

balzer projects

cabinet no. 7

Mika Taanila | The Earth Who Fell to Man

May 5 to July 15, 2017

Vernissage: May 4, 18 to 20h

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Exhibition Opening and World Premiere of *The Earth Who Fell to Man*: May 4, 2017 18h

Balzer Projects is pleased to present a small solo show of Taanila's most recent projects, a video installation entitled *The Earth Who Fell to Man*. with an accompanying cut-out book piece. Archives, memory, media obsolescence and archeology of the future are at the core of Mika Taanila's oeuvre. He successfully challenges points of connection between art, photography and cinema. As part of his artistic practice, he has been working in film and video editing (both analogue and digital) for 30 years. Many titles in Taanila's filmography are based on archival and found-footage.

The exhibition coincides with art events, such as the Venice Biennale (13.May - 26.Nov), ART Basel week (12.-18.June) and Bildrausch Filmfest Basel (21.-25.June). Taanila has been selected as one of six artists in the Nordic Pavilion at the 57th Biennale (Curator: Mats Stjernstedt, Moderna Museet, Stockholm). One of his most recent experimental films, entitled *Branches*, was selected for the International Competition of the 63. Oberhausen Kurzfilmtage (11.-16.May). On view at TAPE Basel (12.-17.June) will be *The Earth Who Fell to Man*.

The video installation *The Earth Who Fell to Man* is a sequel to Taanila's reductionist film and sound pieces, such as *My Silence* from 2013. The elimination of the core of the film, the eradication of human form, transforms the film into a 'deleted narrative'. The piece features shots from Nicolas Roeg's 1976 film starring David Bowie, yet without any recognizable human resemblance. Merely landscapes, building, backdrops, roads, sky and the earth are running in total disarray. The key element: mankind, or in this case the iconic embodiment of David Bowie as alien Thomas Jerome Newton, is systematically deleted. The shots are running upside down on screen and are enhanced with the acoustical accompaniment of earthquakes, falling rocks and landslides. The Earth (as the title suggests) seems to be falling to Man.

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On view in the exhibition will also be new accompanying miniature book piece by Taanila, based on a copy of the original novel, *The Man Who Fell to Earth*.

In his *Film Reader* project for The Nordic Pavilion in Venice, Taanila will show a series of prepared cinema books. Instead of text editing, the artist creates a process parallel to traditional film editing, i.e. splicing. These books are works of moving image, quite literally: images are moved and taken out, erased, cut-out, transformed and discarded. Immaterial ideas of cinematic writing/reading transform into eerie cinematic collages.

Mika Taanila (*1965) lives and works in Helsinki. Filmmaker and visual artist, his works have been exhibited in important international group shows, including Aichi Triennale (2013), dOCUMENTA (2012), the Shanghai Biennale (2006), the Berlin Biennale (2004), Manifesta (2002) and the Istanbul Biennale (2001). His solo shows include balzer projects, Basel (2016), Kiasma Museum of Contemporary Art in Helsinki (2013-14), Museum of Contemporary Art St. Louis (2013), TENT, Rotterdam (2013), Galleria Heino, Helsinki (2010), Badischer Kunstverein, Karlsruhe (2008), Dazibao, Montréal (2007) and Migrosmuseum, Zurich (2005). Taanila's films have been featured at more than 300 international festivals and special events, including the Berlinale (Forum Expanded), Toronto International Film Festival, IFFR Rotterdam, the International Short Film Festival in Clermont-Ferrand, Karlovy-Vary Film Festival, Midnight Sun Film Festival, CPH: DOX, IDFA in Amsterdam and the Oberhausen Kurzfilmtage. A retrospective of his cinematic work will be shown at GEGENkino in Leipzig in April. In 2015 he received the prestigious Ars Fennica award. Mika Taanila is among the representatives of the Nordic Pavilion at the 57th International Art Exhibition, the Venice Biennale.

For further information, visuals and additional material, please contact:

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Gallery hours: Tuesday to Friday | 14-18h | Saturday | 11-16h