

Kunath intro

Going to Quauhnahuac, 2003

Kunath's simultaneously melancholy and funny video captures small-scale performances, seemingly fruitless actions that portray staggering ineptitude, a desire for human connection, and outlandishly minute acts of rebellion. The stage is his home city of Cologne, and we see him visit historical sites, museums, and train stations. He is an outsider, prone to acting badly as a desperate plea for attention. His every attempt fails miserably. We feel pity and compassion, and laugh at his inexplicable antics and agitation.

Clips of Snowflake, the only known albino gorilla who died last year, further highlight the notion of the outsider, the only one of its kind. Though Snowflake fathered 22 offspring not one of them was an albino. Found footage of perhaps the epitome of the outsider shows a Russian girl abandoned by her family and raised, no joke, by dogs. The artist, dressed in white, passes time exploring the city in utter loneliness, looking for someone or something with which to connect.

Kunath goes to a museum, perhaps looking to connect with fellow artists. Instead he is lost in a Carl Andre maze, then physically dumbfounded by something in a Jeff Koons show. He throws off his jacket and crouches down, unable to move. Instead of empathy, or even sympathy, people move quickly away. His odd behavior is sometimes subtle, comical, and often blatantly pathetic as when he professes his emotions in a trite coffee mug- expression in marker on his shirt.

The artist composed and performed the soundtrack, a tune so sad it's a cliché. Underneath the deliberate piano is a bit of electronica and a throbbing rap beat. The visual style is simple: an anonymous camera captures the artist's meanderings. The editing, in its occasional repetitions and dissolves, is as dumb and deliberate as the tune.

His persistent ramblings, his hope with a flower at the train station, and even his farewell dumping of his clothes onto the street, lead him nowhere but further into a symphony of absurdity, blankness, and pathos, which in the end leave him no retreat but his streetside campsite.