

## (soir) & (matin)

Installation by René Pulfer with two video projections:  
Projection (soir) & Projection (matin) by Rémy Zaugg in cooperation  
with René Pulfer, 1990 / Installation 2021

der TANK, Basel

Curated by Roman Kurzmeyer

5 – 14 March, 6 pm – 8 am

The exhibition can only be viewed through the windows from outside.

[dertank.space](http://dertank.space)

Artist and curator René Pulfer presents an installation of two video projections especially conceived for der TANK. The work is only visible at night and through the windows, from outside. Both films, shown here in this format for the first time, were created in 1990 on the Susten Pass. We see an artist painting snow and ice at 2224 meters above sea level with a view of the Stein Glacier, during dawn and before nightfall. The painter is Rémy Zaugg (1943 – 2005), who had then already found international renown both as an artist and author of theoretical texts on art. His methodological rigor, employed when addressing visual perception from an artistic point of view, is remarkable. Today, his writings remain just as relevant due to their concern with not only the image as a work of art but also the “difficulty to grasp reality.” In a memorable 1992 conversation with art historian Jean-Christophe Royoux, Zaugg mentioned that many artists experienced this difficulty as a failure, with it being addressed in their practices as such, whereas he viewed the perception of reality as a “task that has no end in sight.” The perception of reality as a process that cannot be concluded is a concern that René Pulfer shares with Rémy Zaugg.

*News* (2005), an installation that played a pivotal role in René Pulfer’s understanding of moving images and the function of art, effectively demonstrates this. Originally conceived for the exhibition *Covering the Real* at Kunstmuseum Basel, the work has recently been shown at Kunstmuseum Liechtenstein’s 2011 exhibition *Beispiel Schweiz*, where it was placed in dialogue with works by Fischli/Weiss, Mario Merz, and Hannah Villiger. *News* comprises 24 small LCD monitors that are fed live-images from different satellites through long cables ornamentally laid across the floor. Silent media images from 24-hour news channels, spanning across all continents and the earth’s 24 time zones, are broadcast. These images are not selected; the project’s dramaturgy arises from daily events. Via a hidden receiver, the installation’s images spill across the room like running water. With varying lengths and branching out from this same source, the cables wriggle their way across the floor, their ends curling up like blades of grass. While based on natural structures, this poetic image of a media-centric world brings to mind the words of French anthropologist Marc Augé, according to whom the global is today perceived as local and, as stated in *Non-Places* (1992), “it becomes possible to think in terms of the unity of terrestrial space.”

This brings us back to Susten Pass in the late 20th century. Remy Zaugg indeed worked before his subject in nature, but from a slide projection, as the canvas blocked his view of the mountain panorama. A monochrome painting emerged as a result, since Zaugg employed the color tone he had already used for priming the canvas for the depiction of ice and snow. René Pulfer is presenting the two films from the beginning and end of a day in der TANK's glass cube as back projections on two screens hanging in the room as loop and at the same time the whole night through until dawn. The installation (*soir*) & (*matin*) explores the changing, uncontrollable natural light with which both artists worked on the Susten Pass. In the presentation format chosen by René Pulfer for this exhibition, what is painted becomes either visible or disappears through light. The creation of images, the processes of their transformation and loss both in technical and cultural senses, which have been central to René Pulfer's research since the beginning of his artistic practice, are equally reflected in this work.

Roman Kurzmeyer

For many years, up to 2014, artist and curator **René Pulfer** was the head of the Art Institute HGK FHNW in Basel. He is considered one of the pioneers of video art in Switzerland. He first began organizing film and video programs in 1980 and in 1985 founded the video class in Basel where many Swiss video artists active today studied. In 1987, on the occasion of documenta 8, he worked on the video art section, for which Wulf Herzogenrath was responsible. There were not yet any public media libraries when Pulfer founded the video class. Video was a new medium. Pulfer collected and archived videotapes and documentations on film, video, and art. He used this video collection in his teachings and made it available to students across institutes so that they would experience this new art form first-hand and become acquainted with the medium's history, which was yet to be written. Today, this video collection is held at the HGK FHNW's Media Library in Basel.

René Pulfer's work is currently featured in the exhibition *Afterlight. Afterglow. Video installations and their pioneers* at Kunsthaus Baselland until 24 May 2021.

### Exhibited works

René Pulfer

PROJECTION (*soir*)

Video 2021, 21'45", HD, 16:9, color, without sound

PROJECTION (*matin*)

Video 2021, 21'45", HD, 16:9, color, without sound

Production René Pulfer

Postproduction Reinhard Manz, point de vue, Basel

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## Exhibitions with former students and lecturers of the Art Institute

The exhibition by René Pulfer is the seventh of a series of exhibitions initiated in 2017 that presents commissions of former students and lecturers of the Art Institute. Previous exhibitions include *Our Common Space: Tiphonie Kim Mall, Mia Sanchez, Valentina Stieger* (22 February – 1 March 2020), *Louise Guerra Archive: Keine richtige Schule* (30 November – 8 December 2019), *Kaspar Müller: Rendering of service in the pitch of the bruise* (23 Februar – 3 March 2019), *Jürg Stäuble & Hannah Villiger* (1 – 9 December 2018), *Kasia Klimpel – Berge* (3 – 11 March 2018) and *Werner von Mutzenbecher – 8/1/D999R* (2 – 10 December 2017).

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### More information

[dertank.space](http://dertank.space)

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