

PRESS RELEASE

Peter Miller
Photuris

14 December 2013 until 15 February 2014

Galerie Crone is pleased to present ‚Photuris‘, our second solo exhibition from the young artist Peter Miller. Exhibited is a collection of new works which that work with bioluminescence. Driven by the idea of making the invisible visible, Peter Miller has developed various experimental exposure processes. Working with media sensitive light, he examines methods for recording the marks that events, objects and living creatures leave behind. By freeing himself from classical methods of photography he expands the medium, questions it and creates a spectrum of interpretation for what photography is and can be. Central to his search is the performative creation of an image and the magical act of its occurrence.

The exhibition ‚Photuris‘ shows a recent grouping of the artist's latest experimental work with light. He travelled specifically for this project to the Appalachian Mountains in the USA in order to work with the fireflies there, who are of the genus ‚Photuris‘. Working without a camera, Miller developed methods on site for exposing firefly light to film and Polaroid photo paper.

Thus the patterns of movement generated by the fireflies are recorded on the paper, forming abstract drawings of light described by the artist as ‚a magical process‘: natural organic movements visualize themselves into abstract technical forms. On the one hand the works are reminiscent of automatic drawings in which the author has only a limited influence on the resulting pattern, on the other hand the works can be defined as luminograms, which are like photograms, but are specifically about the light that is being recorded. Miller also applied this technique to the large format 20" x 24" Polaroids in the show, where the traces of the fireflies first become visible after prolonged viewing. The artist's anachronistic interest in Polaroids is relevant – by not deploying a camera to capture the motif he is able to produce a far more immediate image and because there is no negative, the photographs are not reproductions; they are the actual site where the light inscription took place. It is a similar case with the large format C-prints, which were also not exposed using a camera, but here Miller exposed negative film, which allows for enlargements that reveal wondrous details embedded in the light.

The exhibition includes a 16mm film. Three different sequences are shown through which, according to Miller, various levels of an image are explored. The first sequence, a didactic performance, appears as the meaning that an image can convey, whereas the imaginary idyllic landscape in the second part stands for the space in an image that the viewer may enter into. The third part of the film was exposed using fireflies and brings the viewer to the surface the image, a material that can carry light. On a video monitor is another work where the theme of light and rhythm is contrapuntally presented. In it we see a drummer drumming under a strobe light that is flashing at a slightly different rhythm. A sculpture called ‚Water Glass‘ completes the exhibition. Featuring an impossible stack of balanced, clear vessels beneath a glass bell jar, the piece challenges the viewer's perceptual thresholds.

Peter Miller was born in 1978 in Vermont, USA. The artist has been living and working in Cologne and Paris since 2008. Miller received his MFA from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago and has received numerous awards. His most recent exhibitions include ‚Means to See‘ (2011) in PACT Zollverein, Essen as well as ‚Leads to Gold‘ (2010) at Mikro Galerie in Düsseldorf. In 2012 he was a resident at the Palais de Tokyo, Paris. In 2013 his video works were exhibited in the Prospectif Cinema at the Centre Pompidou, Paris.

The production of these works was supported by VISIT, the artist in residence program of the RWE Foundation.

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