

## Tobias Zielony

### VELE / SAILS

Opening Saturday 9 October 2010, 11 a.m.

Galleria Lia Rumma – Via Vannella Gaetani 12 – 80121 Naples

Gallery opening hours: Tuesday – Saturday 10.30 a.m.-1.30 p.m. / 2.30 p.m.-7 p.m.

After "The Hidden", the artist's first solo exhibition in Italy, which was held in Milan in February 2007, Tobias Zielony's "Vele" project, promoted and produced by Galleria Lia Rumma in Naples, includes a photographic animation that lasts nine minutes and sixteen seconds and, as an exclusive exhibit, the complete accompanying photographic series of 16 pictures.

For the entire month of October 2007, and then on a number of occasions during the following year, the artist worked in his usual way, examining how adolescents like to appear to others, the poses they adopt, and the way they "kill time" in the suburban districts of the city. He looked at the places they choose for meeting up at in the eastern area and in the north of Naples, eventually ending up at the Vele in Scampia.

Hampered by a series of modifications to the original plans (by Francesco di Salvo, 1962-75), by management failures and, in more general terms, by the excessive housing density and insufficient services facilities in the 167 zone plan, these monumental, anti-urban buildings have now been condemned as uninhabitable by a municipal resolution. They are to be cleared and demolished. Plot L, with three buildings, has already been razed to the ground, and in the autumn the local municipality will present its detailed plan for redeveloping or replacing the remaining four "sails" in plot M. Only about a hundred families – the last remaining assignees and occupants – still live in the buildings, which have now been reduced to ghostlike ruins.

Consisting of 7000 shots taken at night with a digital reflex camera, and edited at an artificial speed, the *Le Vele di Scampia* photographic animation uses the language of cinema to convey the deprivations of those who live in or frequent these places. This is the artist's third video work after *The Deboard*, which was shown in the "Play Forward" section of the 2008 Locarno film festival, and *Big Sexyland*, of the same year.

As well as the subsidised-housing districts and the authorised private-cooperative "parks", this part of the city is also home to a Rom camp – on the landings of the light-blue Vela ("housing units" for the designer) – with American sub-culture models (hip hop and breakdance, for example), which are local versions of global codes and the only means of reacting to boredom and urban decay, overlapping and interacting with a very strong local identity.

Tobias Zielony's work goes beyond simply presenting a stylistic code, however distinctive it may be, for his is a process that observes reality. This is why, more than in other metropolitan areas, his work has been influenced by the very particular characteristics of the context, which is afflicted by a staggering level of unemployment among the young (50%), in which there are both widespread forms of illegality and some sparse centres of cultural resistance which, through a pervasive system of associations, has led to social initiatives of various types.

Tobias Zielony was born in Wuppertal in 1973 and studied at the academy of visual arts in Leipzig. He studied documentary photography at the University of Wales, Newport. He has received several scholarships in the United States and, since September 2009, he has held the chair of Artistic Photography at the Kunsthochschule für Medien in Cologne. He currently lives and works in Berlin. The "Vele" project was shown at the Kunstverein in Hamburg (June-July 8, 2010) and in Dortmund (September-November 2010).