

WILKINSON

A K DOLVEN

the day the sky became my ground

22 January – 28 February 2010

In her latest exhibition at Wilkinson Gallery, A K Dolven is showing two major works, 'the day the sky became my ground', a 16mm film and a video installation entitled 'ahead' with a third 'Self portrait Berlin February 1989 - Lofoten august 2009'. All are rooted in Dolven's sensibility formed in the northern reaches of Europe, in the landscape that surrounds the Lofoten Islands in northern Norway above the Arctic Circle. Here in the winter the mountains that run down to the fjords are covered in deep snow, in the summer the sun never sets. This extreme and beautiful environment is used by A K Dolven as the backdrop to her explorations of the poetic relationship between landscape and the human body.

The two major works in the exhibition develop this theme in different ways. 'the day the sky became my ground' portrays the image of a naked young woman spinning around and around in the snow. Her figure rotates as the camera moves once down her body. The film-strip is then reversed, mirrored and reversed again. This simple process of analogue editing plays with the centre of gravity of the figure and the viewer, as the legs, torso and hair sequentially come into view, feet in the air then feet on the ground. The sky becomes the earth, the earth the sky, all imbued with a bleached atmosphere of abstract beauty.

In contrast, Dolven's installation ahead pulls the high definition camera right back to film across a snow-covered valley. Figures struggle, up to their waists in deep snow. They are dressed in thin casual clothes completely unsuitable for the conditions they are in and are carrying a young woman feet first up the side of a mountain. As they struggle upwards they form a human conveyor belt passing the woman up over their bodies towards the top of the frame leaving behind their tracks in the snow. Shot in evening light in a single take and without edits, the people involved in this task seem to be acting out an arduous ritual; one that has a purpose that we as the distant viewers are not privy to. A monitor on the floor shows a fast edited re-shoot of the projection with some images framed differently. The work is reframed and quoted back at itself as a contiguous but separate reality.

The third work 'Self portrait Berlin February 1989 – Lofoten August 2009' has been made by Dolven over a period of twenty years. The screens of two monitors placed side-by-side show almost monochromatic images interrupted by indistinct interference. They convey the essence of an action first performed by Dolven in Berlin in 1989 on the balcony of her flat, and again, twenty years later, on the top of a mountain in Lofoten. In each case Dolven turns a hand held

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camera around her naked body and unlike the day the sky became my ground where the body turns in the world, here the world turns around the body. Both works, however, become the means by which the abstract beauty of the body and the cold atmosphere of the landscape become one present moment of light and form.

David Thorp 2009

Forthcoming exhibitions include 'Untuned Bell' Tullinlokka, Oslo, Norway, Ahead, Platform China, Beijing. Previous to Dolvens exhibition at Wilkinson she has recently held solo shows at Oslo National Museum, Laboral Centro de Arte, Gijon, Spain and Tromso Museum, Norway. Recent group exhibitions include Grensland Museet, Kirkenes, Carnegie Award, Kunsthal Charlottenberg, Copenhagen, Denmark, Staatliches Museum, Schwerin, Germany and Haugar Vestfold Kunstmuseum, Norway.