

LES NEUF PORTES DE TON CORPS

photogram The photogram as a contact medium is a clear counterscheme to the forms of representation in photography, which always operates from a distance. Tim Otto Roth worked unmistakably out in *LES NEUF PORTES DE TON CORPS*, a colour Ektachrome photogram series about the nine female apertures, that this aspect of contact involves another physical self-image. With reference to two poems of Guillaume Apollinaire the German artist explores proverbially the shadowy representations of all from the outside accessible female cavities. The association of the Platonic Cave with the placenta finds, on this occasion, a positive twist transforming the putative darkness of the cavities into coloured emanations of light.



LES NEUF PORTES DE TON CORPS studio view, 2000
unique photograms on fuji velvia slide film, 10 by 8 inches

Apollinaire What makes both love poems, which Apollinaire sent to two different innamoratae during the First World War, so special is the different hierarchization of the female „gates“ (frz. *portes*). The ranking of the first seven body apertures is already extremely interesting. However the emphasis of the last both apertures at the poems end is the pivotal point.

In the *Poème à Lou*, which Apollinaire wrote still during his basic military training period, before he was sent to the front, ends with an ode to the vulva. In the *Poème à Madeleine* six months of front line experience are reflected: It closes with the eulogy of the supreme aperture in the *derrière*.

touch The nine photograms play figuratively with that hierarchy imposed by Appolinaire. The 10 by 8 inches Ektachromes concretise his verbal image by the immediate physical contact of the slide film with the aperture during the exposure process. Unlike a photograph the picture rises to a witness, which can really claim to have been „there“. Roland Barthes' „ça-a-été“ transmutes into a „ça-y-a-été“.

crypto-porn This impression of the nearness is strengthened by the fact that the parts, which were in touch with the slide film, are represented in the highest concretion, the slightest distances, however, become apparent in a loss of concretion. In the end, the materiality of the unique Ektachromes still intensifies this impression of tactile density, which reveals no photographic grain to the naked eye any more. Finally the reversal of the common distance relations constitutes a decisive irritation for the human viewer. Like X-rays those physical documents avoid by her divergent manifestation a much too easy attribution. Therefore the hanging of the nine pictures are intentionally liable to no certain order to play thus with the voyeuristic ambitions of the viewer.



LES NEUF PORTES DE TON CORPS installation view at Marburger Kunstverein, 2000
unique photograms on fuji velvia slide film, 10 by 8 inches
bent carbonate glass, white acrylic diffusing screen, high-grade steel bracket, illuminant, cable

Plato At the latest since Platon's Parable of the Cave the shadow is connected with the blemish of the speciousness. Tim Otto Roth's examination of the shadow medium photogram is more than the attempt of a rehabilitation of a camera-less procedure. Rather his work is a negative criticism of photography and a corrective of its representation forms. Besides, he doesn't expose the female body to the dark hole before a camera, but he repositions the body into a dark chamber. For short moments the cavities of the woman become in the absolute darkness of the studio an origin of light exposing the slide film pressed on the apertures. So Roth's crypto-pornographic approach to the medium photogram can also be understood as a rediscovery of Platos Cave under a new apparative constellation.

installation The 10x8" slides are mounted in a bent carbonate glass pocket and fixed with a metal glamb to a high-grade steel. They are illuminated from the back with an energy saving illuminant (230V). The serial hanging accommodates to formal criteria. The 2-pole cables gather laxly in the middle of the installation. The pictures emit a reddish „body light“ surrounded by a warm corona caused by the light source behind. So in allusion to the fire in a cave the dark space is immersed in a warm pleasant atmosphere.

public presentations

Das erste Mal, Marburger Kunstverein [D], 2000

Synesthesia - the Next Generation in Art, Woodstreet Gallery Chicago [US], 2001

Sexuell, Stiftung Starke Berlin [D], 2001

idea & copyright: Tim Otto Roth, Oppenau/Cologne, Spring 2006

web: www.photograms.net/documentation/works/poemes