

PingPong Methodology

Films are always produced and perceived in the framework of genre (road movie, western, melodrama, trash, experimental film, etc.) or in resonance to it. Yet for the film project "Le PingPong d'Amour" it seemed from the beginning on necessary to fuse two genres otherwise considered diametrically opposed: the classical soap opera and the French Nouvelle vague cinema-auteur. For this hybrid we have coined the neologism "nouvelle vague soap". Why this combination?

Being a serial format that relentlessly operates with clichés, and having the intention to not only respond to the desire of the audience but to satisfy it the soap is addictive. It creates dependency and conformity. Critically speaking, the format is normative and trying to appeal to the masses. The soap is the compensation for self-empowerment of the spectators. However, its comparatively simple standards and conditions of production could as well encourage self-empowerment in the sense of production and re-appropriation: after all everyone can work with video technology nowadays. For the project "Le PingPong d'Amour" it is exactly this specific feature of the genre that is essential and serving as the starting point.

Still, it takes another genre to dodge the formal trap and allow the potential to emerge. And this is where the avant-garde nouvelle vague cinema of filmmakers like Godard and Truffaut in the 60's comes into play. It emphatically ventures to formally and content-wise dodge and critically reflect the genre clichés with the goal to politicize and revolutionize the film and the modes of filmmaking. Some nouvelle vague films - like Jean-Luc Godard's "Au bout du souffle" did get very popular and had much success with the audience of their time.

Nevertheless, the complexity and the unwillingness to compromise that they delegated to and entrusted the audience with soon led to a certain isolation that persists until today and is located on the dividing line between E and U film: entertainment being on one side and art on the other.

"Le PingPong d'Amour\" seeks to combine both aspects in a self-reflected political soap without falling into abstract formalism. The idea is to at once use and subvert the social codes, clichés and standards of soap-opera seen as a mean of accessing reality, and to acquire a certain artificial distance to one's own reality that is then serially investigated. There is therefore a tendency to erase the boundaries between the conception and the screenplay, acting and technical production: to be loved by a film ...