



## X LOVE SCENES

**Opening: April 20<sup>th</sup> 2007, 7 pm**

**Exhibition: 21/04/2007 - 26/05/2007**

**Filmscreening: from 11 am to 7 pm (every hour)**

### Press Release

*He was wonderful to work with. He came to work prepared, he knew his lines, he knew what he was supposed to do. Only one bad thing he did. By 4:30, 5 o'clock, his drinking would catch up with him, and he was in no shape to continue filming. I did all my love scenes to a white chalk mark on a black flag that was supposed to be Erroll Flynn, while the script girl read his lines in a dead, expressionless monotone voice.*  
(Maureen O'Hara on working with Erroll Flynn)

*X Love Scenes* is the fifth part of the project series *X Characters* which attempts to re-script the identities of iconic female film characters derived from cinema modernism as contemporary new versions. An Ur-trope of cinema narrative provides the mise-en-scène's starting point, a "primal scene" going back as far as Edison's famous May Irwin Kiss from 1896 – the filmic convention of the love scene, which *X Love Scenes* restages as an unresolved, traumatic, repetitive cycle. An actress, a director and a script girl on a film set; the male lead is absent. He is replaced by a mark – a white chalk X on a black flag that becomes the actor's stand-in. While the script girl reads his lines, the actress performs her part vis-à-vis the flag – facing an empty sign. The character of the actress is based on the template of Giuliana from Michelangelo Antonioni's *Il deserto rosso* (1964).

Since her first performance as a chat room character in *X Characters / RE(hers)AL*, Giuliana, who by now has become an actress, has divided herself into a number of sub-characters. These represent new versions of Bree from *Klute* (Alan J. Pakula 1971) and Hari from *Solaris* (Andrej Tarkovsky 1972). NaNa, the script girl, goes back to Nana of Godard's *Vivre sa vie* (1962), as well as to the versions already developed in *X Characters / RE(hers)AL* and *X NaNa*. All these characters were introduced in these previous productions. The director is the only role that is not based on a film-historic template.

Each of the five sequences tag basic coordinates of a love story's course – from the first meeting, falling in love, conflicts to separation – and are always dedicated to one character. The love scenes that are to be performed by the actress refer to their filmic templates and are rehearsed and shot in ever new versions. *X Love Scenes* focuses on these interwoven character fragments as rhizomatic updates and identity relais stations, that convey coded messages back from a "comédie humaine" staged under the conditions of contemporary New Media technologies. This is where the other side of a lover's gaze, or at least, the reverse shot of the passions required in the cinematic love scene, become visible. This "reverse shot", the "other side" of the "love scene," is rendered as a view of the production aspect of the cinematographic apparatus – staged as an imaginary Off, simultaneously a reverse shot of the desires and passions inscribed indelibly in the filmic convention of the love scene.

### **X Love Scenes**

2007, 58 min., color, sound

Written and directed by Constanze Ruhm with Judith van der Werff, Melanie Herbe and Josefin Platt.

For further information concerning the exhibition please contact Kerstin Engholm at +43 1 585 7337.