

[Originally published: <http://culture.pl/en/artist/piotr-krzymowski-0>]

**A graduate of Central Saint Martins College of Art & Design, Krzymowski uses video art to delve into hidden treasures of cinema, opening the genre to increasingly participatory experience.**

Piotr Krzymowski (born 1989) caught the attention of selectors at Bloomberg New Contemporaries this year with his video works *73* and *Boys*, set in the Canary Islands with holiday season in full swing. The works capture the islands' beauty and the monotony of leisure, with frame repetition referencing repetitious activities of people on holiday. Each still is spliced with a numbered frame announcing how many times the viewer can expect to see a given repetition.

What Krzymowski finds most striking is the effect on the viewer who has observed an image several times. He or she often notices details, such as a background figure or a tropical breeze as the frame climbs the trunk of a palm tree several times in succession. The repetition is often so seamless and the image so pleasant that we follow a tourist along a sandy beach, handy-cam in tow, without realising that we're looking at the same frame five times in a row. The same holds for sunlight reflected on a pool's sparkling surface. We're not surprised to see the same people as the camera circles the resort lawn, because this is exactly what happens when one is on holiday after a week or two of running into people at the dining hall, at golf or at the beach. Taken separately, an image highlights the beauty of the place, while repetition makes an austere statement on consumption in a global marketplace where leisure is a valuable commodity.

The effect is more pleasant than such a stark description, thanks to Krzymowski's painstaking detail in making repetitions seamless, particularly in the two-minute video *Boys*. An extended fragment from *73*, the piece shows two boys playing with a ball in a swimming pool. Repetitions flow like waves, each building on the next to carry the narrative progression. The boys stretch and leap in pursuit of the ball, with staggered pacing giving a melodious, choreographed feel to their energetic bursts of action. As a tongue-in-cheek reference to Godard's statement "All you need for a movie is a gun and a girl", Krzymowski asserts that "All you need to make a video are two boys and a yellow water-polo ball".

73 and Boys were presented this season at the Liverpool Biennale, part of the Bloomberg New Contemporaries presentation of 30 of this year's most promising graduates of the UK's top art schools. In 2009 Polish artist **Konrad Pustoła** was also included in the exhibition and in 2011 two female artists of Polish origins, Agata Madejska and Agnieszka MM Kucharko, were also exhibited. Krzymowski, the only Pole in the group this year, says he feels at home in the international setting of London's art and academic circles. The show moves this month to London's Institute of Contemporary Arts.

Time, repetition and counting have played key roles in Krzymowski's work since 2010, when his performance-art piece *Time Being in the London Underground* illustrated the passage of time through human movement. The artist's body and hands indicated time as if he were a human clock, expressing time's importance for big-city residents around the world, for whom every second is precious as they bustle from one place to the next. The performance was documented on film then printed as posters that were displayed in the metro. The piece was commissioned by Art Below, a foundation that supports public art, particularly the works of young artists.

Originally from the city of Darłowo in the north of Poland, Piotr Krzymowski moved with his parents to Warsaw when he was 12 and attended secondary school in the capital. After graduation, he was offered a choice of continuing his education at the Academy of Fine Arts in Warsaw or Central Saint Martins in London. He chose London for a change of scene and an exciting experience, to expand his artistic horizons beyond his native Poland. Today he lives between London and Warsaw exploring the participatory aspects of art in collaboration with artists in both cities. His latest work, *Kalina/Kalina*, premiered in Warsaw in early November 2012, stretching time in the form of a video essay playing with the notion of cloning in producing and reproducing art images. The artist casts an actress with a likeness to **Kalina Jędrusik**, an icon of Polish cinema in the 1960s, and sets frames of her replicating Jędrusik's famous scenes alongside the originals. This conceptual narrative is spliced with scientific and artistic ruminations on cloning, time travel and replication, and notions of the existence of the soul in the realm of such manipulation. This latter point is highlighted by scenes from film productions of Oscar Wilde's *The Portrait of Dorian Gray*. The work also features cameos from Paweł Kałużyński, a talented painter based in

Warsaw. Kałużyński, currently artist in residence at the Praca gallery in Warsaw, invited Krzymowski to premiere the film at Praca on a programme bringing together artists' work to find common ground and new platforms for expression. Krzymowski's penchant for repetition and re-creation has led him to delve deeper into his own works, opening them to discussion. A recent publication transcribes his conversation with the artist Camila Mello about watching *Kalina/Kalina* - essentially a play-by-play of associations and insights.

As for the theoretical background to his works, Krzymowski cites Roland Barthes' ideas in *Camera Lucida* of image subjectivity against the emotional context of memory and sentiment, and those of Laura Mulvey, whose book *Death 24 x a Second* addresses new media technologies transforming audience experience of cinema and the image, and the resulting changes in film's narrative structure. Krzymowski draws upon Mulvey's thoughts on how access to repetition, slow motion and freeze-frames have shifted viewer experience of an object or image on screen. For the artist, the link between video and cinema is indelible. "I have always thought of video-making as basically broadening the space of the cinema, the discourse of the cinema, spectatorship, the flow of images", he explains. Exploring the tautology of cinema and ways of viewing the spectator from an academic perspective, he moves beyond theory to project his ideas on the subject in video works that are appealing and slightly unnerving. Krzymowski's goal, as he puts it, is to explore cinema's best-kept secret: the still image.

The 2012 Bloomberg Contemporaries exhibition is on show at the Institute of Contemporary Arts in London between the 27th of November 2012 - 13th of January 2013. For more information, see: [www.newcontemporaries.org.uk](http://www.newcontemporaries.org.uk)  
In May and June 2013 *Boys* travels the UK as part of the **Selected** programme, featuring artists shortlisted for the Jarman Award 2012. Another film by the artist, *The Shape of Things to Come* (2012) was screened as a part of the Urban DISEase programme curated by Carmen Billows in Bermondsey Project as part of the London Seizure project in May 2013.