

THE SENSATIONAL LUCIFER

Sitting in the dark we are suddenly subject to the sound of an enormous explosion. This sound contextualises everything that is subsequently seen and heard. As it slowly fades away from our hearing, it becomes a silent reminder of what might have happened.

Slowly, the continued darkness reveals a fragile and broken line that spans across our field of vision, whilst our senses are penetrated by a high, unearthly sound. This mechanical chattering that twitters irritatingly on the edge of hearing, rising and falling in volume, there and not there, demands our full attention and as a sound we are reminded of the earlier force of the explosion - unreal, manmade and synthetic. What unfolds thereafter could be described as a highly aesthetic and beautiful death driven fear of nothingness, of the end of things. As formal sets of choreographed lines slowly play across the screen, space and perception alter continuously and a sense of suspense and instability manifests itself. We are witnessing a dance of death that cuts the heavens into portions and having divided it up, fades away just to be replaced. Finally a single, unreal vertical line remains that unlike earlier horizontal or diagonal compositions evokes a sense of finality.

To a certain age group the subject of 'Sky Lines' might be reminiscent of films of the cold war and its fear of a possible nuclear exchange. A yet earlier age group might recall the contrails of World War II highflying bombers. The repetitive drone of their vast aerial formations being akin to the mechanical sound described above. Much later the twin towers attack created the conditions of flying machines and disaster, of a loss of control and order and our descent to the condition of the fantastic and unbelievable. '...Lucifer's greatest work of Art', Karlheinz Stockhausen.

In Poulain's film 'Sky Lines' the awful is not seen, but the sensational Lucifer is there nonetheless. He is waiting just around the corner for all of us. This is our anxiety, something Jacques Derrida has coined 'Hauntology'.

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Stonebraker, James, Message from Professor Karlheinz Stockhausen, 19.9.2001,
http://www.stockhausen.org/message_from_karlheinz.html