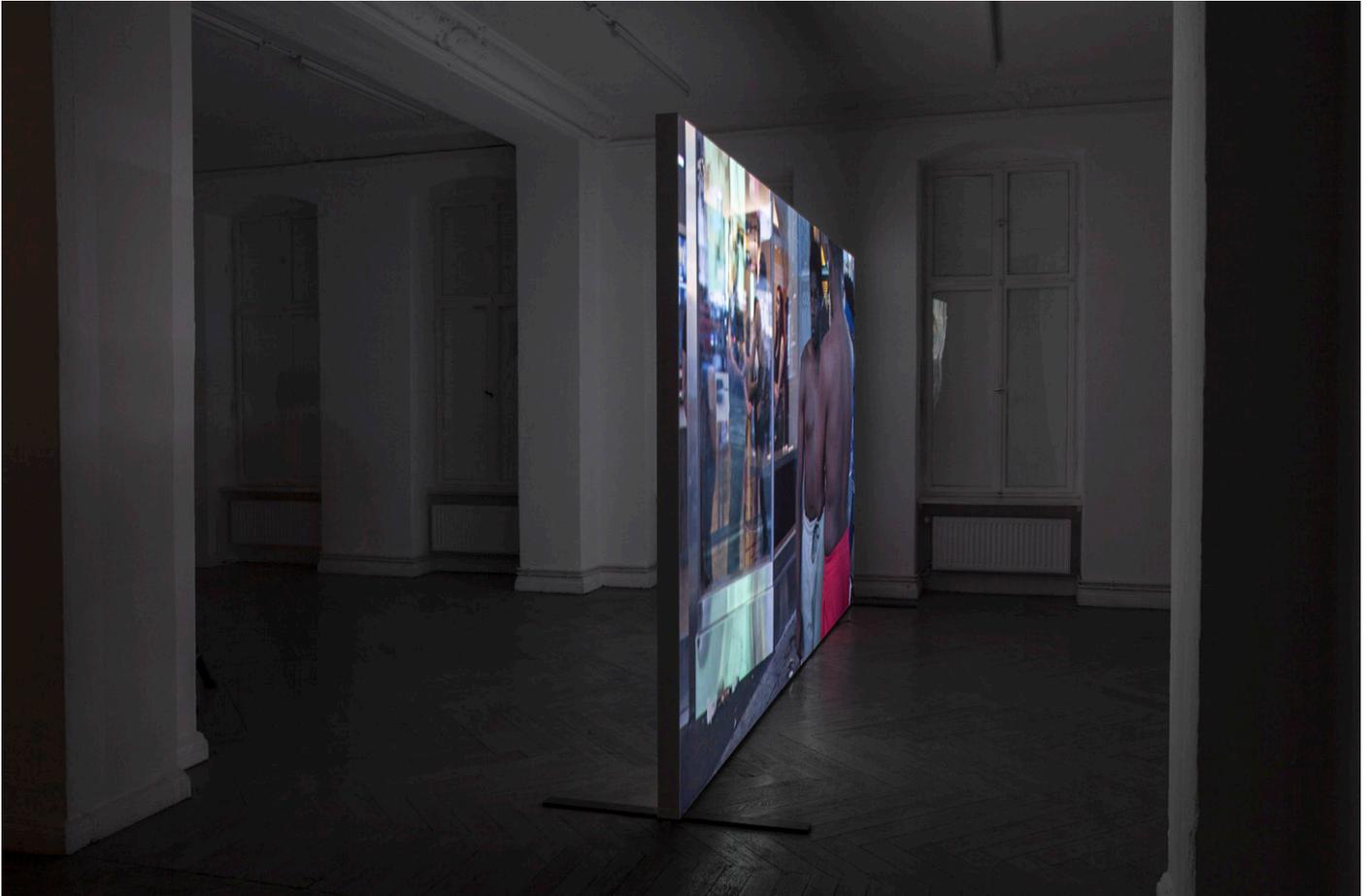


Jana Schulz

being on concrete

January 15 - February 22, 2020



Exhibition view, Jana Schulz, 2020

Greasy, well-thumbed \$1 notes pass through large, brawny hands, are counted, then passed on. Tiny gestures and motions repeatedly send information, give, take, reject, and demand. Cautiously involved in this group of men, the camera witnesses the transactions, the familiar relations, and the routinized sequences.

"If exchange is the criterion of generality, theft and gift are those of repetition."

With Jana Schulz, camera always means camerawoman; after all, this apparatus provides her (and, with her, a female viewpoint) access to circles that would otherwise remain blocked to her or whose habitus would completely change in her presence: groups of young boxers, street dancers, all of them all-male brotherhoods in which every training is always simultaneously practice in an image of masculinity that has meanwhile been absolutely justifiably branded as toxic. But Schulz is far from accusingly documenting mechanisms that we all already know. Rather, she records all these routine, eternally repeated units that form seemingly self-evident stances and self-understandings and – with her very cautious, almost intimate, insistent camera work that constantly shifts between



Exhibition view, Jana Schulz, 2020

proximity and distance, extreme concentration and indifferent casualness – thereby creates an open access to her subjects.

“Repetition as a conduct and as a point of view concerns non-exchangeable (...) singularities.”

Often filmed in the dark of night to exclude visual distractions from the acting persons in front of the camera, she thereby develops a hypersensualism that registers every stirring, every blink. For Schulz’s curiosity is not about the visual tropes and practiced poses of masculinity, this continuous initiation. She wants to look behind the testosterone and note the fragile moments of weakness, sensitivity, and non-conformism. This always-benevolent exposure of slight blurs in the masculine self-image, which already characterized the artist’s earlier works, emerges especially clearly in her current film work “being on concrete”: the beauty of the vulnerable dancer who is afraid to perform the handspring, as the openness of the neophyte before he internalizes the dogmas. Wrested by means of an almost tender proximity, which, however, was also permitted. Perhaps as a kind of present.

“The heart is the amorous organ of repetition.”¹

Text by Moritz Scheper

Translation by Mitch Cohen

¹All quotations are from Deleuze’s *Difference and Repetition*.



Exhibition view, Jana Schulz, 2020