

# NYX

A FILM BY CLAIRE HOOPER

OPENING 16 THURSDAY SEPTEMBER 6 - 8 PM

SCREENING 17 - 26 SEPTEMBER 12 - 6 PM

*Nyx* (2010, 22 mins, HD video ) is a film by Claire Hooper that stages the event of 'the night', set on U7 line of the u-bahn in Berlin.

Where in Greek mythology, the earth mother Gaia gives us the topos of the city, Nyx the goddess of the Night gives us the inner realm. The progeny of Nyx, a potent crowd embodying human experience include old age, rage, strife, and friendship. Thanatos, the god of quiet death, his twin Hypnos and his wife Pasithea, the goddess of hallucination, begin the Odyssean journey of a young man from Kreuzberg along the U7 line to Spandau.

Hooper's cast are made up of friends and acquaintances, mainly Kurdish, who have a parallel, if unwritten, experience of the recent history of the city. Kreuzberg, now semi populated with young artists and trendsetters from around the world, in the 1970s and 80s was a haven for Kurdish immigrants. The Turkish, Arab and Persian population lived in the areas directly alongside the Wall that the German Berliners wanted to forget as much as possible. U7 line, designed by Rainer Rümmler, architectural engineer for the BVG during the cold war, follows the river Spree, and the shape of the wall underground - in *Nyx* the U7 becomes the river Lethe, the river of forgetfulness. The hero's name is Furat, the Arab form of the river Euphrates.

Furat sleeps on the train, intoxicated after a party and finds himself in various parts of west Berlin in direct confrontation with, or under the spell of, various children of The Night. Pasithea gives him these visions, and he hangs dangerously between sleep and death. He meets Morpheus, the son of hypnos and spirit of 'people in dreams', an oracle of sorts, a shape shifter in the guise of his own mother, who reminds him that transgressing the night is not allowed. Pre-islamic tradition all over Persia has it that there are 7 dimensions of existence of which the night is the second after the day. In the night one can expect to encounter the Djinn of the night, who are very similar to the Ancient Greek daemons or spirits, personifications of emotion that are the children of the night. In Furat's dream these become one and the same. His 'transgression' unblessed into the realm of the night requires some form of sacrifice, which he finds unwittingly at the Pergamon Altar in the Pergamon Museum.

The plot of the film is based on anecdotes of Kurdish life in Berlin and Turkey from various friends, especially from Garip Özdem, who also kindly allowed the use of the additional scenes from Kurdistan of the goat sacrifice.

Stylistically the film is influenced by superhero movies as much as by brevity and exaggeration of the anecdotal form, which brings together the narrative. The use of the train platforms by Rümmler as theatrical sets, adds a pop or cartoon palette to the work as a whole.

Claire Hooper lives and works in London. She has participated in numerous exhibitions and screenings internationally. Recent and forthcoming shows include Solo show *MUMOK*, Vienna, 2011, *Time Machine and Anywhere Door*, IT Park, Taipei; Art Statements, Art-Basel 41, Basel; *Nach Spandau*, Hollybush Gardens, London; *The Blessing*, Sketch, London; *An Archaeology*, Zabudowicz Collection at 176, London; *A New Stance for Tomorrow*, Sketch, London, Bidoun Artists Cinema, Dubai & Tribeca Grand Screen, New York;

She is a 2010 winner of The Baloise Art Prize 2010, that honours two young artists every year and is presented at the 'Art Statements' sector of Art Basel.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION AND IMAGES CONTACT LISA PAINTING/MALIN STÄHL**

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