

MIKA TAANILA

*Film without Film*

25 November – 19 December 2021

**galerie anhava**

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*Film without Film* is Mika Taanila's first solo exhibition at Galerie Anhava. Using the moving image in versatile ways, Taanila's work often focuses on the complex relationship between technology and the human mind. It asks: What is cinema?

Taanila's art is characterised by the kind of thought experiments typical of conceptual art, subtle humour, and a longing for aesthetics that eschews rigid proceduralism.

The conceptual premises and manner of production of the works in the exhibition create a kind of narrative in which the object of humour is hard to define unambiguously. A case in point are the videos "Failed Emptiness. Time" and "Failed Emptiness. Place". Co-created with author Harry Salmenniemi, the works arise from speculations about how to depict as little as possible on film or, preferably, nothing. Dispensing with camera footage altogether, the first video consists exclusively of elements such as "scene transition effects" produced with video editing software, although the film dispenses with scenes as well. The other work does contain film footage, but it is recorded with a heat camera that, instead of light, distinguishes the temperatures of objects in the shot. Reality takes on a new cast, becoming an eerie surface on which objects shine and glow in unexpected ways.

In "Interiors" and "Exteriors", Taanila abandons camera and computer technology entirely. The "Interior" series consists of black and white photograms created in a darkroom by moving various filmmaking equipment (film camera, projector parts, DVD player, digital set-top box, film cutter) over photographic paper. The shadow images can be seen as portraits of impossibilities in which the subjects – moving image equipment – appear to move within their frozen portraits, which were created without any such equipment at all. The "Exterior" series consist of lumen prints made by placing movie camera lenses on photographic paper which was then left outdoors for hours to be exposed. During the exposure, the image appears slowly on the paper in colour, without any need of development. Earth's rotation and changes in weather leave their mark on the images.

The exhibition also includes prepared film books from the "Film Reader" collage series, as well as a new kinetic installation based on found film stills, "A Reflection of Fear."

*Mika Taanila (b. 1965) works with documentary film, experimental film and visual art. He has held solo exhibitions at Padiglione de l'Esprit Nouveau in Bologna (2020), STUK House for Dance, Image and Sound in Leuven (2018), Museum of Contemporary Art Kiasma (2013–14), Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis (2013) and TENT Rotterdam (2013). Taanila's works have been presented at numerous international film festivals and major exhibitions, including the Venice Biennale (Nordic Pavilion, 2017), Aichi Triennale (2013), documenta (2012), Shanghai Biennale (2006), Berlin Biennale (2004), Manifesta (2002) and Istanbul Biennale (2001). He has received numerous awards, both in Finland and internationally. Taanila was awarded the prestigious Ars Fennica prize in 2015.*