

annika larsson

Cosmic Galerie

Paris

The first solo show in Paris by Annika Larsson develops with a flawless spatial rhythm through two rooms with rigorously white walls. The first, very large and in semi-darkness, accommodates the projection of a video that lasts a little more than sixteen minutes; the second, of smaller dimensions, presents a single cibachrome that, taken from the video, emblematically synthesizes its essence. This double articulation is aesthetically necessary in order to determine the peculiar space-time nature of the artist's work, connoted by an exceptionally refined fusion between the virtual dimensions of the visuals and the physical space in which the viewer perceives the work. This new video, never before seen and entitled *Pink Ball*, possesses the fascinating and disturbing enigmatic quality of the Swedish artist's preceding works, characterized as usual by the presence of totally inexpressive and affected male figures who are the protagonists of an event that has ambiguously erotic aspects. In this work, the three main characters stage a distressing, disquieting, and mysterious ritual on a deserted "tourist's dream" beach. The first man, dressed in trousers and a shirt,

indisputably plays the dominant role; the second, a muscular young man in a bathing suit, acts as his assistant, while the third, naked except for a singular fluorescent fuchsia bathing cap is the passive presence, apparently consenting or unconscious, the object of interest for the other two. At the start of the video, a little robotic dog plays with a ball, the same fuchsia color as the bathing cap. The dominant character takes the ball, puts it in his mouth, and then spits it out onto the ground. The naked man is lying down on the sand, defenseless. We see a hand grope his head, then he is carried to the sea's edge where, after having small flotation devices strapped to his limbs, he is left to float on the waves only to be carried back onto the beach and become, once again, the object of silent attention. From the point of view of aesthetic intensity, everything in the video hinges on the action's calculated slowness, on the sharp and obsessive accuracy of the framing, and on the emphasis accorded to the details, as well as on the soundtrack's alienating suggestion, electronic music composed by Tobias Bernstrup.

Francesco Poli



| Annika Larsson *Pink Ball*, 2002, still from DVD.