

PROJECTIONS OF A PROJECTIONIST IN A PORN CINEMA

Business as usual at the porn cinema. The film reel is loaded and played. The sounds of the projector mix with the moaning on screen and the masturbation in the audience. Anja Salomonowitz stages the stories conceived by the projectionist, who, in the confines of the projection booth, turns the lead actress of the porn film into the romantic heroine of his fantasies. Whereas sex and pornography have recently become themes in films and literature by women authors—especially in France—in an attempt to radically and bluntly overcome old taboos and deal with themes of female sexuality that were once ignored, this short film shows a male fantasy world from the perspective of a young woman. And this world, parallel to the hard-core fantasies of women, is perhaps much more romantic than we would imagine. The projectionist walks down a narrow street. From the middle of the street comes the light of a lantern. As soon as he steps into the light, he loses his key and out of thin air the lead actress of the porn film appears. All at once she is there, just to pick up the key. The pictures in the projectionist's mind become progressively more radical, along the same lines as the goal-driven porn films that he shows. His fantasies are inspired by small bits of reality. In his fantasies, he transforms the masturbating spectator, who brushes his hand over his hair at the moment that the projectionist's knowing gaze falls on him through a gap in the film, into an exhibitionist who shocks a group of young girls. And in the end we see how he presents himself in his fantasies, as he opens his coat and others watch him reveal his "best piece." And reaching a climax here, the film claims indirectly, is because he is, in this way, accepted and loved for what he is. The fantasies last as long as the porn film that inspired them. Then the audience leaves the cinema and the projectionist leaves his workplace. It is probably just like any other day, when the job is done.

Nora Sternfeld