

CENTRE D'ART CONTEMPORAIN GENÈVE

10, rue des Vieux-Grenadiers
Case postale 121 - 1211 Genève 8
T +41 22 329 18 42
F +41 22 329 18 86
presse@centre.ch - www.centre.ch

PRESS DOSSIER

Pauline Boudry/ Renate Lorenz

(*1972 / *1963)

Contagious!

Reports against normality

11.06-15.08.2010

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(3rd floor)

11th June – 15th August 2010

Opening Thursday 10th June, 6 to 9 p.m.

The Centre d'Art Contemporain Genève is pleased to announce the first major solo show by the duo PAULINE BOUDRY/RENATE LORENZ. These Berlin-based artists have an interest in the almost simultaneous invention of sexuality and sexual perversions on the one hand, and photography and film in the 19th century on the other hand, as well as in their relationship with the colonial economy. Mostly filmed in 16 mm and featuring distinctive aesthetics that highlight the autonomy of the camera, music, costumes and props, the work of PAULINE BOUDRY/RENATE LORENZ gives rise to performances that they define as “queer archaeology”. They rediscover forgotten moments in history, in which non-standard bodies and social constellations are visible. The duo will present numerous recent works, including “Salomania” featuring American choreographer and artist Yvonne Rainer, as well as a new production based on epileptic dance. As a counterpoint to the installations, their show includes “invited” oeuvres by Felix Gonzalez-Torres, Judith Hopf, Zoe Leonard, and Henrik Olesen, which also question identity and its representation.

The exhibition presents four recent video installations together for the first time: “Normal Work” (2007, 16mm film/DVD and 13 photographs), “N.O. Body” (2008, 16 mm film/DVD and 47 photographs), “Salomania” (2009, HD video and installation), and a new production called “Contagious!”.

“Normal Work” presents photographic portraits of Hannah Cullwick, a maid who lived in the Victorian times and who not only had a secret relationship with her poet and bourgeois lover, but also let herself be photographed sometimes as a slave, sometimes as a worldly lady, or as a gentleman. Their sadomasochistic relationship is illustrated by the discreet presence of an armband and a slave chain necklace in the pictures. PAULINE BOUDRY/RENATE LORENZ review these strange documents and re-enact four of these photographs with drag performer Werner Hirsch.

“N.O. Body” re-enacts a photograph of the bearded lady and Barnum Circus star Annie Jones (1865 – 1902). The performer (again Werner Hirsch), mimicking the photograph of Annie Jones, is positioned at the centre of a medicine lecture hall, where he gives a lecture while showing picture slides – including of Jones herself – from Dr Magnus Hirschfeld’s archive. In his 1930 book “Sexology, Pictures” the sexologist from Berlin catalogued pictures of sexually ambiguous individuals and hermaphroditic animals.

“Salomania” goes back in time to investigate the popular *fin de siècle* figure of Salomé, in particular in the eponymous 1922 Hollywood film by Russian dancer, silent-film star, and producer Alla Nazimova. The richest actress of her time spent her whole fortune to produce a nonstandard, modern film that was a commercial failure, sank into oblivion, and ruined her. For this re-interpretation, PAULINE BOUDRY/RENATE LORENZ play with several levels of history: performer and artist Wu Ingrid Tsang, and famous choreographer and film-maker Yvonne Rainer, both based in Los Angeles, restage scenes that are based on the silent film, on Alla Nazimova’s life, and on contemporary research on Salomé. Besides, Yvonne Rainer was inspired by Nazimova’s dance of the seven veils for her own famous choreography “Valda’s Solo” (1973), which she in turn teaches to Wu Ingrid Tsang in this project.

A study on late 19th century dances that questioned the bourgeois order will be central to the new production “Contagious!”. The artists retrace the trend of “epileptic” dance, as well as Afro-American Cakewalk, both popular in Parisian cabarets around 1900. The former reversed the pathologising rhetoric on women’s sexuality by transforming famous photographs of hysterical attacks into show business, while the latter belongs to a tradition of mockery of the white masters’ dances. This work extends theorist Rae Beth Gordon’s research in “Dances with Darwin” (2009), which compares, from the perspective of French colonial history, the scientific rhetoric on the female body with the rhetoric of race. Famous activist drag queen Vaginal Davis performs together with dancer and choreographer Arantxa Martinez.

Pauline Boudry and Renate Lorenz live and work in Berlin. Pauline Boudry studied at the Ecole Supérieure des Beaux-Arts in Geneva, and worked with Renate Lorenz at the Shedhalle/Rote Fabrik in Zurich. She also founded the music band “Rhythm King and her Friends” and “Normal Love”. Renate Lorenz also works as a curator and academic author. In addition to the video installations, they have coproduced television pieces (“Copy Me – I want to travel”, 2004, Arte), critical books (“Reproduktionskonten fälschen!” ed. Pauline Boudry, Brigitta Kuster, Renate Lorenz, 1999, b-books), and exhibitions (“Normal Love”, Künstlerhaus Bethanien, Berlin, 2007). The duo recently exhibited at the Musée cantonal des Beaux-Arts, Lausanne (winning the Accrochage 2010 award), as well as at the Kunstverein Munich, the Museum of Contemporary Art, Belgrade, and the Generali Foundation, Vienna. Their work was also presented as solo shows at the Swiss Institute, New York, Gallery 44, Toronto, Les Complices, Zurich (where the exhibition was amongst the six finalists of the Swiss Exhibition Award 2008), and recently at Ellen de Bruijne Projects, Amsterdam.

The exhibition as well as the new production were made possible thanks to the generous support of George Foundation, the République et canton de Genève (Fonds cantonal d’art contemporain), and Julius Baer.

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Exhibition curator: Denis Pernet

In partnership with Theillard, Le Courier, Pernod Ricard Swiss and **360°**



PARALLEL EXHIBITION : DAVID HOMINAL

PRESS CONTACT : Marie-Avril Berthet +41 22 329 18 42 ma.berthet@centre.ch / presse@centre.ch

« Normal Work », 2007, installation with film and 13 photographs



« N.O. Body »
Installation with film (16 mm./DVD 15 min)
and 47 photographs, 2008

« Salomania »
Film, 17', and
Installation, 2009



BIOGRAPHY OF PAULINE BOUDRY & RENATE LORENZ

Live and work in Berlin.

SOLO SHOWS:

- 2010 „Salomania“, Ellen de Bruijne, Amsterdam
„Charming for the Revolution“, Les Complices, Zürich
- 2009 „Salomania“, Les Complices, Zürich
„N.O.Body“, Swiss Institute, New York
- 2008 „Normal Work“ Galerie 44, Toronto
„Normal Work“ Lakeside, Klagenfurt
„N.O.Body“, Les Complices, Zürich
„Normal Work“, Dolores, Ellen de Bruijne Projects,
Amsterdam „Normal Work“ Galerie Arquebuse, Genf

RECENT GROUP SHOWS:

- 2010 „Lecture Performance“, Museum of Contemporary Art, Belgrade
„Accrochage“ Musée des Beaux-Arts, Lausanne
„Gender Blending“ Galerie Michel Journiac, Paris
„Auto-Kino“, curated by Phil Collins, Kunsthalle Berlin
- 2009 „Lecture Performance“ Kunstverein, Köln
„Bertha von Suttner Revisited“, Harmannsburg
„Everywhere“, CGAC, Santiago de Compostela
„Mother Festival“, Hayarkon 70, Tel Aviv
„Swiss Art Awards“ Basel
- 2008 „49th Salon“, Cultural Center, Belgrad
„Sex brennt!“, Charité Museum, Berlin
„Femmes´r us“, Radialsystem, Berlin
„Make out!“ Studio 44, Stockholm
„And then we take Berlin...“ Substitut, Berlin
„Contrasenas“, Monterhermoso Cultural Center, Spain
„Lost & Found“, Lothringer 13 Laden, München
- 2007 „Oh Girl, it's a Boy“ Kunstverein, München
„Du Nord“ Musée des Beaux-Arts, Lausanne
„Normal Love“ Künstlerhaus Bethanien, Berlin
„Eau Sauvage“ Fieldgate Gallery, London
„Lost & Found“ Shedhalle, Zürich
„Swiss Awards“ Basel
„Feministische Strategien in der kulturellen Selbstorganisation“ Galerie
Bildende Kunst, Wien
- 2006 „Und so hat Konzept noch nie Pferd bedeutet“, Generali Foundation, Wien
„Null Problemo“ Rudolf-Sharpf-Galerie, Ludwigshafen
„Revolt she said“ la Criée, Rennes
„Eau sauvage“ galerie Mackintosh, Lausanne
„Audio“ Cabinet des Estampes, Genève

GRANTS/PRIZES

- 2010 Katalogförderung Senat Berlin
Accrochages, Lausanne
- 2009 Swiss Art Awards
- 2008 Bourse arts plastiques du canton de Vaud
- 2007 Swiss Art Awards
Film- und Videoförderung des KünstlerInnenprogramms des Senats Berlin
- 2004 Swiss Art Awards
Projektförderung im Bereich Bildende Kunst des Senats Berlin