

SEQUENCE - TAEJOONG KIM

Agata Nowosielska(Curator)

"I go and come with a strange liberty in Nature, a part of herself." ¹

The work of Taejoong Kim, Korean young generation artist does not refer to the emotional sphere. On the contrary: his videos are a mathematical puzzle, a logical scheme based on a specific figure in time and space.

SEQUENCE, a strict audio-visual production, clearly proves the above claim. The forest, which is one of the main elements of the works, provides a backdrop and at the same time acts as the protagonist of the intricate synchronisation of sound and light. Taejoong Kim documents forests using photography: first in the vicinity of his native Korea, then in the Black forest in Germany and finally in Gdansk, during his residence at CCA Łaźnia in Nowy Port. Each time, he uses Nature as an intermediate, passive medium, as the final result is a video: a projection showing a forest during a storm, illuminated with hundreds of flashes governed by very strict laws – a sequence of sorts.

In his actions, the artist draws on the practices and theories formulated by Joseph Beuys and the Fluxus movement. On the one hand, the performative nature of Kim's works and the clear reference to the "living sculpture" theory formulated by the German artist and theoretician are a clear tribute to European art and its cross-border impact, on the other – his art poses the question of the legitimacy of such obvious references.

For me, Taejoong Kim's works represent many question marks and, I hasten to add, the reflection is more uplifting than disappointing. Why then? The fascination with European art is an individual choice made by the artist himself. The fascination with Joseph Beuys

¹ Henry David Thoreau, *Walden, or Life in the Woods*, p. 103, Hazleton: Electronic Classics, 2006

obviously results from the scholarship in Germany and the effect of German influences. Some might say that this is a very anachronistic strategy: academic, immature and naive. I, on the other hand, am inclined to defend these works. By doing so, I am not succumbing to the patronizing attitude of a curator. Taejoong Kim's works represent very solid formal experiments, accomplished in their form. Seventeen hours a day spent poring over the selected detail (so non-European, one could say) resulted in the creation of a perfect form. And, at the same time, the content is valid. The artist himself renounces all emotion whatsoever. Since there are no feelings in these works, what we are left with is cool calculation. Upon confronting the calculated, mechanical sequence of sounds and images, the potential viewer is faced with questions, which are answered by the art itself: it unassumingly seduces us, stimulating our thoughts and making us look for points of reference – not just the potential Prospero, but the praise of Nature, which somehow reaches us wherever we are.