

# **Per-Oskar Leu**

## **Vox Clamantis in Deserto**

june 24th – july 31st 2010

**unosunove**  
arte contemporanea

**19**

contents

video stills

credits

text by Peter Amdam

images









Video stills from  
**Vox Clamantis in Deserto**

A film by PER-OSKAR LEU

Cinematography PETTER HOLMERN HALVORSEN

Music VESTI LA GIUBBA from the opera PAGLIACCI written by RUGGERO LEONCAVALLO performed by the CZECH SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA sung by PER-OSKAR LEU

Sound TORGNY AMDAM

Editing KAREN GRAVÅS

With special thanks to 1/9 UNOSUNOVE, PETER AMDAM and the MUAN SÆTHER family

### **Lamenting lamentation in pornoscope**

There exists in much contemporary art a longing for an unimpeded Parousia, an unblocking of the road to a site of authenticity, originality and synthesis. According to Per-Oskar Leu's new film "Vox Clamantis in Deserto" ("A Voice Crying in the Wilderness") such a road is, by many, believed to be found in the history and praxis of Norwegian Black Metal.

At the heart, if such a thing exists, of Norwegian Black Metal lies an act of violent translation. Violence in the sense of an intended stupidity, an intended blindness and the sheer positing force of this, thus violent, act of translation. A "what if?" "What if?" the theatrics, the theatricality, of the hyperbole posture of an (English) band like Venom were to be taken literally? What if the theatrical performance of Venom were plunged into an idea, rather a concretized world, of an era consisting both of "dark" medieavality, of "erronous" paganism thus erasing the prefix "theatrical" and thus opening up the road for the pure pulse of sheer, black performance. Erasing the theatre out of the theatre. Just a blind *this is*, of the *this-ness*, the thing at hand.

The fact that this very idea, or as an effect of time folding, of an originary act of violent translation did not come into being until it itself was mediated, translated, by a multitude of foreign bodies eager to access the same general *body* of transgression. When the foreign cult of worshipping the worshippers of the stupid ("stupidity" is here thought of in an hölderlinian sense via those post-hölderlinian translations of the term performed by Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe and Avital Ronell). A process of intrepid appropriation of what, at bottom, is sheer, blind, stupid, appropriation.

Thus, Per-Oskar Leu's quixotic character lamenting the erred translation of pop culture thought of as pure *a-culture* (as Black Metal would be the very negation of culture altogether). Discovering, as Walter Benjamin's translator, that there is no Original Language, that the original was dead already to begin with. Leu's film warns us, in it's own intrepid, barren and saturated at the same time, and indeed *stupid* fashion of the dangers of ascribing the promise of an afterlife, of a transcendental Parousia, by the ways of contemporary art's platonic temptation of the theatre *sans* theatre, to what is the violent act of translation itself. "Vox Clamantis in Deserto" situates the translation in the afterlife on an always already dead original.

The ironic, laughable, and indeed  *pornoscopic* effects Leu's film produces is thus resembling of an imaginary movie, showed in reverse, of that proverbial man slipping on a banana peel. Only this time the banana peel is a corpse.

Peter Amdam, Greece



Vox Clamantis in Deserto  
2010  
T-shirt, plastic cover  
62 x 84,5 cm  
Signed on the back  
Unique

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