

DAVID JABLONOWSKI

FONS WELTERS - AMSTERDAM

The most intriguing piece in David Jablonowski's first solo show at Galerie Fons Welters is *Directory (App)* (2012). This assemblage consists of a trumpet placed on a printed Arabic Internet directory. The directory resembles a phone book and offers a physical guide for finding websites. On top of the instrument, a manual for "flaming" is presented, explaining the online act of insulting. This piece humorously articulates the friction between the digital and the physical, a recurring topic in the oeuvre of the artist. For the exhibition "user," Jablonowski presents a broad variety of new works, from projections to large sculptures and installations, that turn the gallery into a fascinating yet crowded database.

The show is infused with Jablonowski's deep interest in media archaeology. Two video interviews, for instance, deal with the invention of the computer mouse and the development of the hyperlink, each focusing on the relation between user and system. Jablonowski questions how computer language can be related to "actual" language and handwriting. The series "Future of the Document" (2012) consists of fragments

of Arabic and Persian calligraphy and aluminum plates, while *Where it all begins* (2012) combines a writing tablet with a plaster sculpture. Here the artist seems to connect the online act of cutting and pasting with the tradition of calligraphy.

Jablonowski succeeds in presenting these topics with a sensitivity to materials and textures that will appeal not only to media students and theorists. In the back of the gallery five large monoliths (*Volume*, 2012) are installed. Despite the solid and rough appearance of the objects, they are in fact lightweight, made of Styrofoam and plaster, raising question about surfaces and representations.

However, the show is less interactive than one might expect from the title; the visitor to the gallery remains an observer rather than a user.

Tessa Verheul

DAVID JABLONOWSKI, *Future of the Document (Nastaleegh) 2*, 2012. Anodised aluminium, acrylate, plastic sheet, loop, 34 x 30 x 29 cm. Courtesy Fons Welters, Amsterdam.
Photo: Gert Jan van Rooij.



MUZI QAWSON

ANNET GELINK - AMSTERDAM

City of Valley, USA. The specific location of this small town that British artist Muzi Quawson (b. 1978) visited remains uncertain. Yet, as the images in the three-channel installation *Shawmut Circle* reveal, we are in the south of the USA, somewhere on the border between Georgia and Alabama. The 16 mm film images give a beautiful impression of a town in which time seems to stand still.

Quawson was a resident at the Rijksakademie in Amsterdam and is known for her photographs and video installations. Her new video *Shawmut Circle* (2012) explores Valley by following three men. Similar to the production process of her earlier video works, she lived for a couple of months in this area to become acquainted with the people. Teenager Cody spends his days at Shawmut Circle, a playground that now functions as a skate site. We also follow the unintelligible elder *Bullet*, who introduces us to the black community during a bike ride. The most touching scene is when shop owner Henry sings a hymn in the back of his shop. The undressed man claps his hands devotedly while he reads a text from a bible. The intimacy of this scene is a testament to

Quawson's stay in the area; Henry accepts her as a spectator.

While Henry allows us to come close, we remain outsiders in other scenes. This can partly be explained by the sound; it is hard to understand *Bullet* and therefore to relate to him, and the editing between the three scenes is fragmented. In this sense the installation lacks the contemplative quality of Quawson's earlier installation *The Old Home* (2007-2009), in which we follow a cowboy in the Midwest. During this 14-minute film hardly anything is said, but because the character is followed so intensely by the camera, we can identify with him. Despite Quawson's talented photographer's eye, *Shawmut Circle* offers an unsatisfying impression of three men who surely have a lot more to say.

Tessa Verheul

MUZI QAWSON, *Shawmut Circle* (detail), 2011. Video still.
Courtesy Annet Gelink, Amsterdam.

