

## Andreas Bunte

(Mettmann, Germany, 1970)

Andreas Bunte has long worked on subjects tied to the social history of certain periods of the nineteenth and twentieth century, with particular attention to how, through the study of historical architecture, certain significant cultural aspects of past eras can be reconstructed, almost as if the buildings were refractive prisms of scientific, philosophical, and social ideas in different environmental situations and in different nations. There is something encyclopedic about his way of interpreting old buildings, as if he were seeing in them the emergence of the ancient meaning of medieval cathedrals, with their inextricable compendium of all knowledge and all religion.

The historical narration the artist weaves into his films is made up of faithful accounts, based on extensive archival research, along with variations of fantasy and modified reconstructions. Thus even in his choice of certain specific aspects of past decades, Bunte selects, by preference, the emergence of new fideistic convictions based on developments in scientific and social research.

The modernist building of the University of East Anglia that we see depicted in *New University*, one of the two projections that make up *Beton*, 2010, the work in the CRT collection, appears like a cathedral consecrated to the new social utopias developed in the 1960s. This was a time when numerous new universities were established in England, based on a new teaching methodology and a new organization of campuses and their spaces, with the goal of creating new human beings, new scientists, new citizens, animated by a renewed and more profound sense of belonging to the community. In retaliation, as if following a rule for the internal corrosion of every social utopia, the new University looks completely abandoned, like a great concrete wreck gone aground with its dreams, on the shoals of reality. The montage composed of still images, the black-and-white footage and the obsolescent noise of the 16 mm projectors further heighten the melancholy mood around its ruins.

The second projection in the work, *Normbewegungen*, offers a counterbalance to the sense of abandonment. Some young models, similar to those in postwar proxemics research, move about rigidly, with minimal gestures, against a measurement grid similar to the kind used for photogrammetry. These sorts of experiments were meant to determine the exact volume of space necessary for carrying out actions required for an environment to be functional. Thus, between a desire for optimization and a utopian projection, we observe figures carrying out sequences of movements very similar to those typical of postmodern dance, and, in so doing, we register the flickering of the eye of the artist who, acting as a historian, unexpectedly becomes ironic. (EV)