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For Immediate Release:

ECSTATIC TRUTH

A TWO-ARTIST EXHIBITION WITH
JANNICKE LÅKER AND JULIKA RUDELIUS
CURATED BY RUBA KATRIB

EXHIBITION:
MARCH 7–APRIL 26, 2009

OPENING RECEPTION:
SATURDAY, MARCH 7, 2009, 6–9 PM

GALLERY HOURS:
WEDNESDAY–SUNDAY, 12–6 PM

Directions: F Train to York St. /A/C Train to High St. /B61 to York and Gold Streets or /B25 to Water Street.

“Ecstatic truth” is a term used by the German director Werner Herzog to describe a filmmaking technique that favors emotional accuracy over detail-oriented accuracy in a documentary context. To achieve a sense of “ecstatic truth,” a filmmaker, instead of attempting to portray characters or events in an objective or factual way, fabricates a situation that plays with the emotional intensity of the subjects and reaches a level of sincerity that the facts alone could not achieve. In Herzog’s manifesto, the Minnesota Declaration: Truth and Fact in Documentary Cinema written in 1999, point five states:

“There are deeper strata of truth in cinema, and there is such a thing as poetic, ecstatic truth. It is mysterious and elusive, and can be reached only through fabrication and imagination and stylization.”

Following Herzog’s thoughts on attaining a “deeper strata” of truth in cinema, the exhibition, Ecstatic Truth, the exhibition, brings together two European artists: Jannicke Låker and Julika Rudelius, who share affinities in their attempts at reaching an emotional accuracy through their selected subjects and the techniques they use.

The exhibition presents “Running Woman” (2006), by Jannicke Låker and the premiere of “Adrift” (2007), by Julika Rudelius.* Both Låker and Rudelius are concerned with how production and reception is constructed, the boundaries between fiction and truth as well as the differentiations between acting and non-acting. A central question being: is art a realm in which human truths can unfold or is does its designation to the realm of representation pose an inherent contradiction?

Embedded in a tradition of documentary approaches, a central construction to the works in the exhibition is the utilization of the “crisis structure.” The crisis structure can be described as a fabricated situation in which subjects are filmed or recorded participating in a certain activity in which they become completely absorbed. The “crisis structure” has its roots in cinéma vérité and can be witnessed today in the proliferation of reality TV shows and aggressive documentaries. The intended effect of the “crisis structure” is that the subjects become so involved in an activity that they forget the presence of the camera and can then begin to act naturally, allowing for revelation of truth about their behavior and character.

The works included in Ecstatic Truth employ similar techniques and are linked to a tradition of filmmaking that endeavors to achieve a sense of truth or reality. Låker and Rudelius are committed to revealing emotional vulnerability through the means they find necessary.

*Filmed at the Dumbo Arts Center in 2007.

JANNICKE LÅKER (born in 1968 in Drammen, Norway, lives and works in Berlin). Solo exhibitions have been presented by the Künstlerhaus Bethanien in Berlin, (2006) and the Stenersen Museum in Oslo, Norway (2003). Group exhibitions include Staring into Space at the House of Contemporary Art in Hungary (2006), Baltic Raw in Hamburg (2005), Swedish Hearts at the Moderna Museet Stockholm, Sweden (2004), and The American Effect at the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York (2003).

JULIKA RUDELIUS (born in 1968 in Cologne, Germany, currently lives and works in Amsterdam and New York City). Solo exhibitions have been presented by the Grazer Kunstverein in Graz, Austria (2006) and the Stedelijk Museum Bureau in Amsterdam, NL (2004). Group exhibitions include Global Feminisms at the Brooklyn Museum in Brooklyn, New York (2007); the Gwangju Biennale in Korea (2006); The Youth of Today at the Schirn Kunsthalle in Frankfurt, DE (2006), and Populism (2005), which traveled to institutions in Vilnius, Oslo, Amsterdam, and Frankfurt.

RUBA KATRIB is the Assistant Curator of the Museum of Contemporary Art (MOCA), North Miami. Katrib holds an MA from the Center for Curatorial Studies at Bard College and recent curatorial projects include "Dark Continents" and "The Possibility of an Island," both at MOCA.

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