

Embodied: Performance & Documentary

November 6 – 29 2015

Curated by Jacqui Davies

ARTISTS AND WORKS

Katarzyna Badach and Alfredo Ramos Fernández

Surfing Buena Vista

2007

Duration: 3:30

Surfing Buena Vista shows young men who 'surf', hanging off the vehicles that run down the avenues around Havana's Buena Vista neighbourhood. It is one of the favourite pursuits of the young inhabitants, but also one of the most dangerous and outlawed of hobbies.

Yael Bartana

Pardes (Orchard)

2015

Duration: 71:00

In her work 'Pardes' (Orchard) Yael Bartana takes a very personal look at how Westerners seek personal enlightenment by appropriating traditional rituals: she documents the journey of her close friend Michael – an Israeli artist, who, on the one hand, sceptically rejects all organised religion, but on the other hand, is on a constant search for deeper understanding, investigating Kabbalah as well as the cults of the Amazon. Under the guidance of a Brazilian shaman he undergoes the Ayahuasca ritual, taking the psychedelic brew that is said to lead to deep spiritual revelations about the universe and one's own personality, a feeling described as an experience of rebirth, enlightenment or – in the worst case – as one of the worst trips possible. The once very specific and local ritual becomes an inclusive performance, open for very different needs and cultural backgrounds.

Yael Bartana is an Israeli artist working in film, installation and photography. Her work investigates "the imagery of identity and the politics of memory." She is perhaps best known for the film trilogy *And Europe Will Be Stunned*, which premiered at the Polish pavilion of the 2011 Venice Biennale and explores notions of identity and nationalism inherent to the right of return. She is based in Amsterdam, Berlin, and Tel Aviv.

Jérôme Bel
Véronique Doisneau
2004
Duration: 32:09

Invited to make a piece for the ballet of the Paris Opera by her director Brigitte Lefèvre, Jérôme Bel wanted to stage a kind of theatrical documentary on the work of one of the dancers of the ballet: Véronique Doisneau. The dancer, closed to the retirement age, alone on stage, retrospectively and subjectively considers her own career as ballerina inside this institution.

Jérôme Bel lives in Paris and works worldwide. *nom donné par l'auteur* (1994) is a choreography of objects. *Jérôme Bel* (1995) is based on the total nudity of the performers. *Shirtology* (1997) presents an actor wearing many T-shirts. The last performance (1998) quotes a solo by the choreographer Susanne Linke, as well as Hamlet and André Agassi. *Xavier Le Roy* (2000) was claimed by Jérôme Bel as his own, but was actually choreographed by Xavier Le Roy. *The show must go on* (2001) brings together twenty performers, nineteen pop songs and one DJ. *Véronique Doisneau* (2004) is a solo on the work of the dancer Véronique Doisneau, from the Paris Opera. *Isabel Torres* (2005), for the ballet of the Teatro Municipal of Rio de Janeiro, is its Brazilian version. *Pichet Klunchun and myself* (2005) was created in Bangkok with the Thai traditional dancer Pichet Klunchun. Follows *Cédric Andrieux* (2009), dancer of Merce Cunningham. *3Abschied* (2010) is a collaboration between Anne Teresa De Keersmaecker and Jérôme Bel based on *The Song of the Earth* by Gustav Mahler. *Disabled Theater* (2012) is a piece with a Zurich-based company, Theater Hora, consisting of professional actors with learning disabilities. *Cour d'honneur* (2013) stages fourteen spectators of the Cour d'honneur of the Palais des Papes in Avignon.

Richard Billingham
Ray
2015
Duration: 33:41

Ray is about addiction and control. Alcohol makes Ray a prisoner in his own bedroom. Liz arrives periodically, for money. Sid and Liz battle for control of Ray, Sid with alcohol and Liz with the lure of being reunited.

Richard Billingham (b. 1970, Cradley Heath, England) shot to fame in 1996 with his groundbreaking photographic series *Ray's a Laugh*, extraordinary images of family life in his childhood home, a tower block in Cradley Heath in the West Midlands. *Ray's a Laugh* was exhibited internationally and featured in the pivotal show, *Sensation* (1997) at The Royal Academy of Arts. He was awarded the Citibank (now Deutsche Börse) Photography Prize that year, and was nominated for the Turner Prize in 2001.

He has continued to photograph his family, and presented a major new body of work in 2010. An ongoing engagement with landscape has seen Billingham working in Britain (Norfolk, 'Constable Country' in Suffolk, the South Downs, Black Country, the Gower) and further afield (Ethiopia, Greece, Germany, Italy, Pakistan). In his series of photographic and video works entitled *Zoo* (2001-2006) he explored the lives of animals in captivity.

His work is held in numerous private and public collections worldwide, including Tate, Arts Council England, the V & A, Moderna Museet Stockholm, the Fotomuseum Winterthur, and the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York. Billingham lives near Swansea, Wales, with his wife and two children, and teaches Fine Art and Photography at the University of Gloucestershire. He is Professor in the Creative Industries at the University of Middlesex. He is represented in London by Anthony Reynolds Gallery.

Chim↑Pom

KI-AI 100 (100 Cheers)

2011

Duration: 10:30

This video work films Chim↑Pom members, together with friends made in Soma city, Fukushima in May 2011, doing 100 sequential yells of "KIAI," which is Japanese for shouts showing a fighting spirit. As Soma city is one of the affected areas of the Great East Japan earthquake, these people lost loved ones, their houses were washed away, and they spent over two months in the destroyed city despite fear of radiation. Unlike other areas intensively covered by mass media, this area had suffered from a shortage of volunteers probably due to it being so close to the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station. These were real shouts filmed all in one-cut and ad-libbed, by the young locals who, although being victims themselves, had continued to provide relief and help towards reconstruction.

Chim↑Pom are an artist collective formed in 2005 in Tokyo with Ushiro Ryuta, Hayashi Yasutaka, Ellie, Okada Masataka, Inaoka Motomu and Mizuno Toshinori and all in their twenties at the time. Responding instinctively to the 'real' of their times, Chim↑Pom has continuously released works that fully intervene in contemporary society with strong social messages. Using video as a primary discipline, their expressions freely cross over a range of media from installation to performance. While based in Tokyo, they develop their activities globally in exhibitions and projects in various countries.

Tacita Dean

Event for a Stage

2015

Duration: 49:33

Performed in an intimate setting, *Event for a Stage* is centred around the filming of a portrait of an actor on a stage, to be played by Stephen Dillane. Continuing Dean's exploration of the relationship between the aural and the visual, *Event for a Stage*, 2014, is a significant contribution to the unfolding history of art and theatre collaborations. Dean takes the opportunity of working in a theatre to become more self-reflexive. By exposing her own way of filming to an audience, she is dramatising the role of medium, whilst also working with an actor examining the nature of his own presence on a stage.

The films, drawings and other works by Tacita Dean are extremely original. Her recent film portraits express something that neither painting nor photography can capture. They are purely film. And while Dean can appreciate the past, her art avoids any kind of academic approach. Dean's art is carried by a sense of history, time and place, light quality and the essence of the film itself. The focus of her subtle but ambitious work is the truth of the moment, the film as a medium and the sensibilities of the individual.

Coco Fusco
Operation Atropos
2006
Duration: 59:00

Operation Atropos is a documentary about interrogation and POW resistance training. Director Coco Fusco worked with retired U.S. Army interrogators who subjected her group of women students to immersive simulations of POW experiences in order to show them what hostile interrogations can be like and how members of the U.S. military are taught to resist them. The group of interrogators is called Team Delta, and they regularly offer intensive courses that they call "Authentic Military Experiences" to civilians. The documentary includes interviews with the interrogators that shed light on how they read personalities, evaluate an interrogatee's reliability, and use the imposition of physical and mental stress strategically. More fundamentally, however, the film shows how interrogators rationalise what they do and how they imagine both themselves and their enemies.

Fusco's work combines electronic media and performance in a variety of formats, from staged multi-media performances incorporating large scale projections and closed circuit television to live performances streamed to the internet that invite audiences to chart the course of action through chat interaction. Fusco received her B.A. in Semiotics from Brown University (1982), her M.A. in Modern Thought and Literature from Stanford University (1985) and her Ph.D. in Art and Visual Culture from Middlesex University (2007).

Louis Henderson
Lies More Real Than Reality
2015
Performance (13th November 2015)
Duration: 35:00 (approx.)

An email-epistolary exchange between the filmmaker and an Internet scammer from Benin leads to the demystification of Western exotic expectations of the African continent.

Louis Henderson is an English filmmaker whose films and writings investigate the networked links between colonialism, technology, capitalism and history. A graduate of London College of Communication and Le Fresnoy – studio national des arts contemporains, Henderson is currently completing a post-diplôme within an experimental art and research group at the European School of Visual Arts. His research focuses on new materialities of the Internet and the neocolonisation of cyber space through planetary scale computing. He has shown his work at places such as; Rotterdam International Film Festival, CPH:DOX, Transmediale, Muestra Internacional Documental de Bogota, The Centre Pompidou, FRAC Midi-Pyrénées, Louisiana museum of Modern Art, Tate Modern and Whitechapel Gallery. His work is distributed by Video Data Bank.

Samson Kambalu
Psychogeographical Nyau Cinema
2014
Duration: 1:00

Inspired by the Gule Wamkulu (the Great Play) which has been celebrated by the Chewa in the masquerade culture of his country of birth, Samson Kambalu approaches film making as an occasion for critical thought and sovereign activities - quirky, playful and often transgressive acts aimed at expressing a radical subjectivity with which the artist regards the world. Nyau cinema employs the medium of film and the psychology and geography of urban areas and their vicinities as catalysts for dramatic self-transformation where the self is playfully reconceived as part of a larger scheme of things, transcending the limitations and conventions of everyday life. 'Nyau' is a Chewa word for 'excess'.

Born in Malawi in 1975, Samson Kambalu studied Fine Art and Ethnomusicology at the University of Malawi, and he holds an MA in Fine Art from Nottingham Trent University. He is completing a practice-led PhD in Fine Art at Chelsea College of Art, London. Kambalu has recently won research fellowships with Yale University and the Smithsonian. His work has been shown at the Dakar Biennale (2014), Tokyo International Art Festival (2009) and Liverpool Biennial (2004). Kambalu is the author of two award-winning artist novels - a memoir, *The Jive Talker* or, *How to Get a British Passport*, and *Uccello's Vineyard*, a fictional narrative of modern art set in the Middle Ages. He is currently featured in the Venice Biennale 2015.

Martha Rosler

Martha Rosler Reads Vogue

1982

Duration: 25:22

In this live performance for Paper Tiger Television's public-access cable program in New York, Rosler deconstructs the messages in *Vogue* and its advertising. Rosler looks at the institutional slants of the magazine industry and the fashion industry's reliance on sweatshops.

In her work in video, photo-text, performance, critical writing and installation, Martha Rosler constructs incisive social and political analyses of the myths and realities of contemporary culture. Articulated with deadpan wit, Rosler's video works investigate how socioeconomic realities and political ideologies dominate ordinary life. Presenting astute critical analyses in accessible forms, Rosler's inquiries range from questions of public space to issues of war, women's experiences, and media information.

Zina Saro-Wiwa

Mourning Class: Nollywood

2010

Duration: 20:32

The Mourning Class series is a set of video performances that explore mourning rituals and address the role of performance in grieving. The first in the series is *Mourning Class: Nollywood*. This piece arose from Zina Saro-Wiwa's interest in Nollywood and the African emotional landscape. The close-up of crying face is a classic nollywood trope. A trademark of the genre. The sobbing female figure, a grieving widow, a repentant woman of the night, the dutiful, but put-upon, wife, the performance of pain – close up – forms the emotional backbone of Nollywood film.

Zina Saro-Wiwa is a video artist and filmmaker. She makes video installations, documentaries, photographs and experimental films. She also works with food using feasting as part of her performance practise. Saro-Wiwa currently lives and works in the Niger Delta in Nigeria, where she is making new bodies of work for two major museum shows and where she has set up her own contemporary art gallery called Boys' Quarters Project Space, in the city of Port Harcourt, for which she curates three to four shows a year.

Her current interest lies in mapping emotional landscapes. She often explores highly personal experiences, carefully recording their choreography, making tangible the space between internal experience and outward performance as well as bringing cross-cultural and environmental/geographic considerations to bear on these articulations. The slippery dynamics between "truth", "reality" and "performance" lie at the heart of her video performance work.

Apichatpong Weerasethakul

Teem

2007

Apichatpong Weerasethakul is a singular and distinctive artist and filmmaker. All his films and artworks are set in his native Thailand. Often non-linear, and with a strong sense of dislocation, his works deal with memory, subtly addressing personal politics and social issues. Working independently of the Thai commercial film industry, he is active in promoting experimental and independent filmmaking through his company Kick the Machine. His films have received numerous awards, including two prizes from the Cannes Film Festival. His feature *Syndromes and a Century* (2006) was the first Thai film to be selected for competition at the Venice Film Festival. Alongside his other feature *Tropical Malady*, *Syndromes and a Century* has been found at the top of several polls as among the best films of the last decade.