

Weekendavisen # 48

Mette Sandbye, 28.11.08

OVERGADEN focuses specifically on the lesser known, young and growing artists, either by means of separate exhibitions mainly for Danish artists, who may apply for such an exhibition, or curative group exhibitions that are different. One of the more ambitious of its kind can be seen at the moment under the title *Technically Sweet*. The two curators and artists Yvette Brackman and Maria Finn have come across a film manuscript of that name, or in Italian “Tecnicamente dolce” by Michelangelo Antonioni from 1966. The film takes place in Sardinia, Rome, New York and in the Amazonian jungle. The leading parts are played by Jack Nicholson and Maria Schneider but the film was never released owing to lack of funds. Brackman and Finn have invited 13 Danish and foreign artists to come up with their visions as to how they would interpret the manuscript, either sections of it or as an inspiration to develop their own ideas. In particular, some very good videos have been the result – and altogether the exhibition is well worth seeing. A brief description of the action is given at the entrance. It involves a complex romantic triangle in Sicily, which ends up with the two rivals flying out into the jungle where their plane crashes and they both die after having undergone considerable hardships. However, gradually one begins to piece an imaginary film together or even invent and construct one’s own film. This may sound like somewhat of a cliché but, at this exhibition, it makes sense.

Lars Mathisen reads parts of the manuscript aloud, in addition to having filmed some deserted places. Frans and Frederik Jacobi have traveled out into the jungle where part of the manuscript has been produced. In a rather seductive way, Mark Orange has produced a short film of a silent meeting between three persons at a chemist’s. Several others focus in a more abstract manner on the film’s distinction between towns and wild scenery. Pia Rönicke, for example, has produced a film in a strange, deserted and neglected park in a part of Los Angeles which is characterized as having a high crime rate and where the park bearing the optimistic name of “Elysian Park” has become a dangerous place. In a two-part video, Laura Parnes tackles a similar dualism. On one screen can be seen a small family playing in a beautiful landscape. On another, sequences from a film are shown featuring dangerous wild animals and sinister sounds, all of which points back at the family’s vulnerability and fabricated ideals. You need to give yourself plenty of time, as the many short films each last between 2 and 26 minutes. The exhibition is invitingly arranged and there are headphones available for most of the films. There is lots to look at and one becomes keen to see each and every one of the various artists’ interpretations of Antonioni’s manuscript. which, surprisingly enough, end up in the form of a film collage. However, not enough thought has been given to communications. In the room itself there are neither signs giving names nor explanations of the various works – and especially the latter is necessary. This information has to be obtained in the form of a large sheet of paper where visitors are left to try and spell their way through the small print which almost disappears in the dim lighting. There is room for improvement.