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Nadja Marcin

Sissi

2005, 0:30 min, sound, colour

In the centre of the video image, a young, dark-haired woman can be seen sitting on a narrow bar. The protagonist is barefoot and is wearing a yellow top and light beige skirt. Where exactly she is remains just as unclear as where the bar originates and where it ends. The woman seems strangely isolated against the dark background that nestles against her body and surrounds her claustrophobically. A feeling of constriction creeps in. The blackness presses in on the woman in her exposed position and contrasts sharply with the warm tones of her clothing. The empty, dissatisfied-looking expression on her face reinforces the impression of isolation and loneliness. Abruptly, the woman opens her mouth, but instead of a human voice, there unexpectedly emerges only a short, melodic warbling. This acoustic cue and the title, Sissi, finally smooth the way toward an understanding of what we are seeing: In Marcin's video work the woman as decorative object is conflated with the entertaining singing bird in a cage. The yellow top stands for bright plumage. The woman's warble is at once bewildering, comical, shocking and surreal. Sissi in her imaginary cage leaves behind an uneasy feeling of amusement. (NI/JTG)

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