

T.R. ERICSSON - SHOT 44

April 9 to May 15, 2011

Open 24 hours a day



Kunsthalle Marcel Duchamp

Place d'armes | Quai de l'indépendance

CH-1096 Cully

Dear Stefan,

in our first e-mail exchange you mentioned your interest in a reference i'd made to Michelangelo Antonioni's film *blow-up* and that the idea of blowing something up in the very small space of the Kunsthalle seemed interesting. The work began with thoughts about photography and film and ended as sculpture.

I'd already been considering doing something based around the *Blow-up* film (something related to the sequence in the film where the photographer (Thomas) inadvertently documents a murder while shooting pictures of two lovers in a london park) when a friend of mine in new york gave me a copy of Roland Barthes' book *Camera Lucida*. Barthes outlines several levels of meaning in an image, including a "third level" of meaning or the "obtuse meaning". According to Barthes this third meaning can't quite be absorbed, "it is both persistent and fugitive, apparent and evasive". i counted 43 separate scenes or shots from the park sequence in *Blow-up*. *Shot 44* represents an imagined additional shot in the sequence; a deviation from the films already fractured narrative, a curious incongruous element within the film's given totality.

The first memorable image game I experienced as a child appeared in a school textbook. It was an enlarged photographic image beside a text that asked you to guess what the image was a picture of. I don't recall what it was specifically, it may have looked like tree bark or some meteor floating in space but whatever it was i was sure it was nothing I'd ever really seen before or could really be that sure about. On the next page the image was revealed to have been a magnified hair or a piece of dust. What does any visible thing really look like in the first place? Maybe the world can only be seized through form, but then again maybe not. And is a three-dimensional object any less ambiguous by having a third dimension?

I put objects in front of magnifying lenses and watched the way the things became abstracted at various distances, visually engorged and not easily identifiable. I made a plaster cast of myself as the murdered man, the shot man in the park from Antonioni's film. i thought of my upward facing profile cast in plaster and magnified in glass as resembling the mountains that surround the tiny museum. The magnifying lenses becoming a destructive discharge pulverizing the object they magnify, the plaster face transmogrified into a mountain crest. I thought of the way the individual by necessity must construct his/her own shell or mold and inhabit it, the necessity to construct meaning out of the endless images that bombard us. I thought of the desire to emancipate myself from my own subjectivity, to literally lose myself in the mountains. I thought of a poem I read by Charles Bukowski from his book *Love is a Dog From Hell* (a poem titled "Trapped" on page 144 of the book). I thought of Duchamp's *Eau et gaz à tous les étages*, his flattened and entombed self portrait in profile, a face in a box, a box in a valise, the museum as a tomb. Taking my own face in a bag on an airplane to Geneva, blowing it up into a mountain and putting it in a museum.

Thanks for the opportunity to contribute something to the world's tiniest museum.

Best, Tom (T. R.) Ericsson