

THIS CORROSION
SERGEI ROSTROPOVICH

Sergei Rostropovich's solo exhibition at New Galerie, *This Corrosion*, travels from the canals of hard clubbing Berlin to the underwater archeological park of Baia, a sunken city where the Romans of the imperial era partied. From the residues of Berlin's nightlife to the ancient ruins, water has suspended, eaten away, attacked, but also paradoxically preserved everything in a moment of suspension, off the cycle of time.

The exhibition stops, at length, in a small room, behind closed doors, in the Antwerp neighborhood where Michel lives. Former model, former owner of the nightclub *Café d'Anvers*, frequent resident of psychiatric hospitals, he confides in the artist on 6 screens, over and over. If an obvious, disturbing distress emerges from this gonzo polyphony that Sergei Rostropovich has triggered and captures, one cannot help but think, as well, of the Willard of *Apocalypse Now* unable to leave his hotel room: "I am still only in Saigon". The actor, Martin Sheen, is actually drunk, has really cut his hand open; the crew has to stop him from attacking Francis Ford Coppola. Struck by a heart attack, he leaves the set a few days later.

A series of film stills doubles the sensation of a moment more frozen than decisive, of a capture of scenes whose very essence is repetition. The last "character" of the exhibition is the Görlitzer Park in the southeast of Berlin, photographed by the artist. Every day, a population of crack addicts comes to take refuge there, to look for something to consume, to take drugs, with the nagging fear that the cycle will stop.

The eponymous video of the exhibition *This Corrosion* is set to a music composed for the occasion by Jean-Guillaume Cabanne. He was inspired by the gabber style, an early hardcore techno music from the 90's, on which one performed a syncopated dance, the hakken, at 170 bpm.

Sergei Rostropovich, born in 1986, lives and works in Berlin and Paris.