

LARS - a portrait of Lars Von Trier

Kokoschka Revival  
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## *Lars - a portrait of Lars Von Trier*

Lars – a portrait of Lars Von Trier is a contemporary prose piece, a journey inside the mental landscape of the Danish film director Lars Von Trier.

At the centre of the narration stands the complex relationship between Lars Triers' self-narration and the monstrous portrait of his given by the public media. Nevertheless, we are not interested in truth itself: we took possession of our point of view and crushed it against this contemporary myth. With the broken pieces of the character, then, we fabricated a new narration.

Lars is also a meditation upon the biographic genre and especially upon the cinematographic Biopic. Compared to the latter, the relationship between the aim and mean are diametrically inverted. In fact, here the traditional object of the investigation – the life of a man - is actually the mean of the representation - the theatrical narration.

Watching Lars undertaking an hypnosis session, we enter with him into a deep state of conscience alteration. In this dreamlike world, the monologues – obtained by assembling 30 years of interviews and public declarations given by the director – are interwoven with physical and vocal parts. By means of abstraction and formalization, through a visual synthesis, we try the reconstitute the speech's original density of meaning.

Given the patent performativity of Lars' research, we decided to consider him as a performer – it shall be enough to remember how all of his sets become a sort of happening and how he always used his figure to animate the debate concerning the outdated cinematographic aesthetic conventions.





## LARS - a portrait of Lars Von Trier

Once considered the director as a performer, the focus of the research is naturally moved on the problem of the body of the artist and the relationship which stands between control and loss of control. This theme is developed on stage through some sculptures-prosthesis which hinder the actors in their movements.

These sculptures – created by Alessandro di Pietro – modify the actors scenic presence, transforming them in active symbols, which altogether shape a cubist portrait of the film director. Willing to sabotage the routine of our expressive techniques and following Lars' "Vow of chastity" - Dogma '95 - we decided to impose to ourselves some technical limits in the creation of this show:

- 1. No images from the director's films**
- 2. No talking in our mother tongue**
- 3. Lights operated by performers, sound produced on stage**
- 4. The video documentation must be a performing act itself and must produce another artwork \***
- 5. The viewing of the show will be possible only eating popcorn**



\* *The video project for LARS - a portrait of Lars Von Trier is a performative strategy of documenting the show.*

*The way of recording that Alessandro Di Pietro propose is strictly connected to one of the main crucial questions of the theater company Kokoschka Revival: 'how to document a theatrical live action?'*

*From this standpoint the artist starts to include himself inside the stage as a video making performer. He declares to be distant and at the same time inside the scene by using a black mirroring plexiglass as a device of reflection and as a subject itself.*

*The images produced by this process are now blurred, now defined, recognizable and deform in at the same time. The endless displacement of the main figures prossemic within the narration recalls the main topic of the show itself: control and loss of control.*



## Synopsis



In 1996 Von Trier's Masterpiece *Breaking the Waves* wins the Grand Prix at Cannes and Lars decides to try join the festival. The idea of taking a plane is immediately rejected because of his flight phobia. Later he jumps down a running car, terrified by the idea of traffic jams. Eventually he reaches the train station, but as soon as he enters the train he realizes that it is impossible to open the windows: the wagon is totally sealed. It is unthinkable for him to travel in such conditions. Once calmed down Lars observes the train – unluckily unfit to his needs – moving toward Cannes. Without him. From the empty rails of the Copenhagen central station begins a dreamlike journey inside the mind of Lars Von Trier, the mysterious Vonland. Here a Seventeenth Century hypnotist called Anton Mesmer, employing various bizarre pseudo-psychoanalytic techniques, idealistically attempts to clarify the obscure rules governing

this land and finally save Lars Von Trier from his sufferance. Vonland is populated by sculpture-men prostrated by their own organ-proesthesis, which alternatively clarify and confuse the rules of the Lars' mind in front of the doctor. The centre of this environment is a big rock that Mesmer analyses, explores and digs constantly in search of the truth about the artist and about the Von, that at a certain point appeared between "Lars" and "Trier". Who is Lars Von Trier? Is he just a fictitious character, the extravagant image shown in public by the artist? The action is the result of the struggle between Mesmer, who inspects the artist's life since the depths of his childhood, and Vonland itself, which turns the doctor's therapy against him and transforms the search of Truth in a tragicomic representation.

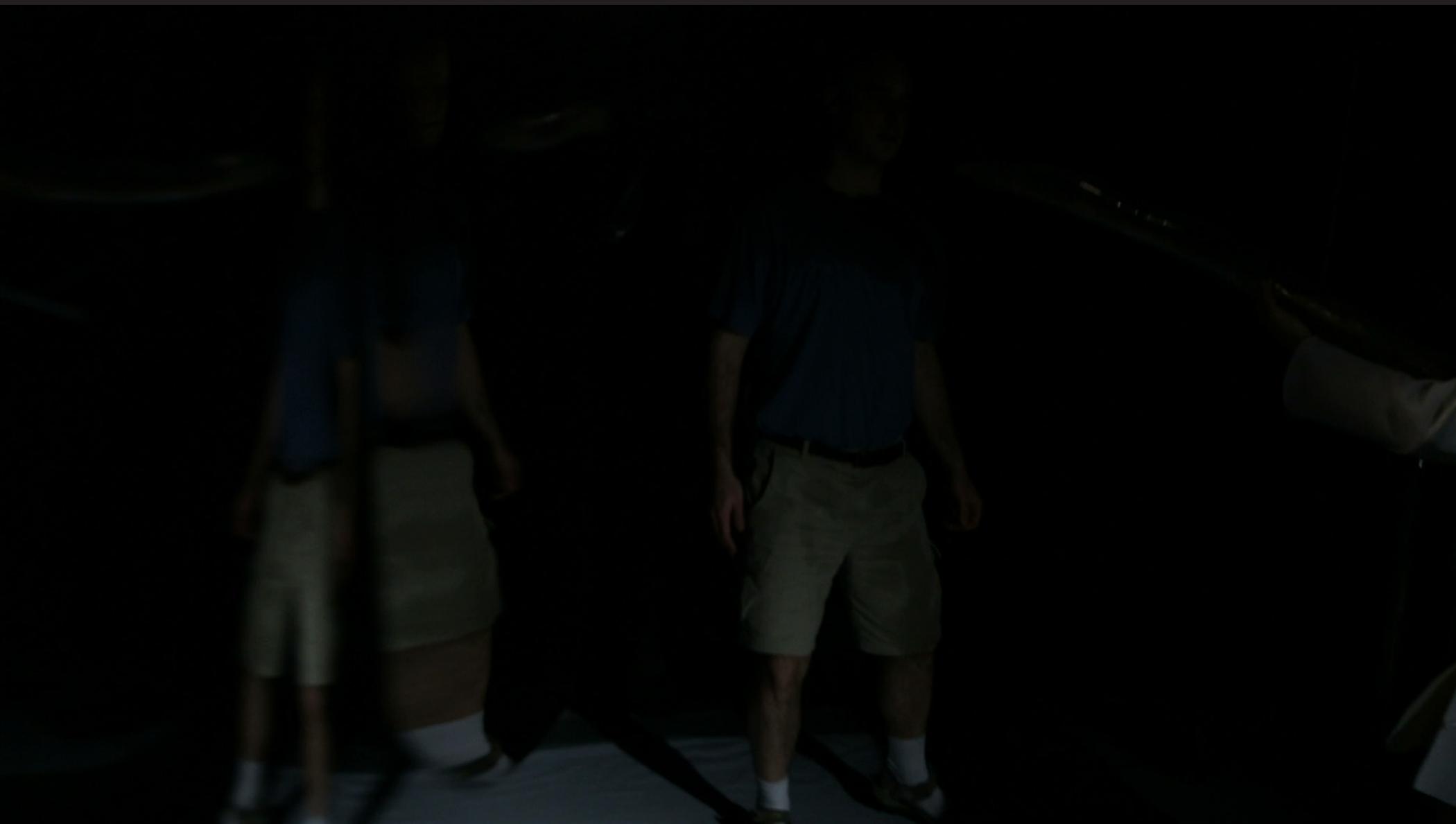
The doctor's mission assumes gradually the feature of a common trierian topos: the crusade of the idealist that will unavoidably crash against the moral banality of his thought. The doctor can not deprive Lars Trier from his sufferance. He cannot normalize him because his anomalies carry the meaning of his artistic practice. Eventually Mesmer experiences a theatrical Passion, gets baptized and changes his perspective. Christ's salvific myth is deformed by Vonland and his inhabitants giving birth to a new mythology of Sufferance, that now faithfully serves the Beauty's cause.

SCROLL DOWN FOR SELECTED STILL FRAMES FROM THE UPCOMING VIDEO PROJECT





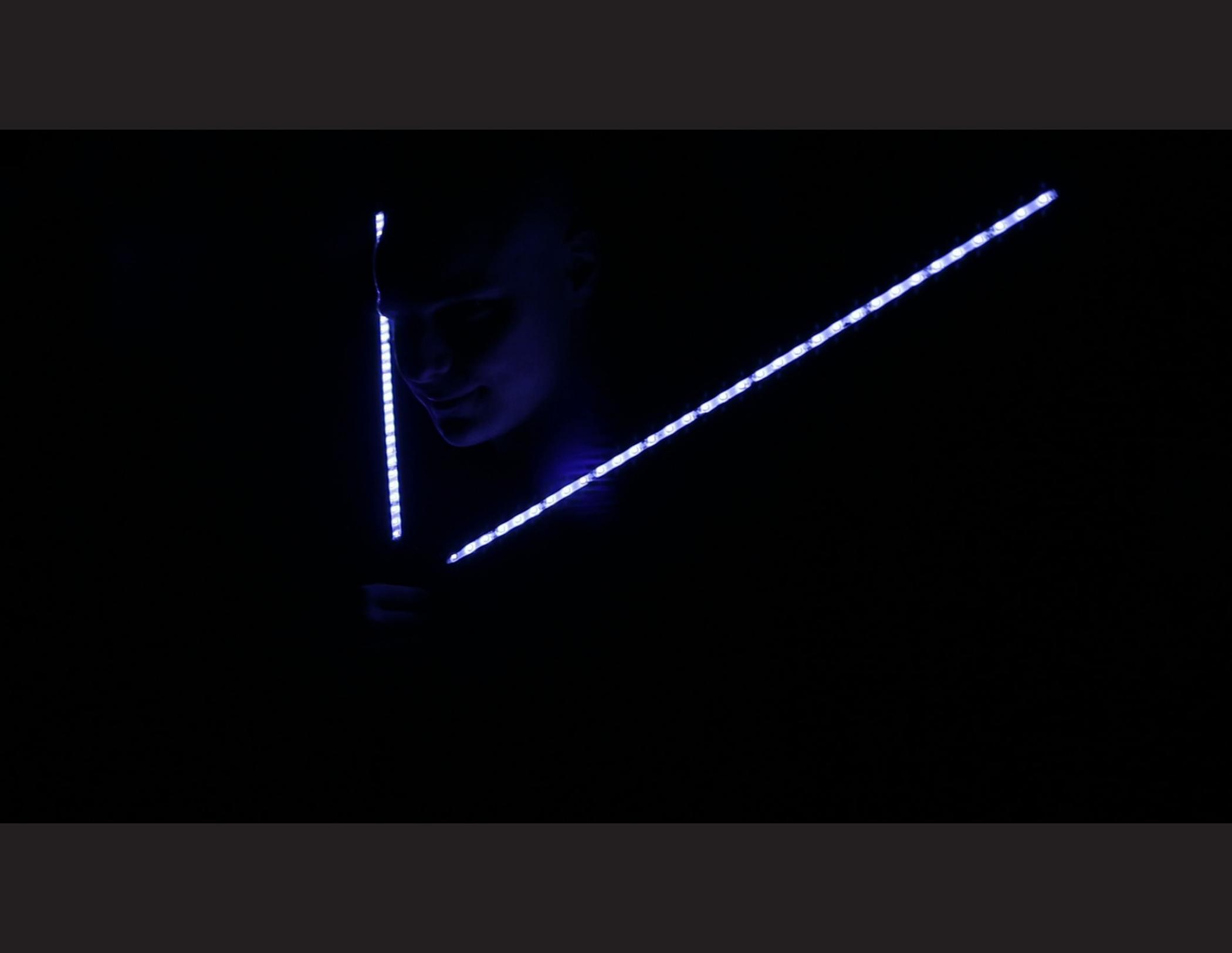


















*Technical Rider*

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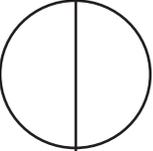
Minimum space : 7x8 m

**EQUIPMENT:**

- \* White PVC 6x8 m
- \* Polystyrene rock 120x70x70 cm
- \* N° 6 dolly's rails 100x50 cm
  - \* dolly
- \* Pendulum 220x70x70cm
- \* Plexiglass sculpture 100x30x 50 cm
- \* Synthetic resin sculpture 120x20x20 cm
  - \* Plastic washbowl 70x40x30 cm
  - \* Foam 120x10x30 cm
- \* 1 drill (we need an extention cable on stage)

**LIGHTS:**

- \* 9 ADB PC 1000W with barndoors
- \* 2 ADB PC 500W with barndoors
  - \* 5 sagomatori 500W
  - \* 4 PAR 64 1000W
- \* 5 PAR 64 500W \* 24 dimmer channels



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