

Tokyo March

2009

Installation with slide projection. 154 slides, 11 min

In this exhibition, Sofie Thorsen follows up on the layout drawings of the facades of the Ginza, the traditionally most innovative and still important shopping street of the city. They were made between 1930-31 by Kenkichi Yoshida, artist, designer and co-developer of Modernology, a theory that is based on the experiences of the great Kanto earthquake of 1923 and investigated the phenomena of urban modernity in the barracks architecture that occurred soon after. The drawings are an analysis of the existing façade compositions and focus particularly on commercial – Western as well as Japanese – typologies, which appeared in the form of neon signs, signboards, and shop windows and which are made readable in an abbreviation. Similar to the later Pop art, commercial life was seen as a feature, as an experimental field, and last but not least, as a stage for modern life. With the camera, Thorsen zooms into these streets, takes details, enlarges, reduces again, showing graphic overlays as well as architectural details, which are characterized by a huge variation. The individual images are shown in the slide installation „Tokyo March“, which analogous to the lyrics consists of four chapters played in different rhythms. The second focal point of the slide installation reassembles in a collage-like manner the photographic archive material further deciphering the meaning of the drawings. The pictures are so blended into each other that they set the architecture in motion. Thorsen breaks out the structures behind the abstraction in order to track down the architectural ideas of this drawn row of houses. Only the individual architectural detail of the façade, singular and in itself significant, is in b/w lit on the wall doubling the concept of the façade. This complex image plane is not only a reconstruction of the facts, but makes the readable and non-readable façade mutually interpretable.

Bettina Steinbrügge

Excerpt from the press release

Sofie Thorsen,

Krobath, 9. 9.– 7. 11. 2009

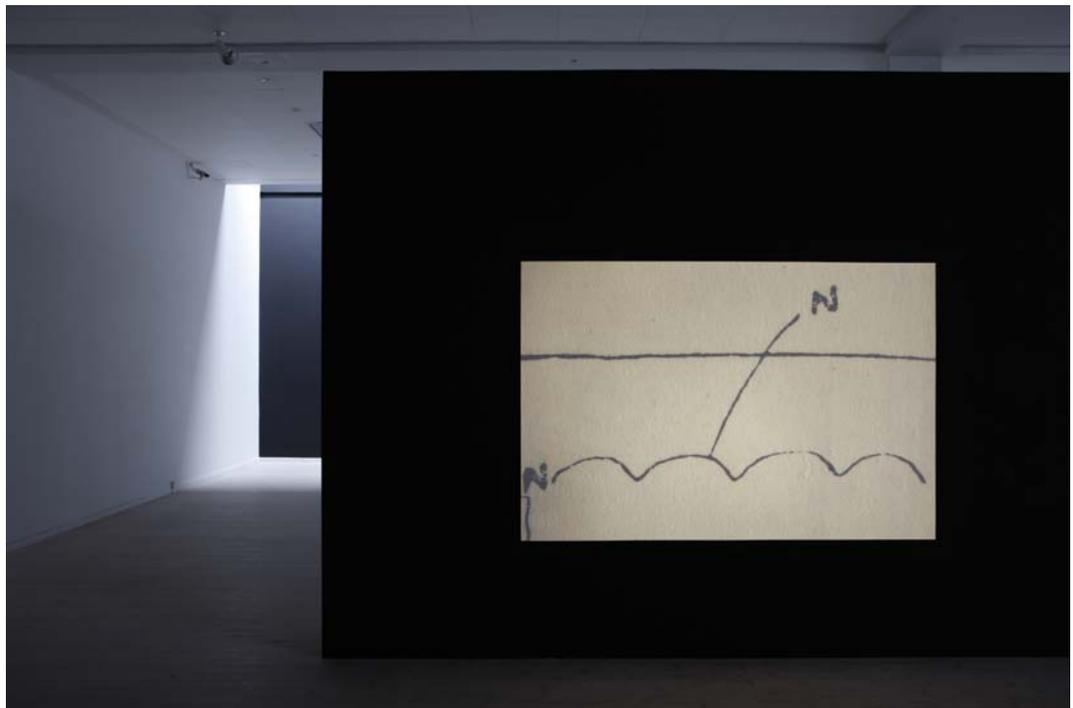
*Longing for the past when the streets in Ginza were lined with willow trees
A young beauty becomes a nobody with age
Dance to the jazz and down liquor into the night
And rain that is the tears of the dancer will sprinkle at the break of dawn*

*Maru Building, the center of love
There is someone writing letters in tears near that window
At least keep the rose you found left behind during the rush hour
As a memorable token of your girl*

*Love makes the vast city of Tokyo small
Secret dates in the chic town of Asakusa,
You are like a subway, I am like a bus,
It's not easy to stop our love.*

*Go to the cinemas? Or for some tea?
Why not we run away on the Odakyu train?
With the ever changing Shinjuku
the moon in Mushashino shines over the rooftop of the department store*

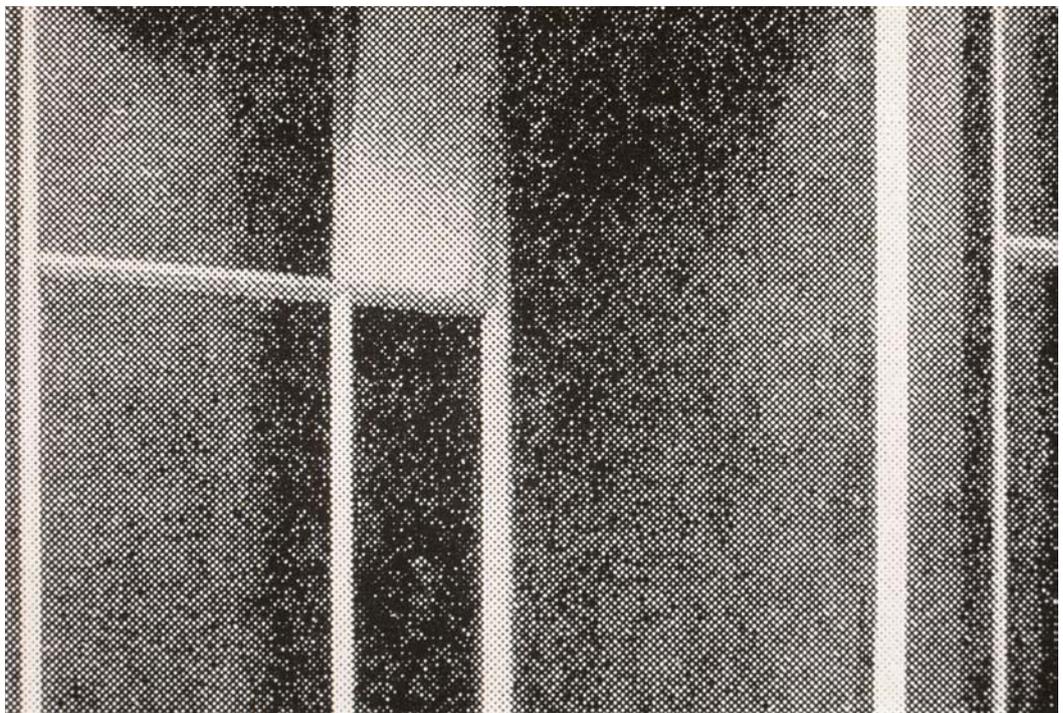
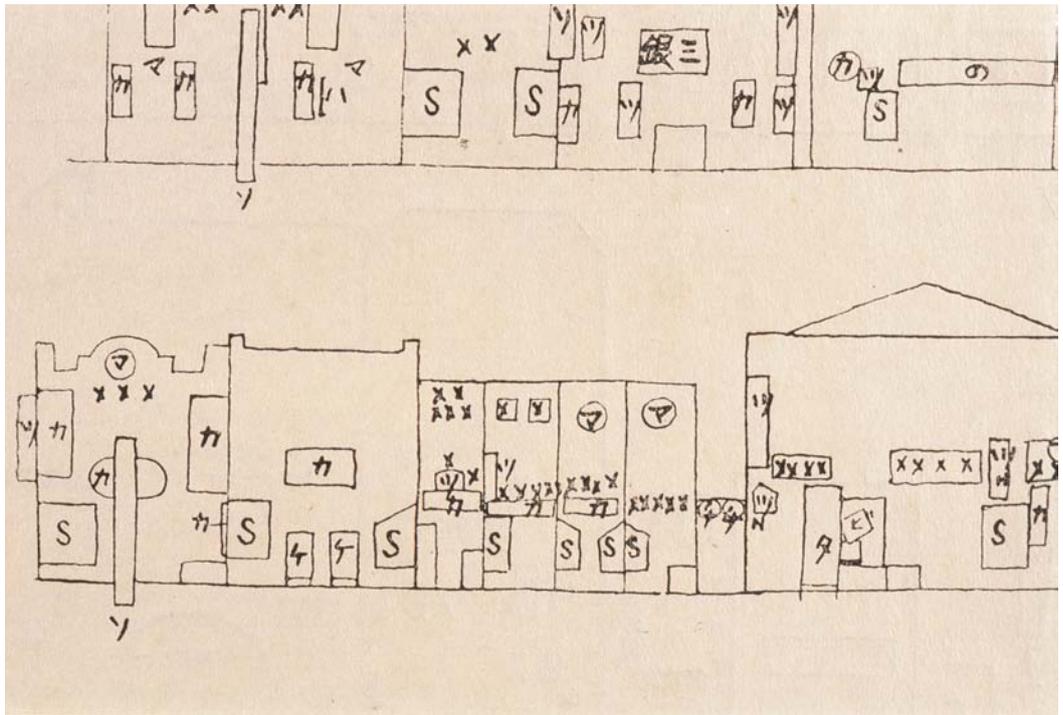
lyrics, Tokyo March



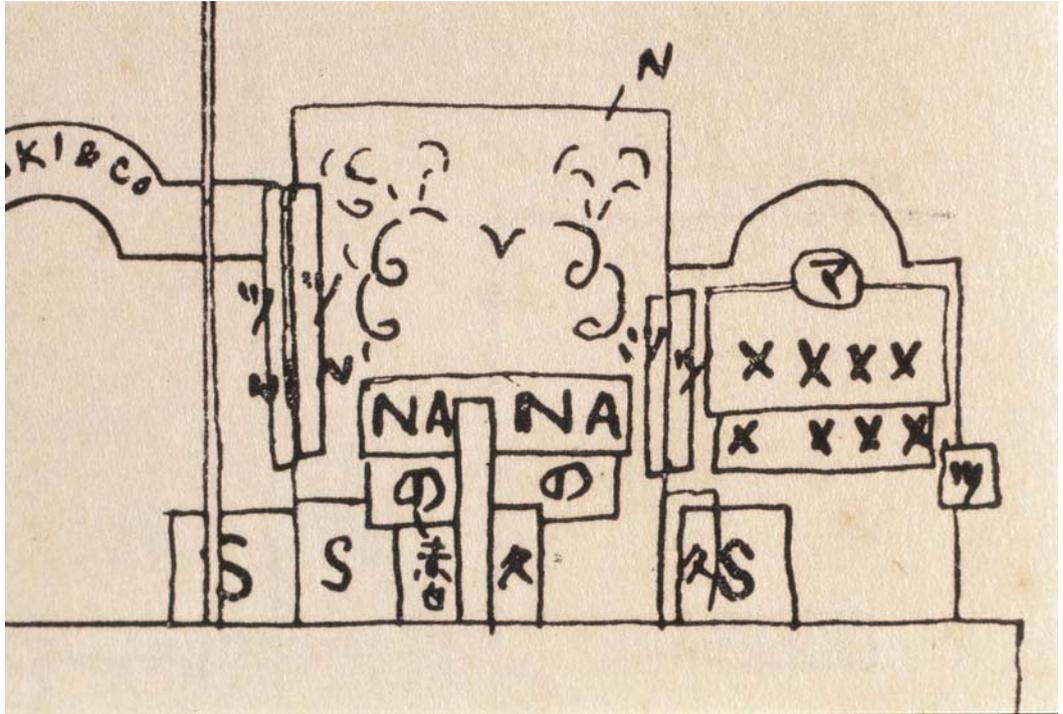
Installation view,
The Achromatic Island
Aarhus Art Building 14.11. 2009 – 24.01. 2010



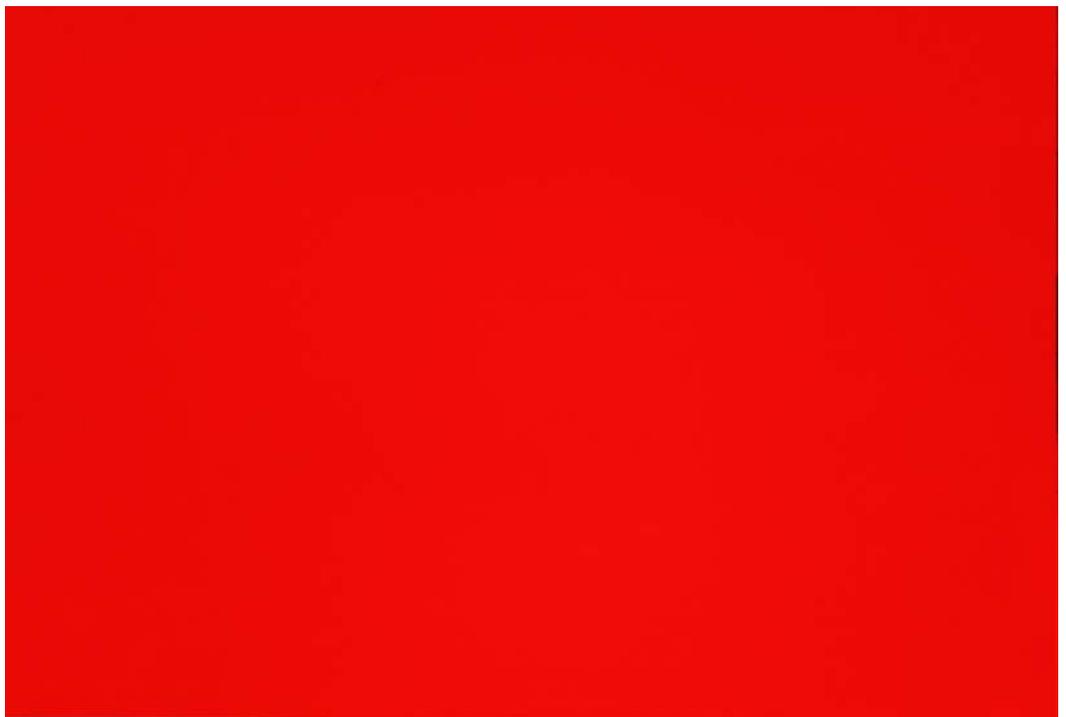
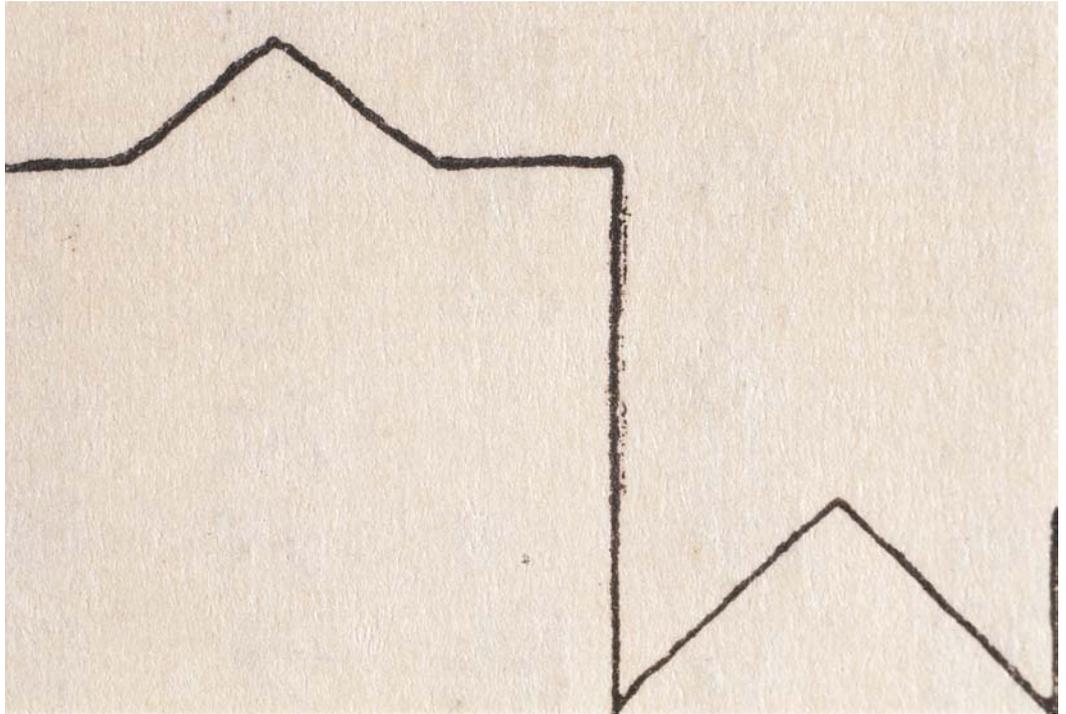
Installation view,
Sofie Thorsen
Krobath, 9. 9.– 7. 11. 2009



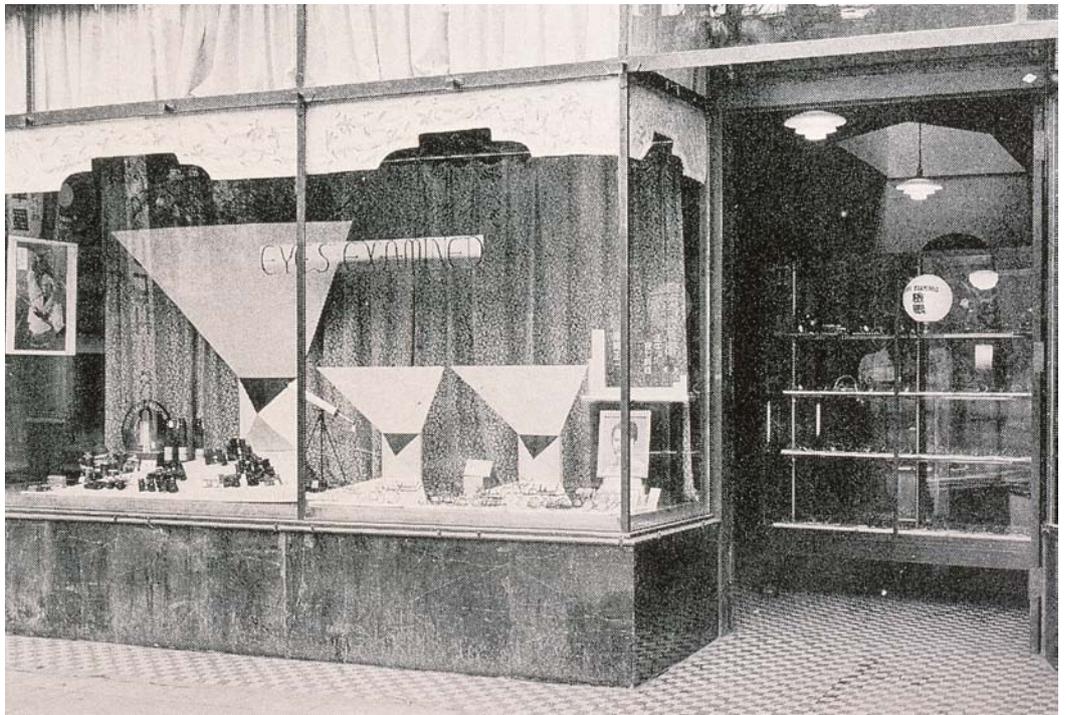
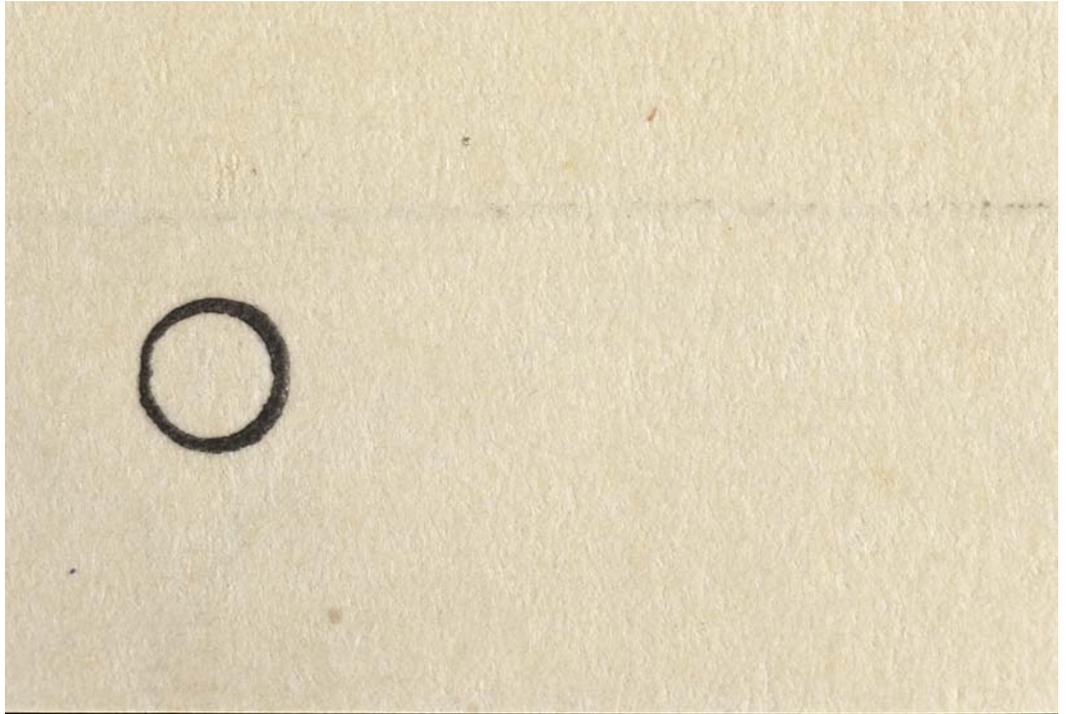
Stills from the slide projection



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