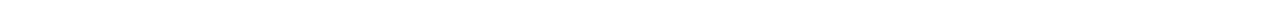


NAT WILMS - PORTFOLIO / selected works

Between documentary and poetry.
A continuous conflict. A continuous need
to combine realism with vision.



Safe zone

installation



On the Italian Emilia-Romagna coast there are 7 lighthouses. These became the focus for 7 photographs, which depict the lighthouses as if they were totemic sculptures in an evocative nocturnal atmosphere.

The photographs, which can be lit or not, represent different ways of seeing a single object. Given its highly symbolic and therefore untouchable nature, the lighthouse gave me the freedom to work with the surface. The way we treat the surface changes our perceptions and emphasizes the differences between structure and light, photography (not lit) and painting (lit).

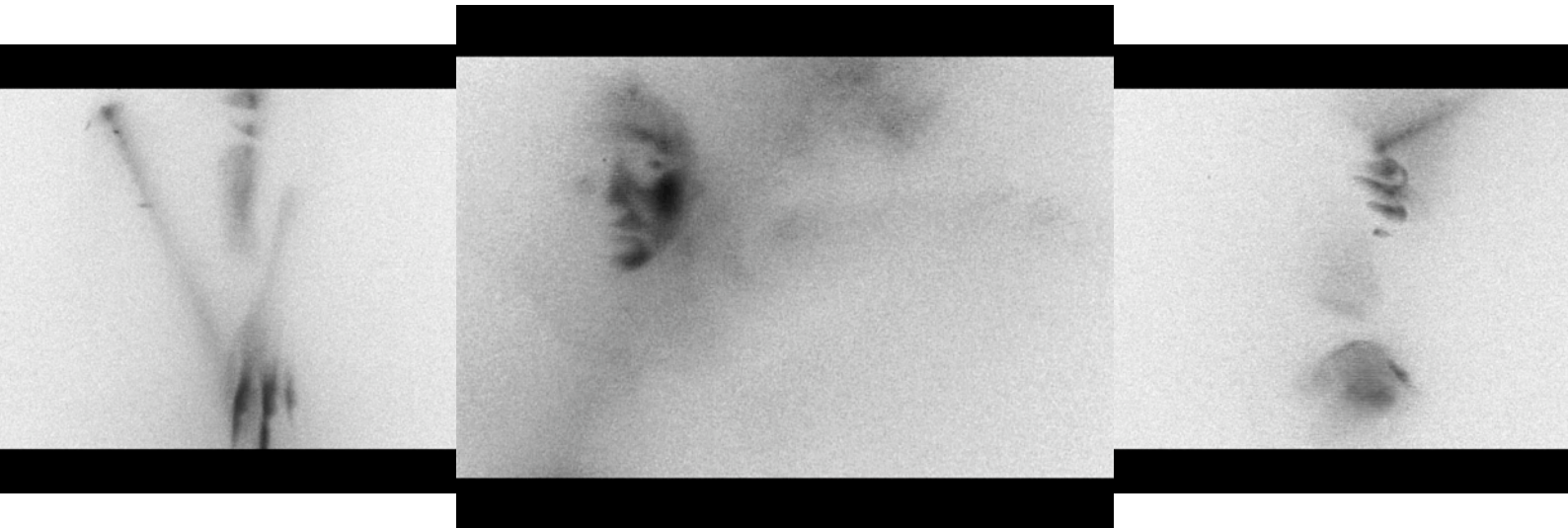
The 7 lighthouses represent a frontier, a symbolic boundary between a non-place (the sea) and a place (land) - a safe zone between two mediums. The safe zone, however, is ambiguous - on the one hand it is synonymous with seeing and finding hope and security. On the other hand, it is the way that we look at things that gives us stability.

The light-box series "safe zone" and the video "within the traces" were presented as a specific project for the art fair "The Others fair", which was located in a prison cell of a former prison in Turin, Italy. This setting completed the work.



Safe zone
2012

7 light-boxes of aluminium, 7 lambda prints, Plexiglas, light with batteries and switch
dimensions: cm 22 x 30 x 9 each



This video is about discovering the "seen" in the "unseen". How can we reveal an intangible intuition and transform the darkness into light?

I filmed under water next to a light-house on the Italian Emilia-Romagna coast in absolute darkness. We used flashlights but on a dark beach it was not enough. So I shot without being able to see, as if I had an "innocent" eye, guided by the power of the sea. During the editing phase I inverted the colors of the material, enabling me to "see" better and differentiate the volume and space made of lights and shadows.



installation view
cell of the ex-prison "Le Nuove" in Turin/Italy

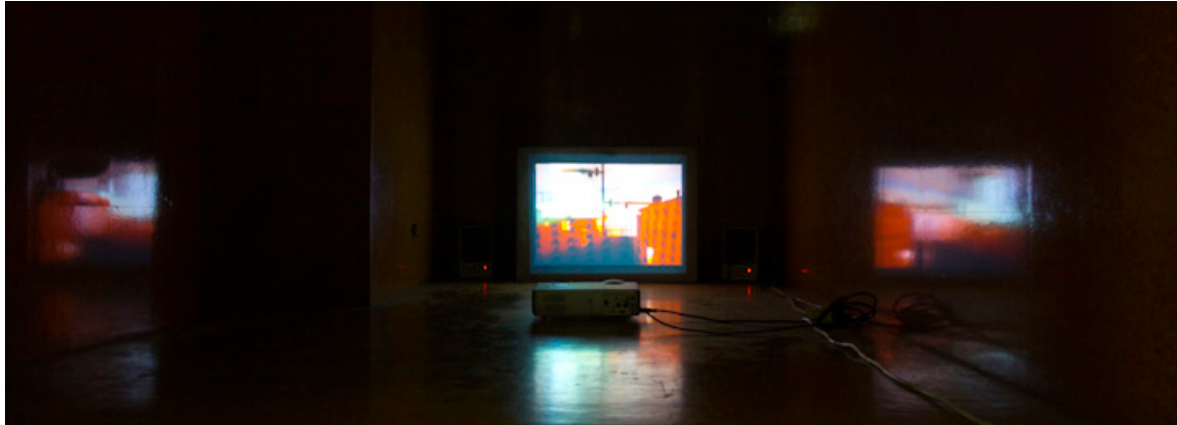
within the traces
2007

6'38" in loop, b-w, stereo
video link: <http://vimeo.com/4871836>

magic spells

installation

use of constructed objects within video



It is a very fine thread that links objects to memory, nonetheless it can be made visible. Through bold borders and heavy walls. As if only they were strong enough to reveal intangible ephemeral energies.

The Italian landscape is full of abandoned historical houses. I wanted to document the time which is left to these beautiful colored walls or the leaves that fill a room without a roof. And I wanted to document how easily people destroy their own heritage.

Perhaps it is true that the more you move the less you remember. In the thirties, in Russia, the forced "relocations" of government "dissidents" were policy. In an efficient yet subtle manner the relocation made them think of anything but the reason they had been relocated.

Somehow this strategy continues. Here in Italy. Even Today. If not why are houses built quickly with cheap, insubstantial material intended to last only a few years. Is it to prevent us from nurturing and embroidering certain thoughts?

Faced with this visual abandonment and sad violence, I wanted to react and I chose to do so through poetry. Even to imagine a metaphysical medicine or attempt to find magic in the heart of these stones that shout and are silent at the same time provides relief.



white words (magic spell #1)

2011

with one of the two magic spells called "Merseburger Zaubersprüche" written in Old High German

8''04' in loop, in color, stereo

link: <http://vimeo.com/28322500>



"He who destroys his own house will inherit wind."
(Bible, proverbs)



heirs of wind (magic spell #2)
2011

*with one of the two magic spells called "Merseburger Zaubersprüche" written in Old High German
8'11' in loop, in color, stereo*
link: <http://vimeo.com/28323937>

circus of peace

experimental documentary



This experimental documentary was born in collaboration with the Mexican musician Carlos Sandoval and focuses on the theme of childhood in artistically and socially difficult situations. Its title refers to the theatre-circus project of the same name, which takes place in the Italian town Bagnacavallo, where every year in the main square a chapiteau is put together to host young artists who come from circus schools around the world. For the 2010/2011 season Afghan children from Kabul were invited to Bagnacavallo and stayed there for more than three weeks. These children did 25 shows entertaining more than 4000 spectators.

I filmed them mainly during their rehearsals, trips, presentations on the street and in schools nearby. I did not want to polemicize their political and fragile background and instead concentrated on their gestures, gazes, unspoken thoughts, tender age and differences to make them familiar to us and emphasize what they are: Children.



circus of peace

2011, Italy

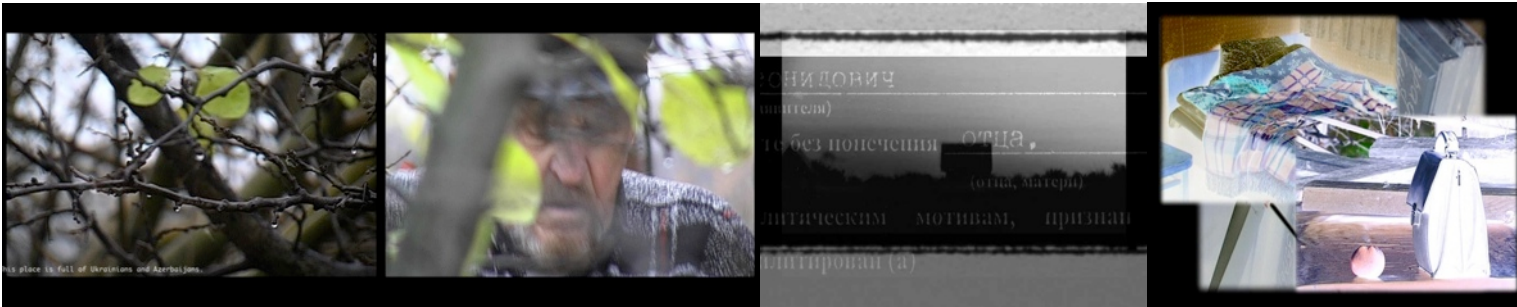
in collaboration with the sound designer Carlos Sandoval

22'', b-w and in color, stereo/no language

link: <http://vimeo.com/28883441>

Behind the Volga there is land!

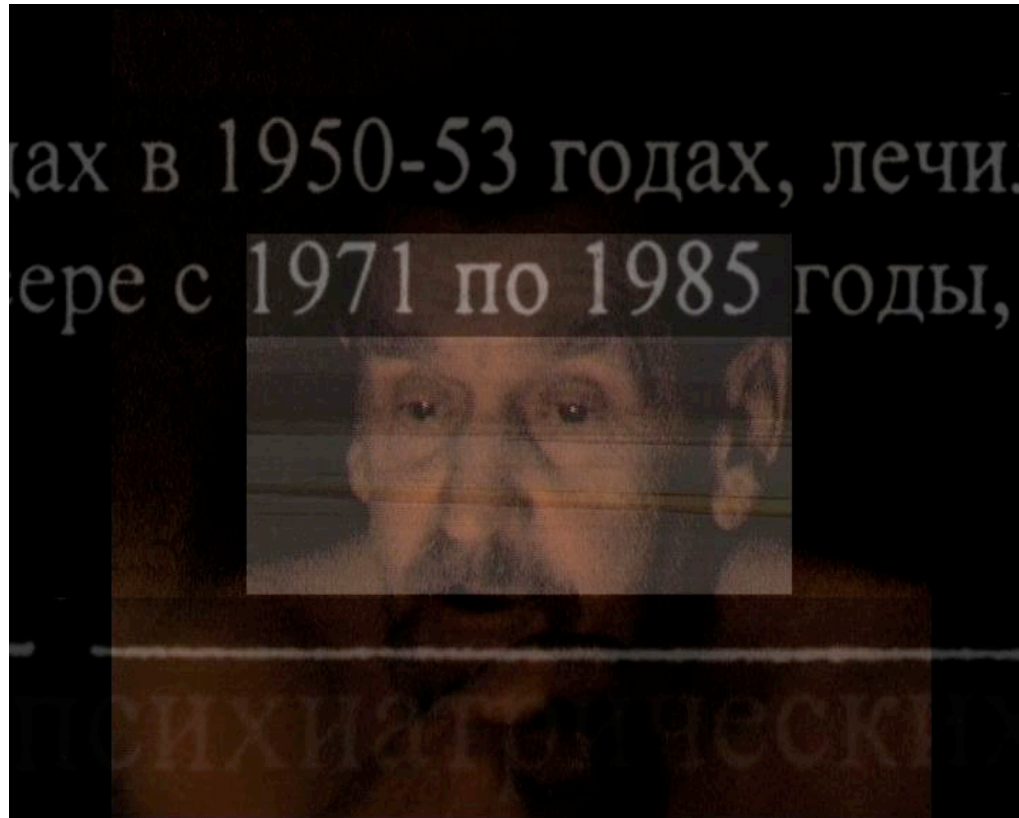
experimental documentary



“I would like to go in a country, where the police does not exist.
He will never leave his country. He loves it too much...”

This video explores a family matter, which I narrate on three levels using different video language. There are three types of information in one story: images show the environment of my grandfather and him in Russia; subtitles reveal a discussion he had with my grandmother in their apartment; and letters throughout the video derive from documents linked to my grandfather which were used against him, when he was put in prison.

The story is obliquely about corruption and about the inner soul of an old and simple man who is trying to save himself with letters in order to break a vicious circle of events.



Behind the Volga there is land!

2008-2011, Volgograd/Russia

7'38", in color, stereo

link: <http://vimeo.com/20852637>

somewhere else

experimental documentary



In Bologna there was a “temporary” immigration reception centre next to an active tobacco factory. The factory’s fumes affected the immigrants, especially the youngest, and after only three months half of the habitants exhibited the first symptoms of asthma. Italians, who had lived there before, were sent away exactly for this reason.

A demonstration for Immigrant’s rights in 2001 brought the issue to light.

The immigration center was destroyed 10 years later.



somewhere else
2004, Bologna/Italy

5'41", b-w and in color, stereo

link: <http://www.arthub.it/index.php?action=video&video=1123>

in-between me

installation

use of constructed objects within photography



For this photographic series I started by researching objects and material - aluminium - seeking to morph their functions with childhood imagination. For this I built two scene objects: A bathtub that could also be a boat, and a satellite dish that could also be a protective shield simply by changing its position.

To give meaning to these objects and in order to express my photographic point of view, I needed to put myself on the scene. I used simple gestures, in naturalistic settings somewhere between romance and nostalgia.



installation view in the gallery OltreDimore, Bologna/Italy



in-between me
2010

3 light-boxes made of aluminium with lambda prints, plexiglass, glass, wood and light
dimension: cm 53 x 77 x 11 each



This work consists of an audio installation and a video without sound, which play separately, in two rooms.

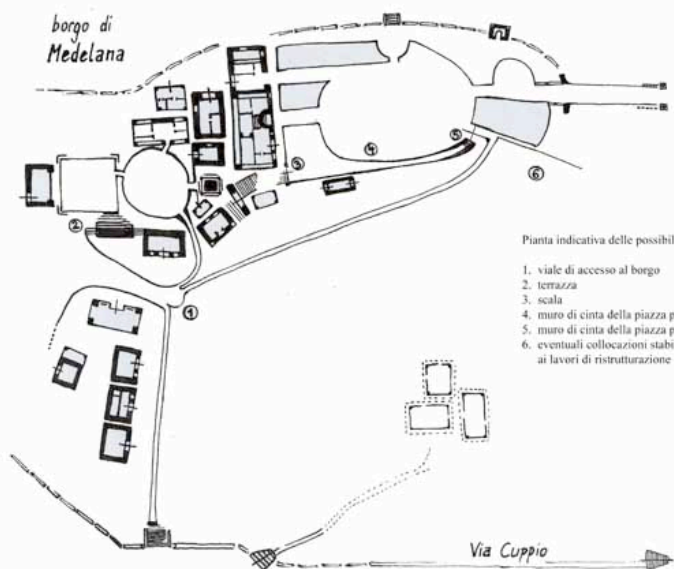
In one room which is illuminated with a blue light, the visitor sits on a seat and listens to the audio with headphones. In the other a video image is watched on a small screen fixed onto the wall.

The installation contains the first spontaneous answer as to why I wanted to make art, but in an interdisciplinary way. It deals with the first moment that I remember. The memory is "divided" into an internal and external vision: the audio narration reveals my impressions as a little girl entering a theatre for the first time. The video shows images of a performance, taken from the Czechoslovak television which broadcast the spectacle "Spider" in 1987. To which I made a few changes in order to assimilate my memory.

spider
2010

installation with video screen, audio recording, headphones, chair, blue light
audio of 2'10" in loop - video of 4'22" in loop, in color
audio link: <http://vimeo.com/36507562> - video link: <http://vimeo.com/36504812>

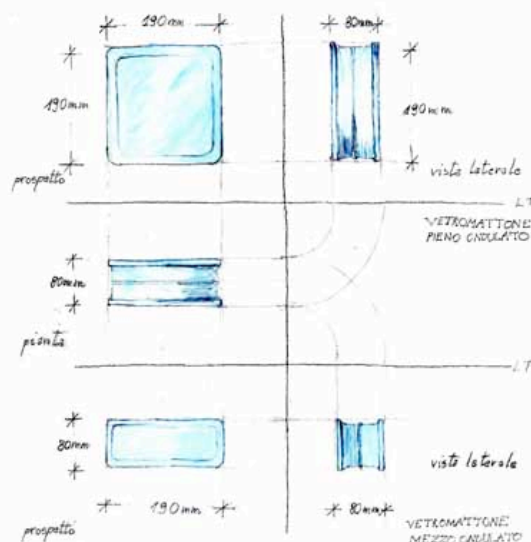
prize murri
public art
site-specific installation



Pianta indicativa delle possibili installazioni

1. viale di accesso al borgo
2. terrazza
3. scala
4. muro di cinta della piazza principale
5. muro di cinta della piazza principale
6. eventuali collocazioni stabilite in base ai lavori di ristrutturazione

SCHEMA TECNICA



An entire historical village abandoned and uninhabited. New habitants will arrive but along with new building plans. What of the past can be saved? What will be the future everyday life of Medelana?

Our proposal was to insert particular moments of Medelana's past into glass bricks, incorporating photography into objects. These glass bricks, that transform old treasures, would then be positioned on paths at the entrance of the village, in the stone walls that surround the main square, in house walls and next to trees - reaching and extending their visible roots, "drawing" new trails in this medieval village.

Passing through the village, the observer - an active part of this public art project - discovers new thought trails bringing about associations of new times and places, which in turn become part of the future of Medelana.



photo brick

2005, Bologna/Italy
 in collaboration with Lucilla Candeloro

photo installation made of glass bricks and photography of the historical and abandoned village Medelana in the Tuscan-Emilia Apennines

Nat Wilms was born in Halle/Saale, former East Germany, in 1976 where she grew up in a Russian-German family. In 2000 she moved to Italy where she enrolled in Sculpture at the Academy of Fine Arts Bologna. She graduated with her thesis "Circular and linear time in masks and icons" in Visual and Cultural Anthropology in 2006. Both during and after her academic formation she took part in video classes at the University of Art in Berlin and has participated in numerous workshops by international artists and theater directors in Germany and Italy.

She is an interdisciplinary artist, who moves easily between mediums; Mixing manipulating and elaborating diverse materials she is able to integrate her creations in well-articulated artworks. Light objects, installations and video-photographical documentaries emerge from a thoughtful social-anthropological approach which allows her to relate her own existence to that of the world at large. The process and product of fragmentation is questioned and materialized in an ongoing experimental and non-linear narration. She produces a very poetically dense but at the same time documentarial video art, creating dreamy atmospheres with pictorial elements through the abstraction of realistic shooting material.

The work of Nat Wilms can be interpreted as a journey towards the discovery of different dimensions of being which talk metaphorically about existence and absence. Her narrative is able to capture ones imagination through unexpected associations and memories, transporting the spectator in a given time frame which is, at the same time, timeless.

She collaborates with other artists, directors, musicians and designers as a video artist and as a video designer in theaters. Adding to and completing the playgoer's experience through an experimental narration that increase the levels of perception by mixing different genres of art.

Since 2009 Nat also works for the design project HILLSIDEOUT which she co-founded. The furniture of HILLSIDEOUT incorporates poetic narration through the use of light, writing, photography and video of landscape elements obtaining a result that lies somewhere between an objet d'art and a functional sculpture.

(text by Elisa Schiavina, Simona Pinelli and Nat Wilms)

> more info about other works and collaborations: www.natwilms.com
