

# TOBIAS ZIELONY

## “Tell me something about you”

Galleria Lia Rumma MILANO  
opening: Tuesday October 20, 2015, h 18.00  
Gallery opening hours: Tuesday- Saturday h 11am – 1.30pm / 2.30pm - 7pm

*“Adding one image to the next is like choosing one story out of the vastness of possible stories. In my work the dark space between all the pictures has always haunted me. And I always wondered where reality is actually having its hiding spot. In the construction of the image or in the missing links. When creating a series the pictures are like all grammatical elements at once. Subject, verb etc. There is no beginning and no end. Working on my first animation out of single images made with a digital camera in continues shooting mode, this accumulation of made and not-made images got directed into the future, like a black hole sucking them in.”*  
Tobias Zielony September 2015

Galleria Lia Rumma is pleased to announce *Tell Me Something About You*, the fourth solo exhibition of works by Tobias Zielony, opening at the Milan gallery on Tuesday, 20 October 2015.

One of the artists chosen by Florian Ebner for the German Pavilion at this year's Venice Biennale, Tobias Zielony is following up the exhibitions of 2007, 2010, and the recent video retrospective of 2015 in the Naples gallery, with the first selection of works shown in Milan from four key projects he created between 2008 and 2014: *Big Sexyland* (2008), *Manitoba* (2009-2011), *Jenny Jenny* (2013) and *The Street (Rome)* (2013-2014).

The show *Tell me something about you* looks at the possibilities and the limitations in creating narratives with still and animated images.

On the **ground floor** of the gallery, the *Jenny Jenny* project, consisting of a video, *Der Brief*, and a selection of eighteen photographs, will be shown for the first time in Italy. The work, which was made in Berlin, portrays young women, some of whom earn a living as prostitutes. Zielony investigates everyday life and the behaviour of young people in contemporary society. He does so by depicting personal stories, focusing his lens on the individuality of his sitters, describing how they relate to the space around them, and taking an interest in their anxieties and problems.

The same artistic vein can also be seen in the serie of photographs, *Manitoba*, on display on the **first floor** of the gallery. In *Manitoba*, Zielony shows the lives of members of a teenage gang originally from the First Nations (the autochthonous people of present-day Canada) in the suburbs of Winnipeg, the capital of the Canadian province of Manitoba. As in previous projects, the artist maintains the techniques derived from photojournalism, but he also makes use of a number of pictorial genres, not only making portraits or group photos in which we see the gang members posing, but also views of the architectural and natural landscapes of Winnipeg. As well as the globalised tastes and customs of his sitters, what mainly interests the artist are the stories of individuals in their socio-economic environments. As part of the *Manitoba* work Zielony shows a sound piece based on text by Andrea Hiott, realized for the catalogue “*Manitoba*”, about the notorious residential school system in Canada, in which aboriginal children were taken away from their parents and culturally “re-educated” to lose their native identity.

The exhibition ends on the **second floor**, where the artist has chosen to bring about an interaction between two video projects – *Big Sexyland* of 2008 and *The Street (Rome)* of 2013. *Big Sexyland* is a screening of 80 slides made in Berlin, showing kids from the East in a porn cinema and in a nearby park. Many of them are on the first leg of a journey towards the West, which they know only from television and blockbusters from Hollywood, a land of promise and individual freedom. *The Street (Rome)*, on the other hand, shows some young people from Bangladesh in a reception centre in the suburbs of Rome, after an adventurous and often costly and dangerous journey to Italy: the first step in their search for a job and a new identity, in a tough social and legal setting.

**Tobias Zielony** (Wuppertal, Germany, 1973) studied at the Academy of Visual Arts in Leipzig.

In 2001, after studying Documentary Photography at the University of Wales in Newport, he frequented the Artistic Photography course held by Timm Rauterts at the HGB in Leipzig. After graduating in 2004 and receiving a Masters degree in 2006, he moved to Berlin. He was awarded the GASAG-Kunstpreis in Berlin, and in 2006 he won two scholarships in New York and Los Angeles. He later put on solo exhibitions in international galleries and museums, including C/O in Berlin (2007), Kunstverein Hamburg (2010), Folkwang Museum in Essen, MMK Zollamt in Frankfurt, Camera Austria in Graz (2011), Philadelphia Museum of Art (2011) and the Berlinische Galerie (2013). One of the artists chosen by Florian Ebner for the German Pavilion at the Venice Biennale in 2015. He lives and works in Berlin.

