



Instituto  
de arte  
contemporáneo

## Some politics of appropriation. Comisariado por Blanca de la Torre

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Cristina Lucas, *Habla*, 2008, Courtesy of the artist

Participating artists: Eugenio Ampudia, Evaristo Benítez, Andreas Berzotti, Sabine Gross, Cristina Lucas, Luis Bezeta, Laurina Paperina, Andreas Sachsenmaier, Mariana Vassileva, Alexei Buldakov.

Curated by Blanca de la Torre

Aspects of appropriation are somehow inherent to the basic act of making art since the beginning of the so-called Art History. We can address it just as the borrowing of images or concepts from the surrounding world and re-interpreting

them as art, starting from the art of the cavemen. The practice of appropriating others' images is quite old, recalling historical examples like Marcantonio Raimondi copying Raphael's *Judgement of Paris* (1515), which would be copied three decades later by Claude Manet *Le Dejeuner Sur l'Herbe*, which has itself been parodied numerous times. After Duchamp, who reproduced an apparent copy of the *Mona Lisa*, appropriation became a regular aspect in Contemporary

Art. Andy Warhol, Robert Rauschenberg, and other artists increasingly incorporated from both art and non-art elements. In the 80's Sherrie Levine addressed the act of appropriating itself as a theme in art and reproduced other works, including paintings by Monet and Malevich. Other contemporary appropriation artists today include Christian Marclay, Damien Hirst, Jeff Koons, Chapman brothers, Joy Garnett, Tom Sachs, Paul Pfeiffer, Pierre Huyghe, Cory Arcangel...and many more.

What would art be without borrowing, adaptation and derivatives? In the area of video art, such a question has taken on additional relevance given the extent to which intertextuality and the recycling of film footage have become crucial factors in contemporary practitioners like Stan Douglas, Jarun Farocki, Ann Lislegaard, Paul Pfeiffer, Tracey Moffat, Christoph Draeger etc...

This selection aims to raise the subject through a collection of videos that utilize methods of the appropriation or pseudoappropriation by taking some icons or subjects in the History of Art, establishing an iconographic bridge between video and Art History. Does this mean that the artists here make a step further in representing the representation of the represented?

As a result, our perception of the appropriated work is no longer the same but instead transformed through a process in which the artist forces us to break with habitual viewing patterns, permitting new meanings around an existing work.

These artists play with art history by re-lecturing it, reconstructing –and deconstructing- its rhetoric to transform it into something else or condensing parts of it to a concentrated essence of the item in question.

All the works could be seen as a head-on confrontation with the anxiety of influence, and even creates the possibility of an allegorical reading of the work, in an attempt to restate the history of art on an original point of view, as well as to

mime moving image and art history stereotypes with a strange blend of camp and genuine feeling.

In order to illustrate this point, In *Where to Sleep*, Goya, Eugenio Ampudia spends the night sleeping inside the Prado Museum and under *The Executions Of The Rebels of the 3rd of May* by Francisco de Goya. Evaristo Benítez in *D'Apres*

Courbet tells a story using a succession of gripping abstract images while Andreas Berzotti *Death of Arts* parallels Hitchcock's *psycho's* death as some kind of Arthur Danto's death of Art, which occurs with the appearance of Warhol and his Brillo boxes. In her videos, Sabine Gross refers to Van Gogh's *Starry Night* and *Happy Tears*, by Roy Lichtenstein. In *Habla/Talk* Cristina Lucas hits Michelangelo's statue Moses with a hammer while asking questions in an attempt to elicit the mystery of creation from his genius. Luis Bezeta is interested in the videographic modification of painting works, and with his *moviecuadros* creates a process of metamorphosis of classical paintings into moving image. Laurina Paperina's *The battle of the arts*, is an animated parody about art and the artist through a series of known characters of today's art world confronting themselves in absurd situations. Andreas Sachsenmaier's *L'Ultima cena* shows an apparent image of *The Last*

Supper by Leonardo da Vinci where female figures are sitting and standing at a long table, all well-known prototypes, which we can see daily in the media. Inspired by a painting by Jan Vermeer, in Mariana Vassileva's video The Milkmaid the

motif becomes transformed into a virtual spaceless and timeless sphere. Finally, Alexei Buldakov's SexLissitzky, deconstructs the myth of abstract art with sexually allusive animations of El Lissitzky's famous poster Beat the Whites with the Red Wedge, completed with sound tracks taken from porno movies.

PARAKINO. Show and Lecture: May 15th 2009, 6pm.

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