

computer-generated, with the second person fed-in and new expressions issued. We see the back of the artist's head during some statements, or the camera panning and swinging back and forth over nearly unreadable text.

Talking in New York, made between 1981 and 2001, has 8 minutes of footage shot on portapak and resembles a Japanese tourist's travel video of New York (perhaps having its origin in that very genre). We see shots from a departing ferry, people in parks, Chinatown, with Iimura all the while reciting his variations upon Derrida in different locales and environments, silhouetted in low lighting, or under experimental recording conditions such as placing the microphone 50 feet away.

Talking to Myself at P.S. 1, made in 1985, is 4 minutes documenting Iimura's video installation of the *Talking to Myself* tapes at the New York alternative space, in greenish footage shot there by a colleague. In places the source video is fast-forwarded to add an urgency to the gallery-goers who evidently included musician-producer Brian Eno and the late filmmaker-folklorist Harry Smith.

In the first of the two texts on the DVD, "On Talking to Myself," Iimura discusses the "video-reality" of recorded offscreen sound and the "silent voice" of the movement of lips, "so that the viewer perceives the sentence repeating itself." What he calls "synch out of synch" is the effect of a time lag between the visual depiction of an on-screen speaker and the words that come from that person's mouth. "What I am trying to achieve in the piece is a communication (sender-receiver within the self) separated by function but integrated by its perception," writes Iimura.

In a chatty May 1979 letter to Iimura from David B. Allison, Derrida's translator calls Iimura's project an "almost preposterous ambition . . . its beauty seems to be in a kind of vertigo, an infinitization of replications, mirrorings, suspected detours, half-forgotten and neglected stops, arrests, reconfirmations and confusions." Allison goes on to liken its "Goldbergian variation" to Bach choral music, to Alain Resnais' movie *Last Year at Marienbad* and Terry Riley's serial musical composition *In C*. One hopes that the enthusiastic Mr. Allison now has a copy of Takahiko Iimura's DVD. He will find that philosophy plus minimal technique and imagery have produced a cohesive, compact and well-assembled document

of an artist's long fascination with what to him has been Derrida's most "epiphanic" text.

EXHIBITION CATALOG

VALIE EXPORT: MEDIALE ANAGRAMME

Academie der Kunste, Berlin, 18 January–9 March 2003. Edited by Neue Gesellschaft fuer Bildende Kunst, Berlin, Germany, 2003. 224 pp., illus. ISBN: 3926796.

Reviewed by Yvonne Spielmann, Institute of Media Research, Braunschweig School of Art, Braunschweig, Germany. E-mail: <spielmann@medien-peb.uni-siegen.de>.

Valie Export is one of the founders of contemporary media art in Europe. Over the decades her multimedia work has included performance and feature film, filmed live action, experiments with cameras and expanded cinema, installation and video, photography and recently digital photography. In the 1960s she was the only woman among the Vienna Group of action artists. Moreover, as a woman artist under the influence of emerging feminist thinking, she used her own body and overtly showed female sexuality in order to provoke moral standards and public order, gender discrimination and dominant patriarchal discourse. Early performances and films put an emphasis on painful, overtly sexual and self-reflexive experiences of the female body. The artist underlines body awareness in site-specific photography in which she places herself in the city landscape as if wrapped around buildings and steps. In photography, film, and performance, Export shows not only the masturbating woman, but also her naked body's encounter with an electric fence, meant to reflect the status of woman as artist in repressive post-war Austrian society. This stance, in accordance with the Vienna Group, needs to be seen as a personal response to a society that is hardly over its Nazi past. Export's overriding concern is with dismantling media representations by making visible and audible the construction of realities that shape our perception of her work, thereby sometimes testing the physical experience of her own body to the limits.

Export understands media art as social criticism, and she deliberately uses

different media languages to explore and express borderlands of mediated and real realities. Her ongoing concern as a media artist lies in the reflection of the zones and in-between spaces of media, arts and society, places where media merge with one another and identities multiply. As part of this strategy and in an act of cutting off the pre-defined identity that was attached to her through bearing the name of her father, the artist purposely has chosen the name Valie Export like a brand name and a tag. When in a 1970 photographic self-portrait the artist holds a cigarette packet bearing the logo "Valie Export," she demonstrates her own identity as a media program to scrutinize the conflict between self and media, between the tools and the cultural conditions of representation. She exposes her new identity as a brand name in capital letters and simultaneously sells a "product" and multiplies her "self" through a cultural process of transfer and transformation, becoming someone else.

In 2003, the Academy of Arts in Berlin showed major works of Valie Export in an exhibit entitled *Mediale Anagramme* (Media Anagrams), which compiled earlier conceptual pieces, experiments with film and photography, performances, expanded cinema and video installations from throughout her career. The work presented in the exhibition and additional text materials by Valie Export are documented in the catalog *Media Anagrams*, along with a series of theoretical articles that reflect on different aspects of Export's media interventions from the late 1960s until today. The analytical articles in the catalog build up a theoretical frame that corresponds with Export's own theoretical writings, especially where the artist explains the diversity of her approach, saying that the medium, rather than being the message, is no longer "one" single message. In a well-known essay (not included in the catalog), Export defines the body in terms of "the real and the double." Export here explicitly declares her conceptual principle that enunciation always involves the double, the other. The borders between different realities are shifting. The multiplicity of media, fragmentation of media language and reflections on media representation are Export's strategies to make the viewer aware and sensible of the different levels of media, representation and physicality of the body.

Roswitha Mueller, in discussing Export's concept of the body, relates it to

feminist discourse where the split of reality and self is analyzed as an experience typical of women in our societies. Such experience, which often starts in childhood, is reproduced and countered by Export through the action of repeatedly cutting herself in performance as a means of finding and defining her own identity. These heavy acts involve bodily injury and pain, which Export performs in the realm of body art. As Mueller states, the artist's idea of the expanded body refers to postmodern theories of circulation of signs, and also to the notion of constructedness through power relations and historical connotations, a notion that takes up Foucauldian thinking. Through pain, as Export demonstrates, the strangeness of the female body in our society becomes strikingly apparent. Much of Export's early performance work (where she bleeds and is hit with electric wires) needs to be understood as a process of self-awareness turning into self-determination. This is highlighted in "Body Sign Action" of 1970, in which Export shows the tattoo of a suspender on her upper thigh.

Ideas of an "expanded" body overlap with concepts of expanded media, in particular cinema actions that Export performed, together with Peter Weibel, in the late 1960s and early 1970s in the streets of Vienna. Marlene Streeruwitz, in her article on the Austrian context of Export's work, draws on the famous street actions where, for example, Valie Export "walks" Peter Weibel on a log leash, with Weibel on all fours beside her. This chimes with the artist's experimental feature length films, most prominently *Invisible Adversaries* (1976), where Export displays an understanding of film practice as an analytical discourse of gender relations and explorations into space. This interest in space, urban structure and city architecture has also been developed in her photographic approaches where, as in her films, she uses superimposition to visualize the "split in reality." As Silvia Eiblmayr underlines in her article about body configurations, Export's concern is to make visible the split in reality between a given context and the constraints of subjectivity. Again, the use of media as a tool to differentiate between the media context and its representational system is carried out by Export through dislocations, superimpositions and sharp cuts. It is this series of devices that, taken together, express both the real and the double.

The catalog's collection of essays and its selection of a wide range of illustrations documenting the phases of development and the diversity of media encounters over the past decades provide a solid overview and insight into the aesthetic principles of one of the most interesting contemporary media artists. As Sigrid Schade in her essay states, Export has always worked with new media (video, and later digital photography) in ways that explore and thematize the media themselves. On the whole, the conceptual approach of Export is a critical encounter with a narrow understanding of media arts. Hers is intervention, an approach that is emphasized, explained and analyzed in the comprehensive essays of the well-illustrated *Media Anagrams*.

VIDEOS

PIERRE BOURDIEU: SOCIOLOGY IS A MARTIAL ART

Directed by Pierre Carles. Produced by Veronique Fregosi and Annie Gonzalez. C.P. Productions and VF Films, 2001. VHS video. 146 min. Color. Available from First Run/Icarus Films, Brooklyn, NY, U.S.A.

Reviewed by Roy R. Behrens, Department of Art, University of Northern Iowa, Cedar Falls, IA 50614-0362, U.S.A. E-mail: <ballast@netins.net>.

This is a collage-like film biography of an outspoken French sociologist, university professor and Chair of Sociology at the College de France, who died in 2002 at age 71. Filmed over a period of 3 years, it was popular in France shortly before Bourdieu's early death. Unfortunately, it may not be quite as engaging for American audiences because nearly all the soundtrack is in French (with English subtitles), while the issues addressed are so hopelessly huge that, even if it were in English, it is unlikely to be penetrable by anyone except a Bourdieu enthusiast. The film's title is derived from a colorful statement in which Bourdieu (in this film and in earlier writings) refers to sociology as "a martial art, a means of self-defense." It also alludes to his vocal support of certain socio-economic causes, as distinct from a reclusive scholar who stays at arm's length from his research subject. The film is enriched by several odd

events, as when this "celebrity scholar" is hailed on the street by a former student who talks on and on about his influence on her, and yet never lets him speak. In another segment, he converses with the German novelist Gunter Grass on a television program; and in a third, we can follow his facial expressions as he opens, reads and is completely baffled by a letter from the French screenwriter Jean Luc Godard. In a documentary that is lengthier than most feature films, one cannot help but start to sense Bourdieu's exasperation with his own life. For more than two cinematic hours, we follow him as he goes to political rallies, research conferences, interviews with journalists, endless car and airplane trips, meetings with students, and sessions with his office staff. There is a revealing moment in which he stands alone, totally exhausted, then suddenly looks at the camera and sighs, "Poor Bordieu." He became so sought after that he no longer had the time nor the energy to do what allowed him gradually to build "cultural capital" (one of his favorite terms) and rise from his working-class origins to academic prominence.

(Reprinted by permission from *Ballast Quarterly Review*, Vol. 18, No. 3, Spring 2003.)

WORLD WIDE WEB SITES

BITART

Web site: <<http://home.netcom.com/~bitart/>>. Artist: Robert J. Krawczyk

Reviewed by Luisa Paraguai Donati, Department of Multimedia, Institute of Arts, Unicamp, Brazil. E-mail: <luisa@iar.unicamp.br>.

My first impression of *BitArt* led me to rethink the conceptual threshold between a piece of mathematical art and a mathematical, scientific graphic, both of which intend to create "a tangible experience" of abstract mathematical objects and concepts. This interdisciplinary interface is not a contemporary occurrence but has generated distinct aesthetic outcomes: artists are moved by poetic proposals that contrast with mathematicians and their accurate representations. Currently, the use of computers to produce these kinds of images has generated more systematic works, resulting in aesthetic experiences such as