

Katharina Voß/Janin Afken, Subjekträume – eine lesbische Produktionskap-
sel, Pelze Multimedia Westberlin 1981 – 1996, 2020, Film Still,
© Katharina Voß/Janin Afken



Katharina Voß

Janin Afken

In the IBB Video Space

2.2.–28.2.22

“Pelze Multimedia” was a space for women* and lesbians* in an initially squatted building at Potsdamer Straße 139 in the West Berlin district of Schöneberg. In their film “Subject Spaces – A Lesbian Production Capsule: Pelze Multimedia, West Berlin 1981–1996“ (2020, 28 Min.) Katharina Voß and Janin Afken remember this place where women* were able to put social norms behind them with relish and where everyone could define for themselves what it meant to be female*.

It was there from 1981 until 1996, serving as a venue for exhibitions, concerts and parties, but especially as a free zone where lesbian* identity and sexuality could be articulated with radical openness and affirmation. Since then, it has fallen largely into oblivion. Interviews with three of the leading figures, Roswitha Baumeister, Ursula Bierther and Mahide Lein, demonstrate how “Pelze Multimedia” played a special role, even within the women’s movement of the time, by opening up to different lifestyles and formats.

The filmmakers bring great sensitivity and respect to portraying the activists, whose commitment created a significant safe space for many women* and made a major contribution to West Berlin’s subculture. It is also evident how much feminism has moved on in recent decades. One of the aspects implicitly addressed by the film is the exclusion of PoC (People of Colour) and trans* people within the women’s movement at the time. It is important for Voß and Afken to show, for example through their choice of archive material, that not only their interviewees necessarily take a partial view, blanking out numerous other perspectives and experiences. The same, the filmmakers suggest, could be claimed about them. The purpose of this film, then, is not to tell the one story of this space, but also to indicate how any narrative is bound to be subjective.

The filmmakers

Katharina Voß (*1978) works in Berlin as an editor, filmmaker and college lecturer and belongs to the queer feminist film collective TINT. “Subject Spaces” has been shown at film festivals in Kassel, Ljubljana, London, Oberhausen, Berlin, Oldenburg, Bologna, Weiterstadt, Glasgow, Hannover, Thessaloniki, Paris and Rome.

Janin Afken (*1980) is a research assistant at the Humboldt University in Berlin, where she works on the cultural history of sexuality. In 2022 she



completed her dissertation “Eigenzeiten” about temporality in lesbian feminist literature in the years 1971 to 1983, during the division of Germany. She is currently working on the Einstein Research Project “Jewish Homosexual Modernism in the German Speaking World and in Mandatory Palestine/Israel (1890– 1945)”.

IBB Video Space

The IBB Video Space is screening artists who work with time-based media. The programme, which changes every month, features not only established names in contemporary video art but also up-and-coming artists rarely seen in museums to date. For these, the Berlinische Galerie seeks to facilitate an institutional début.

Each month brings a new encounter with work that raises questions about the medium and about social or political issues. Importance is attached to including marginalised perspectives and to shedding light on the impact of power structures.

More video works online:
bg.berlin/virtual-video-space

Preview

2.3.-28.3.22 Johanna Bruckner

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Press images

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10 €, concessions 6 €
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