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Pipilotti Rist



Yvonne Roeb



Round One
 March 28 – May 22
 Opening March 27
 19:00 – 22:00

Open Saturday and
 Sunday 13:00 – 18:00
 or by appointment
contact@flexberlin.org

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 Sophie-Gips-Höfe
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Yvonne Roeb's *Midnight Rider* (2009) and Pipilotti Rist's *Pickelporno* (1992) confront each other amidst the energy and eroticism of spring for FLEX's first dialogue. Viewers zoom in and out on a ritualized courtship in both works, stepping closer and away from Roeb's hanging pelvic bone sculpture, accompanied back and forth by the camera in Rist's pixelated video.

Midnight Rider romanticizes and fetishizes. Bone and horse hair hang suspended for viewers to gaze on: remnants of living bodies bound to a ceiling as one might find at the butcher's. Roeb's upbringing within a family of doctors comes to life here through a meticulous, almost hygienic, hand. The obsessive detail of male and female pelvic bones fused together remains a transgressive secret. Lovers united in death or an experiment gone wrong. At the same time, *Midnight Rider* travels to the open frontiers of the Wild West, rider and horse as one, a sculpture which speaks to both action and stasis.

Rist pirates the syntax of mass media, bringing viewers hastily over a landscape of body parts. Her porno is not explicitly sexual, but rather an adventure ritualized in slow motion - not for pleasure as much as for mutual discovery. Rist's characters are ears, feet, breasts. Details of bodies stand in as protagonists, granting her video a participatory quality. The visual glitches, too, impart a distinct sense of DIY, heightened in FLEX's dialogue by the decision to beam the video via YouTube. Porno - an art or exploitation for the masses - is brought into the exhibition space here as it would be at home: screened via a social channel.

ich sehe : video

Tuesday May 13th, 2014, 19:00

Sammlung Hoffmann video screening

Sound(track) Presented by FLEX:

– Joachim Koester, *Reptile Brain or Reptile Body, It's Your Animal*, 2012

– Tracy Emin, *C.V. Cunt Vernacular*, 1997

Sitting in FLEX on a Saturday or Sunday, we have found ourselves caught up by a combination of formal qualities present in the current exhibition of Yvonne Roeb's sculpture *Midnight Rider* and Pipilotti Rist's video *Pickelporno*.

The neon violet light cast over Roeb's *Midnight Rider* often sinks us into a dreamlike stupor, and as we sit behind the desk, eyes halfway shut, Pipilotti Rist's looped voice from the room next door drowns us in a lullaby. It is through this experience, this effect, that we arrived at the idea of sound and soundtrack as tonight's guiding motif.

Drawn into a dream by Pipilotti Rist's soundtrack, we have found ourselves awakened to Yvonne Roeb's hanging sculpture. A viewer engages with the work and her engagement is altered by Pipilotti's inescapable sound. Yvonne's *Midnight Rider* is privy to a permanent and silent dance with Rist's video. And so tonight's questions arose: What power does a soundtrack exert on viewers of a video or in the case of the Round One in FLEX, visitors to a space? How does a manipulated track differ in effect and efficacy from a natural sound?

Joachim Koester's video *Reptile Brain, Reptile Body, It's your Animal* relies on a sound which is natural, part of the environment. It searches for an ancient, local knowledge, in some ways how Yvonne Roeb does with her *Midnight Rider*.

The intensity and obsession of the dancers bodies outpaces a rhythmic shaking, or perhaps it is the other way around: encouraged by the trance-like music, the dancers bodies shake themselves into frenzies. Either way, the movement and sound work in harmony.

In this sense, it is the formal qualities of the work that are designed to have a psycho-physical effect on the body. Perhaps we might better call this piece an installation. It is immersive. The sound in Koester's instance is shared and experienced by the dancers and viewers alike, making the body's status social, networked and inherently communal. Further, the work can be joined or viewed at any moment of its start to finish cycle. This and its experiential focus stand in contrast to the body as an individual, as it was frequently staged within the performance period of the 1960s and 1970s.

Tracy Emin presents her body as utterly individual in *C.V.*, a piece which through its title alone suggests that her sexuality is her identity with its extended title *Cunt Vernacular*. We are part of her personal confession. In contrast to Koester's documentary-style, which relies on sound to impart an experience to his subjects and viewers, Tracy Emin relies heavily on linear narrative. Emin manipulates soundtrack in the direction of a composition - a scripted, composed reading of her life's history. Her words are intimate, similar to Pipilotti's soundtrack, and yet there is a distinct inaccessibility to her person. Title, sound and camera lead viewers through her alleged residence yet her body appears only in the final frames. The soundtrack in Emin's video is the voice of the artist, the added drama that alters a viewer's understanding of a work, that guides the viewer or perhaps even pushes them to a point of empathy. Her presence as an artist, as Tracy Emin, is inescapable.