

ArtReview

Project Space: Ciprian Mureşan

October 2009



Ciprian Mureşan, *Untitled (Laces)*, video still, 2006, video, sound (3 mins 5 secs)

Ciprian Mureşan is an artist based in Cluj, Romania. *Untitled (Laces)* is a short film, featuring unsteady hands tying shoes for the first time, currently on view on ArtReview's Project Space. He has recently exhibited in the Drawing Room exhibition *TINA*, curated by Olivia Plender last year, and in a group exhibition at Wilkinson Gallery. He is represented by the renowned artist-run space Plan B, in Cluj, where he is currently preparing for a solo show.

Here ArtReview discusses this short film with the artist.

AR: Who is the boy tying the shoes? What did you ask him to do?

CM: The boy is my son, and the video is documenting a unique moment when he tied himself for the first time in his life the shoes. We often used this method for collaboration and communication, maybe more directly and efficient, integrate him in what I do, or me trying to involved in his education. We "collaborate" before on different projects like the video called "Choose..." when he have this idea of mixing the same quantity of Coke and Pepsi in the same glass, because for him the taste was not such different, but the image of the brand, yes.

AR: What first gave you the idea to make this experience into a film?

CM: First, it was my "duty" to teach him how to do it, and after this came the idea to record him, and how he does it when he tries for the first time. It depicts concentration and a strange energy, with the little hesitations of doing a normal activity.

AR: Quite a lot of your work involves children attempting simple tasks, often appearing to fail a little, could you say something about this?

CM: What is a very simple task for everybody else, is transformed it in that moment to a very

important and unique moment for my son. In another video we used the same kind of approach. It is such a unique experience that he has in religion classes at school. These classes have been introduced and made obligatory in school programs since after the Romanian revolution, and after the fall of Communism. He was for the first time meant to confess in a Christian orthodox confession. What we tried to understand together is what sin means to a 7 years old boy, Of course everything was transformed by him into an action story with some automatically included Christian rituals, like learning prayers.

AR: Does what you say about your son's education relate at all to your works we saw of yours at the Drawing Room in TINA, which featured children blowing into paper bags, and a wall text made of vinyl records saying saying 'Communism Never Happened?'

CM: The works are related of course, you mention "The Pioneers" showed at the Drawing Room, the pioneer were the pupils in communist time in Romania, with this white uniforms and red scarf. My drawings depict them sniffing glue,(but not in a obvious way , they look like playing with papers or plastic bags) the mixture of two "real" images of children in Romania, an official one, about communist education and one cliché who appear on western mass media after the regime ;s change , the Romanians children sniffing glue in undergrounds. In reality the step was so small between this two images. So we can see the relation, how the State changes the rules, introduced obligatory religion in schools, we can easy say, instead of ideological classes from the past.

AR: What are you are you working on at the moment?

CM: I'm preparing the next solo show at Plan B in Cluj, my hometown, and where I present among other works a new production, a video documenting the process of painting of Tom Chamberlain, artist from London. He has a laborious technique, with a rhythm that will transform 12 hours of video in a slow strange dance. It is also about documenting and reproduction of painting using photography or video. In particular, Tom's work is not easy to reproduced, and this was a challenge for me, not to resolve this through sophisticated photographic or video techniques, but recording the process itself. Would you say that you are quite interested in observing and recording the processes of others then? Yes, I like when I discover some common rules in people's processes and when is the moment they cross their limits.