

Lonnie van Brummelen / Siebren de Haan

Revolt of the Giants
6. September – 10. November 2013
Kunsthaus Zürich

Revolt of the Giants is an exhibition consisting of several films and a collage by the duo Lonnie van Brummelen and Siebren de Haan. While dealing with several different specific situations the works are generally concerned with issues such as colonisation, migration, political, economic and other power structures.

One of the works was a looped 16mm film. The film presented portrait-like cuts of various people who each read aloud a sentence into the camera. The text was clearly not in their mother-tongue, but in German and was further translated into English and shown as text to the viewer between each cut. The people appear to be immigrants learning German and often struggled through their given lines.

Perhaps the most interesting themes here are that of power structures relevant within the work. The theme of immigration becomes relatively quickly apparent and brings with it the structures between various cultures, lands and languages, but also perhaps economics. More interesting here however is the role that the artists themselves are playing. Of course they are also playing a role within a power structure that, one could argue, contains servants and served. The people in the video are used in order to fulfil the criteria set by the vision of the artist and within this is the power structure of their relationship.

Danger is also perhaps present within the presentation of the works as a whole. The films were all presented on film by large projectors and seem to have an authentic vintage feeling. While the unpleasant nature of the noisy projectors fits well often to the subject-matter, the aesthetic presentation is rather unconvincing. One potentially dangerous impression that could be left on the viewer is that themes such as power structures through immigration, politics and economics are simply issues for generations gone by and not current today.