

Program 2009

Festival Screening **Monitoring** AV-Performance interfiction junges dokfest

Kasseler Dokfest

Foreword

Program 2009 » Monitoring » Singing in the Rain



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Location

8 Lessons on Emptiness
with a Happy End

Factum Kang

Ideal

HOME

Does it Mean Anything to
You?

Interrogation

Singing in the Rain

MoshPit – Metal Head
Orgasmatron

Vertical Villa (Part Two)

The Box

Six Apartments

Rites of Passage

The Berlin Wall

How I Learned to
Increase the Value of the
Big Moment of Insight by
a Plain I See!

I am an Other

Singing in the Rain

Nadja Verena Marcin
Video-Projektor, Blu-ray-Player, 2 Lautsprecher, 4:12 Min.
Los Angeles 2008



Nadja Marcin dances "Singin' in the Rain" in front of the public library in downtown Los Angeles. She is the only person at her chosen venue. It is early in the morning, shortly after dawn and the imitated male poses seem strangely sensuous in the emptiness of the city. Already her clothing, a hand-sewn "nudecostume", contrasts with the high-necked suit of Gene Kelly who tap-danced in the original motion picture "Singin' in the Rain" from 1952. Marcin's appearance does not match the tradition of the 50s that prioritized the covering of the body instead of exposure. Furthermore, it is as bright as day – and it does not rain.

With euphoria and effort, the artist exercises the whole four minutes and twelve seconds of the lovestoned, masculine dance. Marcin's expression seems to be too stern for a practice or persiflage of the dedicated performer. The performance reveals a seclusion and intimacy, even melancholy. It seems indisputable that the figure has a sincere motive: maybe it is the reincarnation of an icon in the context of postmodernism and its failure, maybe it is the desire for support and its simultaneous resistance.

Marcin's "Singing in the rain" deals with the seeking of ones persona and its masking. What does this mean within a cultural context where rituals of disguise are publicly exercised? Marcin captures the public space, the park in front of the public library, by transforming it to a dance floor. The rules of everyday life are artistically trampled down by the metal of her tab-shoes and are replaced by the childlike energy and ease of the dance. This improvisation is at the same time obtrusively unskilled, charming, comedic, as well as elegant.

The political intent of Marcin's reply to the famous dancing performance becomes clear through the adoption of the choreography, gestures and mimic of Gene Kelly by a woman. If a female does the wooing, her sexuality and self-determination are affected. Nevertheless, the dance also carries negative feelings of deprivation and uncertainty. Is this the seeking for support or the fear of freedom? Would this be a gender-specific problem or does it depict the general condition of the youth generation? Is the fallback on icons of the 20th century a crisis of boredom? Is it a retreat to privacy since public space is perceived as an anonymous zone without any sense of wellbeing? Maybe a feeling of extraneousness? Is the public space expropriated, since there is nothing personal in it anymore, or is the dance a materialistic attempt to win it back?

Greta Gesenberg

Year

Name

Work



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