

The Museo Universitario del Chopo invited Ximena Cuevas to showcase the photographs she captured, reflecting the essence of her experience in the *underground movement* of the eighties through her Canon 35 mm. But how to revisit those images? The artist defied the traditional documentary format, reactivating the emotional archive, resulting in a visual essay in memory of the recently deceased Ricardo Nicolayevsky (1961-2023), the beloved friend with whom she went through the darkness of waking youth. This exhibition, between museographic and cinematographic montage, is an expanded film in space. Cuevas, director and editor, reappropriates the Super-8 material and music by Nicolayevsky, cuts, and intervenes in mutual's archives to make a new work out of the sediments of the past. The main character, Nicolayevsky, is portrayed prolifically and explored plastically and histrionically by himself. The script is based on a previous text written by Cuevas at that time.

As the film progresses, the viewer is drawn into a nocturnal journey through the alluring dark and gothic world of the bohemian punks within the Mexican middle class. In this docufiction, a poet with a romantic spirit enters a world inhabited by fascinating, sensual, androgynous vampiric beings. This herd of dissidents steals from the light of day and resists the *status quo*. Then begins his initiatory journey, his metamorphosis. In the dimly lit clubs with strident music, bodies let go of their inhibitions, radiating sensuality and sexuality. Drugs and alcohol flow freely, accompanied by a sense of camaraderie and shared laughter, while the specter of AIDS whispers to them: "Tomorrow you will die, so live fast". The intersection between art and life dissolves and the cameras records the urgency of experiencing everything in all its intensity, exploring the forbidden, transgressing orders and genres, creating a grammar of its own.

Itala Schmelz (Curator)