


Landscape

A photograph of a vast, flat landscape under a clear sky. The foreground is dominated by long, straight, dark tracks or paths that lead towards the horizon. The tracks are separated by lighter, possibly wet or sandy, ground. In the distance, a few small structures and utility poles are visible on the horizon line. The sky is a pale, uniform blue.

Kunsthaus Graz

Universalmuseum
Joanneum

Camera Austria

Neue Galerie Graz

Universalmuseum
Joanneum

Kunst
im öffentlichen Raum
Steiermark



Michael Snow
La Région Centrale,
 1977, production
 study

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the speed of the camera movements preset and accelerating over time. *La Région Centrale* shows the landscape at a real place, whereby the (picture) view frame concerned seems to wander randomly with the eye of the camera. While the film is removed from being documentary on account of the unusual picture movement, it nonetheless reflects in a fully authentic way the rugged mountainous world in its cosmic abandonment through the isolation of its location.

Given the background of the 1969 moon landing and the view of the rotating earth from outer space, this film must also be read as a commentary on our own finiteness. Yet at the same time it reflects the social climate of a hope, ignited by technological developments, of another life beyond our planet. Snow speaks of how he planned a filmic manifesto with *La Région Centrale*, which tells of a changing planet as a legacy and a message to alien life. His structural landscape portrait is arranged and organised using highly developed technology, and thus defined in terms of media technology. With *La Région Centrale* Snow succeeded in producing moving images that no human eye could have imagined until then, and through the multitude of shifting axes and accelerations, in enabling us to experience the sheer infinity of a perspective that encompasses 360°.

- KBT (AH) -

Guido van der Werve

b. 1977 in Papendrecht (NL), lives in Hassi (FI), Berlin (DE) and Amsterdam (NL)
www.roofvogel.org

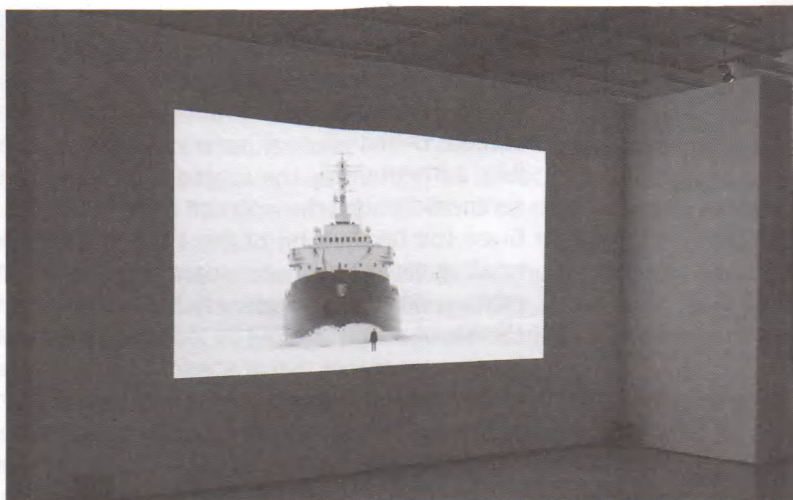
Nummer acht, everything is going to be alright, *Golf of Bothnia FI, 2007*

16 mm film transferred to digital media, colour, sound; 10:10 min
 Courtesy of the artist and Monitor Gallery Rome, Gallery Juliette Jongma Amsterdam, Marc Foxx Los Angeles, Luhning Augustine, New York

Film recordings made in the Gulf of Bothnia in Finland show the artist as he seems to walk just a few steps away from an icebreaker—it was actually just 10-12 metres away—as it pushes its way through the gulf. The ship is fast on his heels as he approaches the position of the camera or the viewer. The heroic icebreaker's approach is reinforced by the increasingly loud sounds of breaking ice. The film *Nummer acht* can be considered an interpretation of the painting *Das Eismeer* [The Sea of Ice], 1823/24 by Caspar David Friedrich, a leading proponent of 19th-century Romantic landscape painting. As is characteristic for Van der Werve, he sarcastically undermines Romantic landscape painting in that, unlike Caspar David Friedrich (in whose paintings the ship is sinking), the force of nature is not destroying man. Instead it is the human being—embodied by the artist—who shows the boat the way, leaving a path of destruction in the frozen landscape. There are two moments in this observation: first, the human being is marching ahead of the ship with the conviction that everything will be all right, as it says in the title of the work. On the

Guido van der Werve

Nummer acht,
everything is going
to be alright, *Golf of*
Bothnia FI, 2007
exhibition view,
Kunsthau Graz,
2015



other hand, the ship—a technical achievement of humankind—becomes an immediate threat to both man and nature.

The Dutch artist works with the media of film, photography and performance, also composing music, which generally plays a large role in his work. Van der Werve appreciates music's directness and ability to immediately communicate emotions that reach every recipient—an effect he also employs as a visual artist. Since 2003, the artist has created 11 short films and has prefixed each title with a number similar to the way in which musical compositions are numbered, without forming a contiguous series. The film *Nummer acht* brings together a number of recurring themes in Guido van der Werve's oeuvre: physical endurance, man's struggle with nature, interfaces between history and geography, melancholy and loneliness.

— ES (AP) —