thrown into them. Situations guided by strong emotions, where even one's own common sense offers no protection from exuberant affection, insatiable longing, pain, and deep existential angst.

Just employs classical film techniques almost manipulatively and combines these with background music in such a way that he creates an atmosphere of trust for the viewer. In a certain sense Just's work is comparable with that of a psychotherapist: he offers his patients a familiar structure of trust that makes it possible for them to perceive things they weren't aware of before or which they hadn't thought about for a long time. The difference between him and a therapist, however, is that he doesn't expect a response from his vis-à-vis; instead, it is in his best interest to leave the viewer to deal with his experiences alone.

Works like "Invitation to Love" (2003), "A Fine Romance" (2004), or "The Lonely Villa" (2004) appear to suggest a homoerotic interpretation or the playing with an erotically charged constellation of the father-son relationship. Just himself points out that it is not his intention to elicit a one-sided interpretation of his films; rather, his works stand for his complex and profound interest in interpersonal interaction, relationships, and dependencies, which for their intensity might have been borrowed from ancient Greek tragedies. Just works specifically with the maliciousness, offenses, and perversions of human emotions as well as with their greatness and beauty.

The exhibition will be shown simultaneously at the Witte de With, Center for Contemporary Art, Rotterdam, and will also run at the S.M.A.K. in Gent from April to June. The ursula blickle videolounge in Vienna will be showing a selection of Jesper Just's work in April.

Exhibition venue

Ursula Blickle Foundation
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Curator

Nicolaus Schafhausen,
Director of the Witte de With, Rotterdam

Press information

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Preopening viewing

Please call for an appointment
Phone +49 7251 60919 Fax +49 7251 68687

Press photos

Available on our website:
www.ursula-blickle-stiftung.de

Duration of the exhibition

March 4 – April 15, 2007

Opening

Saturday, March 3, 2007, 7:00 p.m.

Catalogue

A catalogue will be published in cooperation with WdW Publishers, Rotterdam, and S.M.A.K., Gent

Opening hours

Wed. 2:00 p.m. till 5:00 p.m.
Sun. 2:00 p.m. till 6:00 p.m.
and by appointment

We'd appreciate an announcement of our exhibition in your medium. If publicized, please send us a copy for our files. Thank you!