

The Authentic Boys

The international collective Authentic Boys was founded in Altay (Siberia) in 2007. As artists in residence during the Meetings in Siberia Festival the video artists Aaike Stuart and Boris van Hoof presented together with Johannes Dullin their first shared production, the short film *In Character*. The performer and visual artist Gregory Stauffer joined the group in 2008.

Authentic is a term that from the beginning has served as a common means to view the world around them. Authenticity means realness, genuineness or credibility. However in our daily lives we are constantly confronted with powers from outside which in different ways become examples for us. We are frequently moving in an artificially created environment, adapt gestures and clothing styles and conform our behavior to certain standards. What does authenticity mean and what are its expressions in an environment that so strongly influences us?

The game with the thin line between self and self-staging, being and performing is always present as a substantial element in the productions of the Authentic Boys. The guideline of their first production *In Character* was the search for dramaturgical elements in every day situations in the public domain. Simple tasks like opening a newspaper and throwing away a ball of paper were being investigated on meaning and form by endless repetitions. A film-character arose who watches, copies, wants to be seen and eventually becomes imitated himself. *In Character* showed a liking for the mix of staged and documented film.

The Authentic Boys work and experiment with contexts and themes, which are derived from everyday life. Their artistic starting point is the playful questioning and illumination of the fictitious layers in the reality and the authentic moments in the theater, surrounding us. In their work the Authentic Boys want to touch upon certain social and political themes without turning them into the central focus. With the help of simple means they want to offer a different perspective on that which surrounds us permanently. In this respect humor and poetry are as important as a penetrating view through the surfaces of our surrounding reality.

The Authentic Boys work in places that represent spirit of the time, civilization, progress or perfection and by means of their infrastructural or stylistic perfection have a tremendous amount of appeal to modern day humanity. In that category, for example, fit gas stations, shopping malls, traffic isles, campsites and bungalow-parks. For the Authentic Boys these are the platforms on which contemporary communication processes and lifestyles in their most unvarnished form become visible. They resort to these places not as hidden spectators, but as actors who in a subtle yet self-willed way get in contact with them, use them and put in an accent or a counterbalance.

With their work the Authentic boys connect film, video art and photography with physical acts and performance. The Authentic Boys hail from Geneva, Berlin and Rotterdam. In each project different artists can collaborate. Amongst others, they are currently working on the seven-screen video-installation *Chakra Gang Bang* and their first solo-exhibition.