

# TOBIAS ZIELONY

*Dream Lovers. The Films 2008–2014*

Galleria Lia Rumma NAPLES

opening: Thursday 19 February 2015, 7 p.m.

gallery opening hours: Tuesday-Saturday 11 a.m.-1.30 p.m. / 2.30 p.m.-7 p.m.

Galleria Lia Rumma is pleased to announce *Dream Lovers: The Films 2008–2014*, the third solo exhibition in Italy of works by Tobias Zielony. The opening is on Thursday 19 February 2015 in the Gallery's spaces in Naples. Selected by Florian Ebner for the German Pavilion at the forthcoming Venice Biennale, Tobias Zielony is now showing eight videos made between 2008 and 2014, after the exhibitions in 2007 and 2010, which were held in the former premises in Via Solferino in Milan, and in Naples respectively. *VELE DI SCAMPIA* was created for the 2010 exhibition in Naples, the city that has influenced him more than any other metropolitan area, and is being shown again on this occasion. Consisting of 7000 photographs taken at night with a digital reflex camera and mounted at artificial speeds, it adopts the visual language of film to convey the difficulties faced by those who live in and frequent these places. His artistic practice combines a social and documentarist approach with a more conceptual one, describing the living conditions of adolescents in the world that they inhabit on the fringes of society. Tobias Zielony has been round the world to tell the story of the dark side of adolescence and has portrayed the night-wandering teenagers of Los Angeles, the little Manitoba Indians in their reserves, the squalor of Knowel West in Bristol and the northern districts in Marseille, life in the Halle-Neustadt complex made by the DDR, kids in the Vele di Scampia, and young people in Ramallah. Most of his sitters pose proudly, imitating film and rock stars, illustrating their dreams and aspirations, and conveying a mythical vision of themselves, yet their melancholy looks reveal the chasm between illusion and reality, between mythical fantasy and the world they live in. Right from the outset, his artistic research has adopted a narrative and visual approach that is typical of cinema, heightening the gap between the real and the unreal, and between what goes on behind and in front of the lens. In *BIG SEXYLAND*, 2008, his first film, which is set in a porn theatre in Berlin where young male prostitutes from Eastern Europe spend their time, Zielony films the face of a sleeping man rhythmically lit up by the flickering reflections of a film projection. In *MANITOBA*, 2008, Zielony is in Winnipeg, Canada. Shot in Super 8, it records the story of a prisoner, a member of Canada's First Nations, who survived a ritual before being allowed to leave the gang. In 2013 the artist made another two films in Berlin as part of his *JENNY JENNY* project: *DER BRIEF (THE LETTER)* shows two prostitutes talking with a colleague, who has aroused such passion in one of her clients that his constant threats have forced her to change her place of work. Her admirer's love letter lends authenticity to the story. In *DANNY*, 2013, Zielony follows a woman waiting by the side of a country road on the outskirts of the Ruhr region, showing where she takes her clients and the little coloured plastic lights she uses to attract their attention in the dark. In *THE STREET(C.P.A.)* he illustrates the world of underage Bangladeshi refugees living without their parents in a reception centre on the outskirts of Rome: the road that leads from the camp towards the city and to the beaches, where the kids sell electronic gadgets to tourists, is the stage on which they perform. In 2014 Zielony made two films while working for a couple of months in Ramallah. *AL-AKRAB (THE SCORPION)* pays tribute to the opening scene of the surrealist film *L'Âge d'or* by Luis Buñuel. Zielony's most recent film is *KALANDIA KUSTOM KAR KOMMANDOS*, and it is also the first on which he has worked on the stage design: a remake of Kenneth Anger's *Kustom Kar Kommandos* (1965), it is set near the Kalandia checkpoint, a very busy crossing point through the wall that divides Ramallah from Jerusalem.

**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). He has been invited by Florian Ebner to the German Pavilion at the Venice Biennale in 2015. He lives and works in Berlin.

