

ANNIKA LARSSON

Interview by Federica Tattoli

Who is Annika Larsson?

Wikipedia says that I'm "a contemporary artist living in New York. That I received a Master of Fine Arts from the Royal University College of Fine Arts, Stockholm."

I could agree with that.

Tell me about your last work.

"PIRATE." This video is a bit different from earlier works of mine. Usually everything in my work is staged, but here I'm using only documentary footage.

I filmed it in Stockholm on the 1st May 2006 during a manifestation by the Swedish anti-copyright movement Piratbyran and the Swedish pirate party Piratpartiet. It mainly focuses on the aesthetics of this movement. Also the way I show the work is different. It can be seen in its whole online... and is meant to be copied and shared. So if my other works play with monumentality in the way they are shown, this piece is smaller in size and has more of a viral character.

How would you define your style?

Close up.

How come you've chosen video as an expressive form?

It probably has to do with that it is a medium that uses and controls time.

What's the importance of music in your work?

Very important. I use it to reinforce certain actions and expressions and as an emotional trigger.

I also have a special relation to the type of sounds I use which is often synth based music and sounds. I very much like the sound of the 70s analog synths and sequencers like the ARP 2600.

Which past and present artists have an influence on your work, and which ones you would like to collaborate with?

My influences come a lot from film and directors such as Eisenstein, Fassbinder, Godard and Kurosawa. Not so much from art. But I always found the the dadaist, futurists and surrealist movements very inspiring. And also later movements like the situationists.

One of my latest works, POWER DOWN, has a lot of references to the Italian futurists, especially Marinetti. But also Caspar David Friedrich and romanticism.

I hope to be soon able to collaborate with a robot. AI. I mean, humans are nice too...like I've recently had some really good collaborations with the artist-musician Tobias Bernstrup, the NY based musician Sean McBride aka Martial Canterel and the Swedish design group REALA.

The importance of detail and "slowmotion" in your videos.

Yes, very important. So is time, control, uncertainty and suspense. They're all connected.

The stereotypes in your work.

The stereotype for me functions like a raw material for a new type of image.

In your work there seems to be a balance between aesthetics (intense like a formal control of elements which compose the image) and violence.

What relation do you have with the overexposure to violent messages, concerning and shocking to which we are constantly exposed to, and how do you think they are connected to the images' anxiety, the beauty as identity, of western countries?

Present in all my work is our relationship to power, desire and aesthetics. Violent images are all part of that game. Before we had a much clearer distinction between sender and receiver of violent images and today the relation between the image, the sender and the spectator is getting extremely blurred. I found this very fascinating. We all become accomplices. The darker sides of us humans has always fascinated me.

In some of your work, the clash or at least the differentiation is a central element. How do you react to the opinions of the people surrounding you?

Regarding your research and your work, as well as your everyday life.

I'm interested in images and phenomenon that either are about to change their meaning or that have already come to have a new meaning (could be for me, a smaller or a closed group, or a new context). I think that images and situations that exist in this "in between" state...that their ambivalence both reminds us and challenges us and our already rehearsed conventions.



“Pirate”, still from video, 2006-2007





“Power Down”, stills from video, 2006

