



40 Jahre Years
Museum der Moderne
Salzburg

ECSTATIC Media Art Reconsidered **MEDIA**

10/26/2023
-2/25/2024





Peter Weibel, *Observation of Observation: Indeterminacy*, 1973

Uli Aigner, *Metanoia*, 1995



ECSTATIC MEDIA

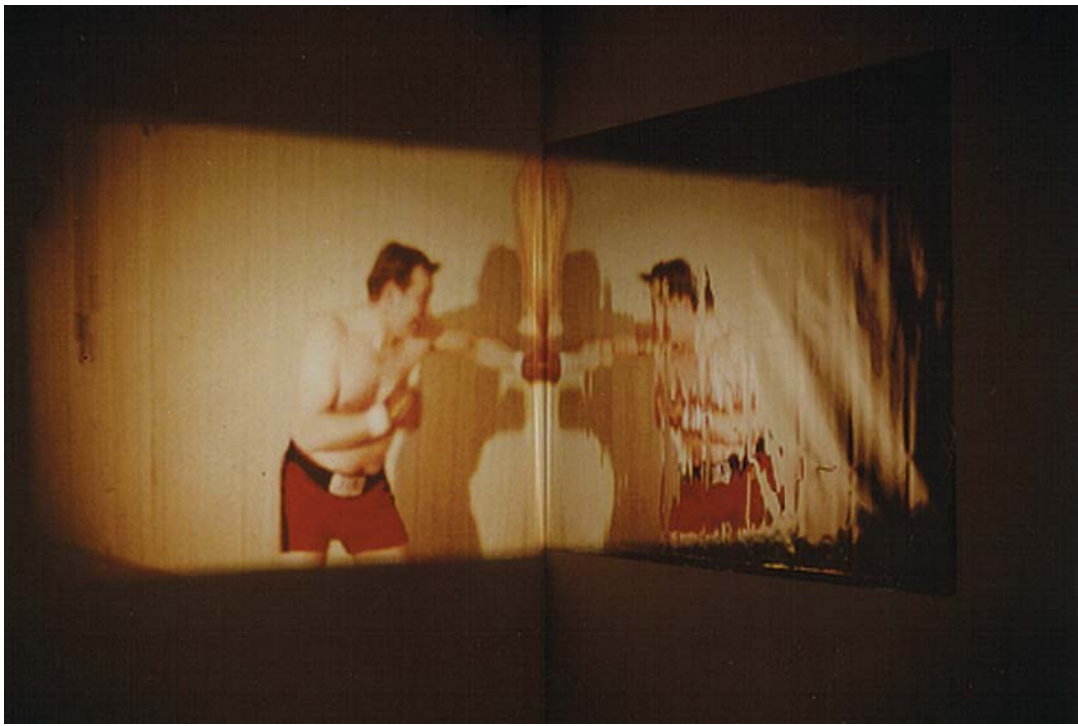
Media Art Reconsidered

The imageries of novel media and technologies can provoke intense experiences and induce extraordinary emotional states. The exhibition coins the term “ecstatic media” to capture this distinctive agency of media. Characteristic examples include consumer products such as videogames or beauty filters, which affect us so profoundly because they arouse deep-seated yearnings.

The concept of “ecstatic media” derives from a consideration of the emotional and psychological potency of such products. It indicates the contemporary vantage point from which the exhibition sheds fresh light on the media art of the past sixty years, demonstrating that artists grappled early on with the technological, aesthetic, and psychological impact of media on viewers and users. Taking a variety of—critical, analytical, or, in some instances, affirmative—perspectives, they have scrutinized the effects of certain properties of media, deliberately amplifying them to make them more tangible.

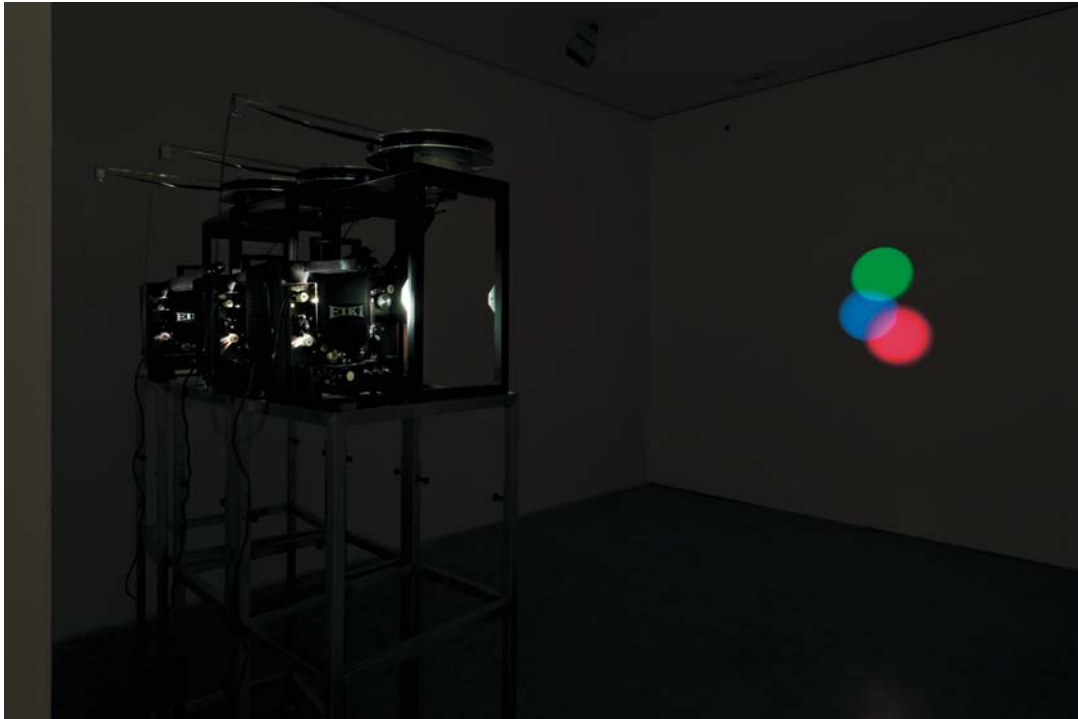
The exhibition musters imposing examples—from avant-garde film and video art to computer animations and data engineering—to unfurl an alternative history of media art. Key exhibits are drawn from the Generali Foundation Collection—Permanent Loan to the Museum der Moderne Salzburg, which is dedicated to the preservation and scholarly study of one of the most important collections of media art in Austria, with over five hundred works by international artists.

With works by Uli Aigner, Theresa Hak Kyung Cha, Danica Dakić, Carola Dertnig, VALIE EXPORT, Harun Farocki, Morgan Fisher, Ulrich Formann, Simone Forti, Dan Graham, Richard Kriesche, Friedl vom Gröller, Helmut Mark, Willem Oorebeek, Christa Sommerer & Laurent Mignonneau, Peter Weibel, Heimo Zobernig



VALIE EXPORT, *Splitscreen-Solipsism*, 1968

Morgan Fisher, *Color Balance*, 1980



Space 1

1 Peter Weibel

1944 Odessa, UA – 2023 Karlsruhe, DE

Observation of Observation: Indeterminacy,
1973

Closed-circuit video installation

3 video cameras, 3 video monitors, floor
marking made of black tape

Diameter: approx. 400 cm

Generali Foundation Collection—Permanent Loan
to the Museum der Moderne Salzburg

2 Willem Oorebeek

1953 Pernis, NL – Brussels, BE

Dot-Screen-Wall, 2011

Wallpaper, offset printing

Dimensions variable

Generali Foundation Collection—Permanent Loan
to the Museum der Moderne Salzburg

3 Dan Graham

1942 Urbana, IL, US – 2022, New York, NY,
US

Sunset to Sunrise, 1969

Film, 16mm (color, without sound)

4:20 min.

Generali Foundation Collection—Permanent Loan
to the Museum der Moderne Salzburg

4 Morgan Fisher

1942 Washington, DC, US – Los Angeles,
CA, US

Color Balance, 1980

Three-channel film installation
(reconstructed in 2002)

3 films, 16mm (color, without sound)

5 min. each

Generali Foundation Collection—Permanent Loan
to the Museum der Moderne Salzburg

5 VALIE EXPORT

1940 Linz, AT – Vienna, AT

Splitscreen-Solipsism, 1968

“Expanded Movie”, film installation

Film, 16mm (color, without sound),
aluminum foil

3 min.

Performer: Hubert Wening

Generali Foundation Collection—Permanent Loan
to the Museum der Moderne Salzburg

Media Realities

The exhibition traces an arc from the media realities of the late 1960s to the present. It opens with seminal examples of early video art, experimental film, and Expanded Cinema. One central work is Peter Weibel's interactive installation *Observation of Observation: Indeterminacy*, which was created as early as 1973. The work turns the spotlight on the human being and their self-perception in the media space, raising the question of how novel visual technologies influence the formation of personal identity.

The situation in the 1960s and 1970s resembles our own time in very interesting ways. Now as then, we are experiencing profound social and technological changes. Just as our world is being transformed by innovations in information and data processing, by social networks and artificial intelligence, the society of half a century ago is changed by the media revolution of the period. The mass medium television is booming all over the world, emerging as a central instrument of social communication on a par with print media and radio. Video technology becomes accessible to private consumers for the first time in the form of video cameras and monitors. Television and video spawn not only a new visual language but, more importantly, a media reality that had hardly existed only years earlier and that soon grows overwhelming. The Vietnam War is perhaps the most prominent example: in the 1960s, television first transmits moving images recorded on the actual battlefield into people's living rooms. Wars have been fought in part on the screens ever since.

The new media technologies unlock enormous potentials, but they also open the door to unprecedented manipulation. The pioneers of media art are very alert to these dangers and so often adopt a pedagogical stance. Many of their central works can feel educational. The works on view in this room from the domains of video and film, too, evince an experimental as well as didactic quality. They analyze the new media's technological and aesthetic structures and basis in the psychology of perception and inquire into their impact on users, prompting profound reflections on how media thoroughly reconstruct our understanding of reality and how these technologies can change and manipulate how we see the world.

1 Peter Weibel
Observation of Observation:
Indeterminacy, 1973

Peter Weibel has been hailed as one of the most influential protagonists of media art. This installation, created in 1973, is an experimental setting that turns our perception on its head. It consists of a hexagram, a symbol with a mystical aura, surrounded by surveillance cameras and screens. However we turn and twist ourselves, the screens never show us our faces, only our backs—a sight that is elusive in ordinary life. From selfies to video conferences, we are used to beholding our faces in the mirrors of media. In this instance, however, we watch ourselves trying to see something. We are subjects and objects at once—observers and observed, beholden to the perspective that our bodies determine.

Weibel's installation harnesses technology to implement what the Surrealist René Magritte envisioned with the means of art in his painting *La reproduction interdite* (1937): a mirror that shows its counterpart as seen from behind rather than en face; a paradoxical mirror that conceals the face and lets us keenly feel the loss of identity precipitated by such effacement.

2 Willem Oorebeek
Dot-Screen-Wall, 2011

Willem Oorebeek's works investigate the foundations of image production in mass media and print media in particular. The *Dot-Screen-Wall* presents a drastically enlarged grid of black dots; the magnification lends the almost microscopically fine grid pattern, which is used in mechanical printing, a spatial dimension. Meanwhile,

the dense mesh of dots recalls the composition of digital images from pixels or the grain of analog film stock. As we walk through the room, our eyes try to discern structures within the grid, resulting in optical interference effects. The only discontinuity in the perfectly schematized representation, however, is a blank. The grid frames a rectangular unprinted field that visually comes to the fore and brings to mind a video screen or projection.

3 Dan Graham
Sunset to Sunrise, 1969

Sunset to Sunrise is one in a series of early experimental 16mm films by the conceptual artist Dan Graham that probes the moving image medium's capacity for representing space, time, motion, and perception.

The unedited footage shows us what the artist recorded with his camera in real time. Standing in an open landscape, he begins at dusk, capturing the setting sun. He turns the camera in a slow spiraling 360-degree rotation from the horizon to the zenith, recording the entire firmament. The next morning, a second panning shot traces the reverse trajectory, concluding with the sun rising on the horizon. The sun's light illuminates the room, defining time and establishing a connection between the artist's location and the celestial sphere. Watching the film, we feel how the motion of the camera's eye, which is fused with the artist's body, gradually destabilizes our spatial system of reference.

4 Morgan Fisher
Color Balance, 1980

Color Balance is a film performance, an abstract play with light based on the principle that “the whole is more than sum of its parts.” As the artist and experimental filmmaker Morgan Fisher puts it, his installation is meant to “liberate colors from their servitude.” Unlike a conventional film, the installation consists not of a single length of footage but of three film strips that are projected atop one another. Only in the interplay between the projections does the intended image emerge.

The starting material was a white table-tennis ball balancing on an air column that was recorded before a black wall. In the laboratory, the image was exposed using three different color filters. In the installation, three 16mm projectors cast the image of the bobbing ball on the screen, but at different replay speeds. The cones of light are in constant motion, overlapping in ever-shifting constellations that continually yield new negative colors: red and green blend to produce yellow; red and blue, magenta; blue and green, cyan. Where all three beams coincide simultaneously, these hues disappear, fusing into white—the original color of the ball.

5 VALIE EXPORT
Splitscreen-Solipsism, 1968

Splitscreen-Solipsism is an example of the pioneering media artist VALIE EXPORT’s “Expanded Movie” practice. The film image is duplicated by a mirror set at a right angle to the projection. The boxer throwing punches near, and against, the edge of the image becomes two boxers. He spars with or fights against himself. The fists invariably fly synchronously; each action is its own reaction. It feels like the film does not need us spectators—the boxer is completely absorbed in himself. In reality, though, our eyes and perspectives are of fundamental importance for this film: it is only by seeing the double in the mirror that we complete it.



Dan Graham, *Sunset to Sunrise*, 1969



Christa Sommerer & Laurent Mignonneau
Homo Insectus, 2020

Space 2

6 Simone Forti

1935 Florenz, IT – Los Angeles, CA, US

Huddle, 1974

Performed in the artist's studio
Single-channel video (black and white,
without sound)
30 min.

Camera: Andy Mann

Produced by Castelli/Sonnabend
Videotapes

Generali Foundation Collection—Permanent Loan
to the Museum der Moderne Salzburg

Huddle, 1976

Integral hologram (multiplex)
Plexiglass reinforcement, polymer protec-
tive cover, electric light, wood
162,4 x 54,5 x 54,5 cm

Made by Lloyd Cross

Generali Foundation Collection—Permanent Loan
to the Museum der Moderne Salzburg

7 Danica Dakić

1962 Sarajevo, BA – Düsseldorf, DE

Autoportrait, 1999

Video installation (color, sound)
4:35 min.

Camera: Egbert Trogemann

Editing: Michael Winterberg

Generali Foundation Collection—Permanent Loan
to the Museum der Moderne Salzburg

8 Theresa Hak Kyung Cha

1951 Busan, KR – 1982 New York, NY, US

Mouth to Mouth, 1975

Single-channel video (black and white,
sound)
7:40 min.

Generali Foundation Collection—Permanent Loan
to the Museum der Moderne Salzburg

9 Christa Sommerer & Laurent Mignonneau

Christa Sommerer
1964 Gmunden, AT – Linz, AT

Laurent Mignonneau
1967 Angoulême, FR – Linz, AT

Homo Insectus, 2020

Interactive installation
Flatscreen, PC computer, camera, CGI
software

Generali Foundation Collection—Permanent Loan
to the Museum der Moderne Salzburg

10 Uli Aigner

1965 Gaming, AT – Berlin, DE

Metanoia, 1995

Single-channel video (color, sound)
11 min.

Combination of live-action film and 3D com-
puter animation (Silicon Graphics, software:
Explore-TDI, morphing software: Elastic
Reality)

Generali Foundation Collection—Permanent Loan
to the Museum der Moderne Salzburg

11 Helmut Mark

1958 Stall, AT – Vienna, AT

L 12, 1989

Computer (Commodore AMIGA 2500),
monitor (Commodore), 3,5" floppy disk,
2 glass elements, connecting parts (plastic
corners)
200 x 40 x 45 cm

Generali Foundation Collection—Permanent Loan
to the Museum der Moderne Salzburg

Body Images

Augmented-reality beauty filters on visual social media platforms are extraordinarily popular digital tools. Users can alter their faces in live video streams; their choices on how to improve their appearance are guided by the beauty ideals of the day. Beauty filters pose a dilemma: they are entertaining and cater to our yearning for youth and beauty, but they also give users a distorted self-image and leave them dissatisfied with their own bodies. They are a striking contemporary example of how profoundly media realities can change people's physical self-awareness.

Not coincidentally, the engagement with the body is a theme that runs through media art from its beginnings to the present. The body's translation into a thoroughly transformable virtual phenomenon gives rise to an utterly new understanding of physicality. The works on display in this room illustrate this novel image of the body informed by media. One formidable example is Simone Forti's hologram *Huddle* (1976), which shows an interwoven group of human bodies in motion. The hologram is a distinctive medium capable of suggesting three-dimensional reality, yet it is candidly a phantom-like apparition. The spectator can positively feel how the tangible body slips away into immateriality, pointing up a fundamental constant of media images.

The exhibition shows the hologram in a dialogue with works on video and computer-generated visual universes. At stake in all these works are the—confrontational or participatory—interaction between the real and what media present and the question of how the newly created media realities have changed and continue to change our physical self-awareness.

6 Simone Forti ***Huddle*, 1974 / 1976**

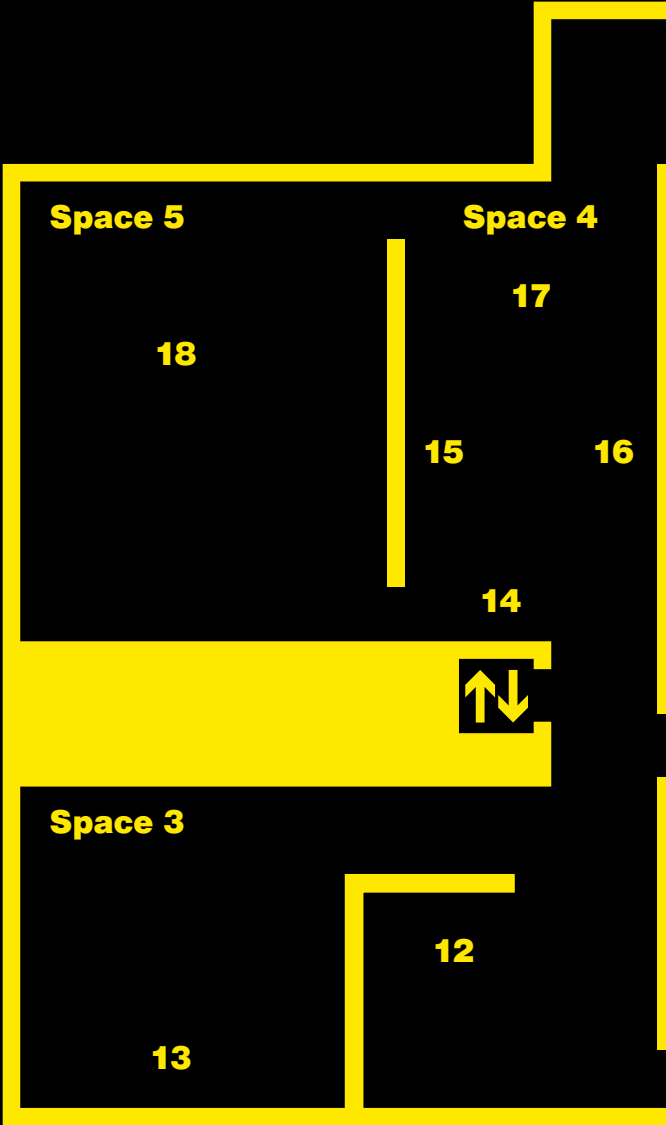
First staged in 1961, the performance *Huddle* is a key work by the visual artist, dancer, and choreographer Simone Forti. A leading figure in postmodern dance, she has enriched the classic dance techniques with their focus on perfect body control by adding natural workaday and improvised movement sequences. *Huddle* straddles the boundary between sculpture and dance: the participants form a circle, bending forward, their arms around each other's waists and shoulders. One individual climbs atop the others, using their shoulders as a ladder, then slides down into the center of the circle and rejoins the group. The piece is an experiment exploring the transcendence of physical boundaries in a community.

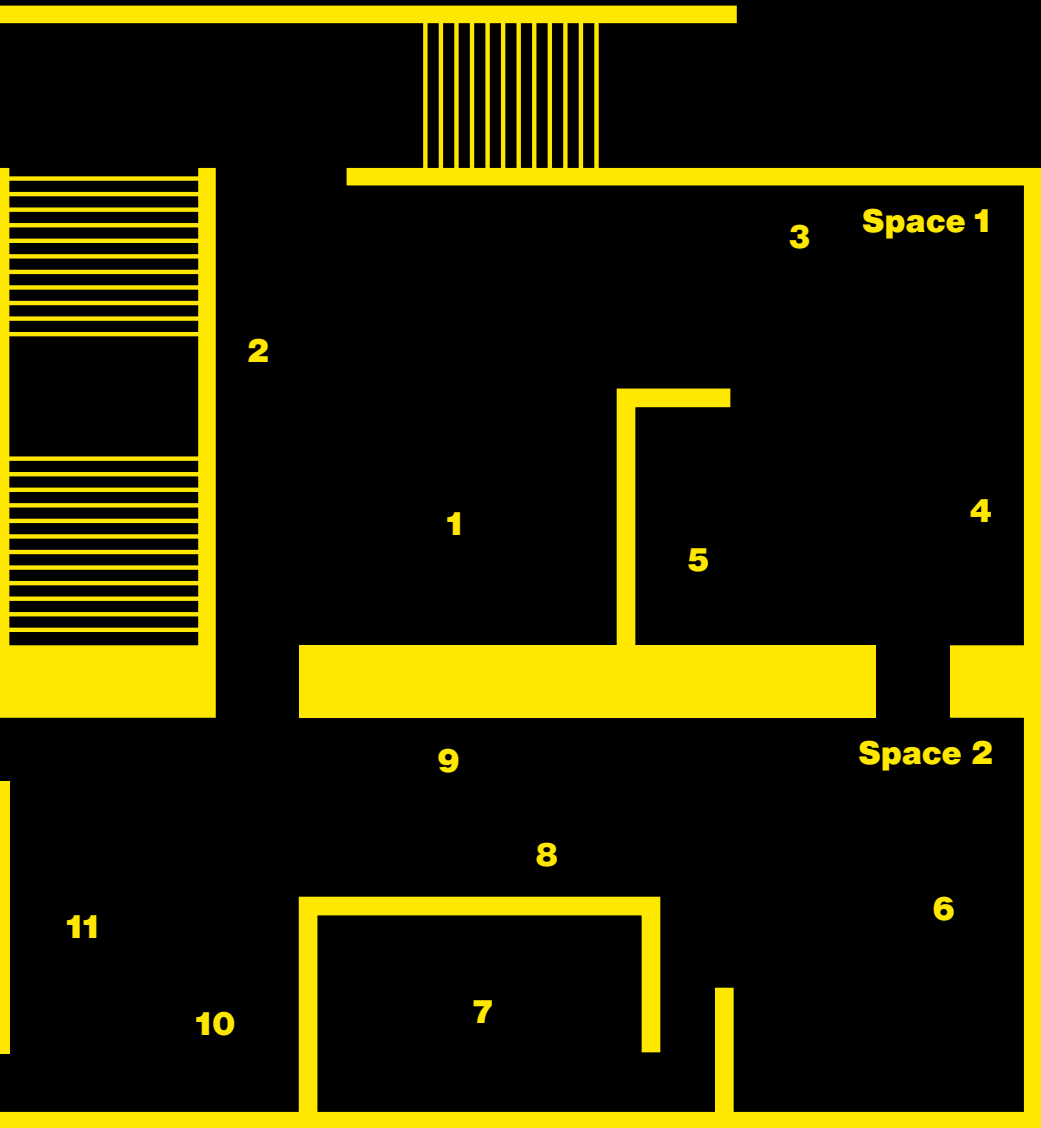
The video documents a performance of the piece in the artist's studio. In the hologram, Forti translates an isolated movement sequence into a three-dimensional immaterial image. Her objective is to focus the attention on a single act, not unlike in a haiku, a traditional Japanese poetic form that consists of only a few syllables and lines. The holographic image differs considerably from the video image. It appears to hover above the base and is oddly elusive, its shape and colors shifting with even the smallest movement. The ensemble's powerful physical presence, which is still palpable in the video, is transmuted by the hologram into a ghostly light phenomenon. Invented in 1947, holography is a technology that underscores the gulf between real bodily presence and its media representation.

7 Danica Dakić ***Autoportrait*, 1999**

The video installation *Autoportrait* is an iconic work of the turn of the millennium. With its presence in the room and its surreal symbolism, the image speaks to us on a positively physical level. Danica Dakić's work blends painting and video: on the one hand, it is reminiscent of an Old-Masterly self-portrait; on the other hand, the artist harnesses the video medium with its possibilities—motion, light, sound—to bring the portrait to life. What is certainly out of the ordinary is the second mouth that appears where the eyes should be. The two mouths recite passages from fairy tales in Bosnian and German, with the two languages sometimes interweaving like echoes of each other. "The video installation strikes a raw nerve with a generation of people defined by uprooted identities: the face with the two mouths speaking different languages reflects the experience of migration and globalization, but also the potentials for manipulation unlocked by genetic engineering and medical technology as well as the digital universe, which increasingly affect the process in which our identities take shape and threaten to subvert it." (Reinhard Spieler)

Level 1





3 Space 1

2

1

5

4

9

Space 2

8

6

11

10

7

8 Theresa Hak Kyung Cha
Mouth to Mouth, 1975

Theresa Hak Kyung Cha is born in Korea in 1951; when she is thirteen, her family moves to the United States. Her immigrant experience proves formative for her work as a visual artist and writer; she grapples with cultural and linguistic forms of rootlessness and explores the importance of language and the loss of a language for the formation of personal identity.

Mouth to Mouth is an intimate video sketch in which Cha represents the alienation from her native Korean language as an inner struggle. The video opens with an image of writing: the camera slowly pans over letters spelling out the English words of the title. Then the artist's mouth appears in an extreme close-up shot. Her lips form the eight Korean vowels without audibly pronouncing them. White noise gradually swallows up the mouth. Any suggestion of spoken language is drowned out by ambient sounds—flowing water, birdsong. The video conveys a kind of inner conflict: one the one hand, the imposed silence over the mother tongue; on the other hand, the artist's almost physical need to express herself in this same, her primary, language.

9 Christa Sommerer & Laurent Mignonneau
Homo Insectus, 2020

“Insects are an essential element of the biosphere. However, due to pollution and the widespread use of chemicals, many insect species have gone extinct in recent years. Each insect species has an important function in the ecosystem: they are pollinators, composters, or food sources for other animals. As industrialization and human intervention threaten their world, we all need to become more aware of our impact on the insect kingdom.

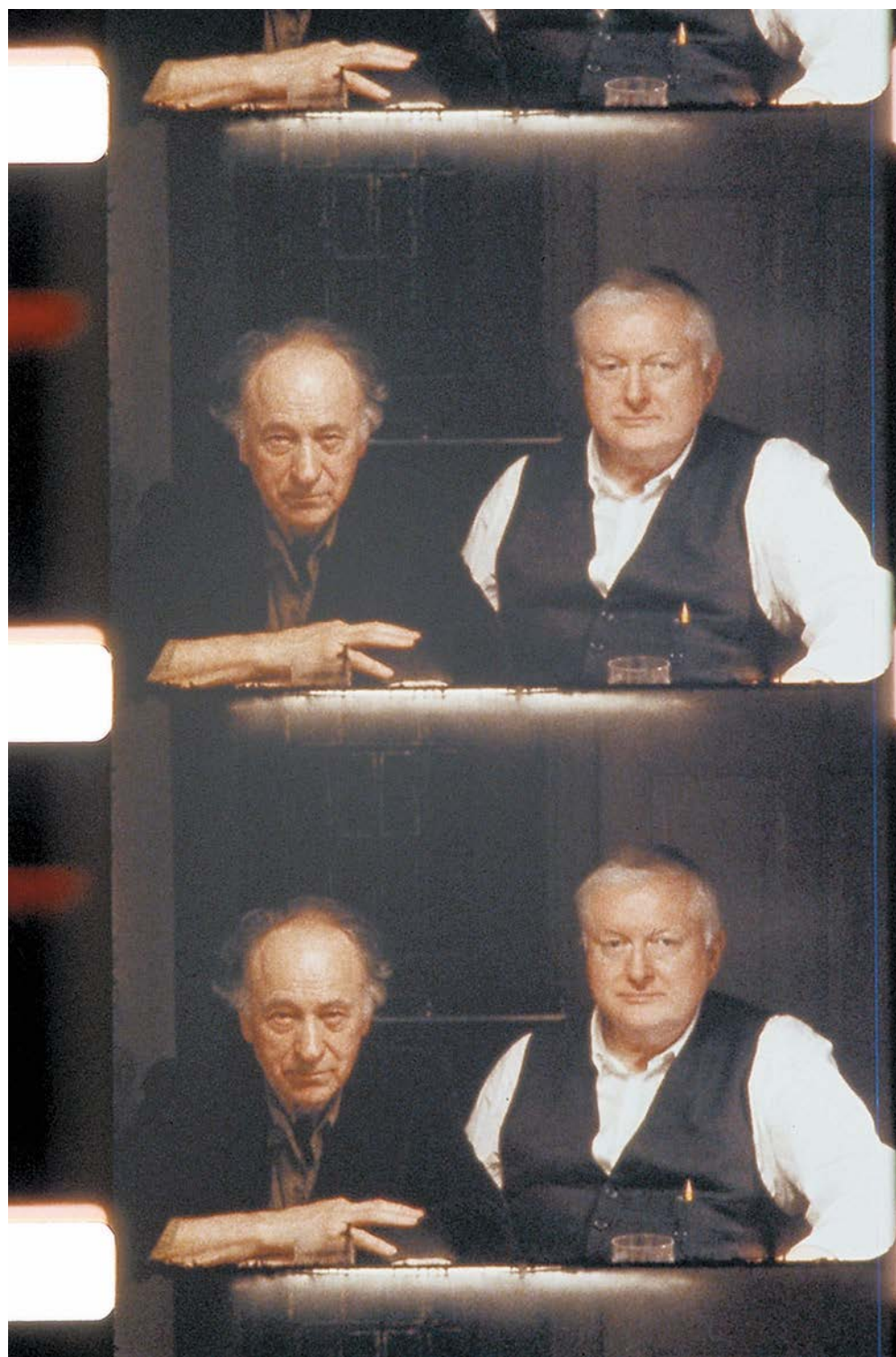
Homo Insectus is an interactive installation that highlights the human contribution to the insect world and promotes a positive attitude towards these creatures. Participants interacting with the installation can see their own bodies transformed into a habitat for artificial ants. They propagate and organize themselves into colonies and formations as long as the participants accept a sensitive dialogue with the world of the artificial creatures.” (Christa Sommerer & Laurent Mignonneau)

10 Uli Aigner
***Metanoia*, 1995**

The term “metanoia” comes from psychology, where it designates a fundamental change in the human being’s personality and attitude to life. Carl Gustav Jung used it to describe the psychological process of self-healing after a life crisis. In Uli Aigner’s science fiction film *Metanoia*, reality undergoes a series of radical shifts. The two protagonists, played by Tina Fischer and Elke Krystufek, find themselves fusing against their will with objects and architectural elements. The materiality of their bodies disintegrates as they transform into abstract formations that represent something like the consciousness of these novel human-things hybrids.

11 Helmut Mark
***L 12*, 1989**

Digitally generated computer graphics first become widely available in the mid-1980s. The ‘Commodore Amiga’ personal computer proves popular with consumers in part because it serves as a platform for early two-dimensional videogames. In his installation *L 12*, the media artist Helmut Mark probes the material and aesthetic premises that underlie this novel technology. The computer sculpture simulates a slightly larger-than-life abstract human figure. A glass body cradles the computer as its figurative heart roughly at chest height. Face to face with the beholder, the screen shows a computer-generated animation. The digits 0 through 9, constructed as virtual three-dimensional models and continually morphing into one another, rotate in an endless loop. The transparent glass body not only lends the computer an aspect of weightlessness, it also reveals the indispensable power cable running, like the central nervous system in humans, through the body and up into the brain. The immateriality of computer-generated imagery clashes with the sculptural physical reality of the infrastructure that sustains it.



Space 3

12 Friedl vom Gröller

1946 London, UK – Vienna, AT

Peter Kubelka and Jonas Mekas, 1994

Film, 16mm (color, without sound)

2:50 min.

Generali Foundation Collection—Permanent Loan
to the Museum der Moderne Salzburg

13 Harun Farocki

1944 Nový Jicin, CZ (formerly Neutitschein,
CS) – 2014 Berlin, DE

Transmission, 2007

Single-channel video (color, sound)

43 min.

Director, screenplay: Harun Farocki

Idea: Antje Ehmann

Research: Antje Ehmann, Christiane

Hitzemann, Regina Krottil, Matthias

Rajmann, Isabell Verret

Camera: Carlos Echeverria, Harun Farocki,

Ingo Kratisch, Matthias Rajmann

Editing: Meggie Schneider

Sound: Jochen Jezussek

Recording Supervision: Avi Perez, Haim
Perez

Technical director: Jan Ralske

Production: Harun Farocki Filmproduktion,
Berlin

Commissioned by Kunst Öffentlichkeit
Zürich

With the support of the Schwyzer-Winker
Foundation

Generali Foundation Collection—Permanent Loan
to the Museum der Moderne Salzburg

Transmissions

Harun Farocki's documentary video *Transmission* (2007) and Friedl vom Gröller's 16mm film *Jonas Mekas and Peter Kubelka* (1994) portray moments of contact in which media play a key part.

Farocki's film is a study on the human need to touch objects and sites charged with spiritual energy or fraught with memories. Immediate physical contact creates a connection to something else—to the past, to the sacred. In these interactions, the places of remembrance and cult objects are conceived as mediators, as "media." Vom Gröller's use of the medium of film is performative rather than documentary. She harnesses film—and more specifically, the act of recording with the camera—to establish a particular form of connection between herself and the subjects she portrays, forging an empathetic exchange of gazes that, by way of a kind of transference, involves us as viewers as well. This film sustains a practice of mutual perception and recognition, an invisible emotional bond.

12 Friedl vom Gröller
Peter Kubelka and Jonas Mekas,
1994

Since the late 1960s, Friedl vom Gröller, a.k.a. Friedl Kubelka vom Gröller, has used photography and film to create portraits that stand out for their psychological acumen. Her oeuvre encompasses over a hundred experimental short films; the artist still works mostly in black-and-white and on analog 16mm stock. The main character in her works is the face with all its expressive potential and its capacity to convey inward agitation, moods, and emotions. The gaze plays a key part, mediating a relationship of reciprocal recognition between the artist's subjects and herself behind the camera. Vom Gröller stretches the instant of an exchange of glances to the length of a film reel (around three minutes). Such a fixed gaze is normally taboo; in this instance, the film camera's presence justifies it, allowing for a particular intimacy, tension, and empathy to build up that extend to us as the spectators as well.

In the film shown in the exhibition, vom Gröller portrays two protagonists of avant-garde film who are close friends: Jonas Mekas and Peter Kubelka. All in all, then, the work gathers three artists who have made it their vocation to subject the world to penetrating scrutiny. At one point, vom Gröller, who does not otherwise appear on the screen, pointedly intervenes, precipitating an unexpected emotional twist.

13 Harun Farocki
Transmission, 2007

Many cultures and religions conceive of memorial sites, monuments, relics, and scenes of worship as "media" that allow for communication between the present and the past, the sacred and the profane. The documentary filmmaker and media artist Harun Farocki's video *Transmission* portrays the ritualized gestures with which pilgrims and tourists connect to sites of remembrance and cult objects. The film focuses on the instants in which people make contact with these media by touching them, with their hands, their foreheads or mouths, their feet or even entire bodies. "What all these rituals, whether casual, routine, or sacred, have in common is that they seek to touch upon the untouchable, to take physical possession of the spiritual, to make the incomprehensible tangible." (Harun Farocki)

TIME	NUMBER	ROUTE	DEPARTURE	DESTINATION	DURATION
21 15	NR 7962	PMI > BRU	Palma De Mallorc	Brussels	in transit
21 02	LH 888	FRA > UNQ	Frankfurt am Ma	Vilnius	in transit
20 44	QR 8222	FRA > DOH	Frankfurt am Ma	Doha	in transit
20 27	AF 6740	CDG > ORD	Paris	Chicago	in transit
19 43	FR 869	MXP > OUD	Málaga	Oujda	00 41
19 40	OR 507	AMS > PMI	Amsterdam	Palma De Mallorc	in transit
19 31	XZ 290	FCO > OLB	Rome	Olbia (SS)	00 38
19 23	UY 404	ALC > BCN	Alicante	Barcelona	00 47
18 56	CZ 468	FRA > CAN	Frankfurt am Ma	Guangzhou	in transit
18 45	BA 2789	SVQ > LGW	Sevilla	London	in transit
18 43	AZ 9924	FCO > GRO	Rome	Girona	01 21
18 34	IB 2893	BCN > MAD	Barcelona	Madrid	00 54
18 31	RE 612	BER > HEL	Berlin	Chi in u	01 42
18 29	NR 2272	PMI > NUR	Palma De Mallorc	Nuremberg	01 48
18 12	QR 8036	MAD > CDG	Madrid	Paris	01 32
18 06	AHO 213	MUC > HAM	Munich	Hamburg	00 56
17 54	OR 8145	FRA > ATL	Frankfurt am Ma	Atlanta	in transit
17 34	AHO 373	PMI > MAN	Palma De Mallorc	Manchester	in transit
17 33	YW 3275	PMI > LIS	Palma De Mallorc	Lisbon	in transit
17 20	CI 6522	FRA > TPE	Frankfurt am Ma	Taipei	in transit
16 56	A3 8902	ATH > SKG	Athens	Thessaloniki	00 32
16 34	CZ 404	FRA > CAN	Frankfurt am Ma	Guangzhou	in transit
16 28	BAF 769	PMI > KTW	Palma De Mallorc	Katowice	02 22
16 00	OR 207	AMS > RHO	Amsterdam	Rodes Island	in transit

Space 4

14 Carola Dertnig

1963 Innsbruck, AT – Vienna, AT

Dancing with Remote, 1997

Single channel video (color, sound)

6 min.

Generali Foundation Collection—Permanent Loan
to the Museum der Moderne Salzburg

15 Heimo Zobernig

1958 Mauthen, AT – Vienna, AT

Untitled, 1991–96

Installation, rubber, black

Overall dimensions variable

Generali Foundation Collection—Permanent Loan
to the Museum der Moderne Salzburg

Video No. 12, 1996

Single-channel video (color, without sound)

30 min.

Performer: Heimo Zobernig

Production: The Renaissance Society at the
University of Chicago

Postproduction: Matthew Konicek (Avenue
Edit)

Generali Foundation Collection—Permanent Loan
to the Museum der Moderne Salzburg

16 Richard Kriesche

1940 Vienna, AT – Graz, AT

self-space, 2022–23

3 picture tableaus: wooden door, screen
with video (color, sound, 2:57 min.), black-
and-white exposure on Ilford RC semi matte
on aluminum sandwich panel, metal frames
each 115 x 214 cm

Tableau 1: text on the reused door of the
room for the interactive data installation
self-space in the exhibition Richard
Kriesche, *a solo presence*, 2022, Museum
der Moderne Salzburg

Tableau 2: screen showing the video doc-
umentary *SELF SPACE TURNING POINT*;
documentation of the installation *self-space*
with the artist as protagonist

Tableau 3: data traces of all visitors to the
installation *self-space*

Generali Foundation Collection—Permanent Loan
to the Museum der Moderne Salzburg

17 Lounge

2 longTonSofas; upcycling from faulty
garbage cans and tarpaulin fabric by
gabarage manufacture, Vienna
each 127 x 86 x 86 cm

Courtesy gabarage manufacture, Vienna

Space 5

18 Ulrich Formann

1996 Vienna, AT – Vienna, AT

Slotmachine, 2022

Additional title: *Slotmachine—Tracking
Europe's Ghost Flights*

Installation, live media artwork
LED wall, web crawler, flight database
400 x 300 x 120 cm

Generali Foundation Collection—Permanent Loan
to the Museum der Moderne Salzburg

Systems

Artists working with video today have access to a range of media practices enabling them to fundamentally alter, manipulate, or rearrange visual and audio material after recording. Heimo Zobernig's *Video No. 12* and Carola Dertnig's *Dancing with Remote* are created in 1996/97, when the first digital video systems come out, opening up what were then novel image postprocessing techniques. Both works combine performance and video, the body and the space of media. With their positively demonstrative use of editing techniques or chroma keying (a visual effect that allows for the superimposition of different image planes), they direct the viewers' attention to the media space as such, while also making direct contact with them: Zobernig, by encouraging a voyeuristic gaze; Dertnig, by drawing us in with her gestures and dance moves.

The rise of digital technology has brought us to a turning point: systems designed to gather, store, and evaluate data are operating in many domains of society, and everything one can think of is quantified, converted into data, and subjected to analysis. In their data installations, Richard Kriesche and Ulrich Formann zoom in on this watershed moment, using data as their material to uncover processes reshaping society. Datafication technology is typically deployed so as to remain below users' threshold of perception. Kriesche's and Formann's works, by contrast, aim to build awareness of data processing, harnessing visualization, interaction, and integration of live data to help us better understand it.

14 Carola Dertnig
Dancing with Remote, 1997

In her video *Dancing with Remote*, the performance artist Carola Dertnig is dancing alone to the techno beats that fill her studio in New York, where she is living and working at the time. Meanwhile, she is also interacting with the fixed video camera recording the action. Using a remote control she holds in her hand as she is dancing, she continually stops and restarts the camera in the rhythm of the beats, editing the video's image and sound directly while shooting. The spectators' attention is increasingly drawn to that camera: as the recording medium, it is not visible as such, but with every temporary halt, the ecstatic flow of the techno beats and the dance performance is briefly interrupted, making the role of the camera as well as the screen on which the material is played back visible and even almost palpable.

15 Heimo Zobernig
Video No. 12, 1996

Heimo Zobernig's oeuvre comprises sculptures, installations, graphic art, and paintings as well as an extensive body of works on video in which he puts the premises of the video medium on "display" in two senses of the word. He not only reveals the operations of the video system as a tool of art, but also exposes the rules and conventions that govern it with characteristic bluntness. *Video No. 12* is conceived as Zobernig works at the Renaissance Society in Chicago. The work shows the naked artist performing gymnastic and dance exercises in a hallway. In reality, his actions are set in a sheltered interior space. In the video, however, the use of chroma keying

dismantles the hallway's blue walls, transporting him to an exterior scene. Abrupt shifts of perspective inject panorama shots that Zobernig recorded during a tour of the city's architecture. The coarsely executed chroma keying stands in deliberate contrast to the perfection with which this technique is employed in TV and film productions today. The goal is to unmask video as an apparatus of illusion, not to cater to it.

16 Richard Kriesche
self-space, 2022-23

The pioneering media artist Richard Kriesche's triptych *self-space* analyzes and recapitulates his 2022 interactive installation of the same title, in which over 4,000 participants were subjected to an invisible datafication process. The visitors singly entered a darkened room and went looking for its content. What they encountered instead was an algorithm that recorded their movement patterns during their search in the space—just like the digital devices that nowadays constantly surveil and analyze our actions. The movement patterns were fed into a computation that yielded individual hexadecimal numbers, which were output to the visitors in an automated process.

The triptych *self-space* puts the resulting data collection on display and reflects the layers of meaning involved in the interactive data installation, which went live during the Covid-19 pandemic. The restriction to a single visitor in the room corresponded to the social distancing and isolation practices of the time, while also serving to create an individual physical experience of digital data processing.

Kriesche sees the triptych as a statement “manifesting a global social turning point”—a watershed moment precipitated by the advance of digital technologies in all domains of society. It exemplarily unites three planes reflecting aspects of the past, present, and future: the world of material things (embodied by the reused exit door of the *self-space*, an element marking the transition between rooms), the world of media (visualized in the video documentary on the process of datafication), and the digital world (manifested in the massive aggregation of data).

18 Ulrich Formann ***Slotmachine, 2022***

Ulrich Formann creates digital media installations that grapple with questions of economics, democracy, and the climate crisis. His toolkit includes computer programming, reverse engineering, and hardware hacking.

“‘Ghost flights’ carry neither freight nor passengers. Their purpose is to retain so-called slots. Slots are exclusive takeoff and landing times at airports that are allocated to individual airlines. When an airline does not use a slot on a regular basis, it is forfeited and reallocated to another airline. To prevent their competitors from obtaining these valuable starting and landing rights, airlines simply operate flights with empty planes. This system leads to thousands of ghost flights that produce ecologically harmful emissions for no good economic reason.

Slotmachine continually retrieves the departure schedules of European airports and correlates them with the radar data

supplied by aircraft tracking systems, made possible by airplanes’ constantly transmitting their positions so as to avoid collisions. By correlating these datasets, *Slotmachine* identifies current ghost flights, which are displayed on a departure board of the sort one can see in airports.” (Ulrich Formann)



Short guide published in conjunction with the exhibition

ECSTATIC MEDIA Media Art Reconsidered

October 26, 2023–February 25, 2024
Museum der Moderne Salzburg
Curator: Jürgen Tabor

Museum der Moderne Salzburg in cooperation with the Generali Foundation Collection—Permanent Loan to the Museum der Moderne Salzburg

Director, Museum der Moderne Salzburg: Harald Krejci
Head, Generali Foundation Collection: Doris Leutgeb
Curator, Generali Foundation Collection: Jürgen Tabor
Registrars: Susanne Greimel, Annette Lill-Rastern
AV Technics: Michael Krupica, Wolfgang Konrad
Technics, Facilities and Exhibitions: Oliver Wacht
(Head), Patrick Gänser, Christian Hauer, Thomas Mey,
Alija Salihovic
Museum Education: Victoria Fahrenguber,
Christine Fegerl, Elisabeth Ihnenberger,
Magdalena Stieb, Cristina Struber
PR & Marketing: Martin Riegler (Head),
Katharina Maximoff, Christina Baumann-Canaval,
Hannes Guerreiro-Arnold

Publication

Edited by Harald Krejci and Jürgen Tabor
for the Museum der Moderne Salzburg und the
Generali Foundation Collection—Permanent Loan to
the Museum der Moderne Salzburg

Museum der Moderne Salzburg
Mönchsberg 32
5020 Salzburg
Austria
T +43 662 84 22 20-0
www.museumdermoderne.at

Texts: Jürgen Tabor
English Translation: Gerrit Jackson
Graphic Design: Tommi Bergmann
Production: Generali Foundation Collection—
Permanent Loan to the Museum der Moderne Salzburg
Print: offset 5020, Salzburg

© 2023 Museum der Moderne Salzburg and
Generali Foundation
All rights reserved, especially the right of any form of
reproduction, distribution and translation, in whole or
in part.

Printed in Austria.

Copyright of all works in the exhibition
© 2023 Copyright by the artists and their legal
successors

Text Credits
© 2023 Copyrights for the texts by the author

Image Credits
© 2023 Generali Foundation Collection—Permanent
Loan to the Museum der Moderne Salzburg; Bildrecht,
Vienna, for Uli Aigner, Danica Dakić, VALIE EXPORT,
Friedl vom Gröller, Werner Kaligofsky, Egbert
Trogemann, and photographers
Photos: Uli Aigner (p. 2 bottom), Ulrich Formann (p. 22),
Werner Kaligofsky (p. 2 top, p. 4 top, p. 9, p. 18),
Laurent Mignonneau & Christa Sommerer (p. 10),
Iris Ranzinger (p. 4 bottom), Egbert Trogemann (cover)

We are committed to the UN Sustainable Development
Goals.



Cover:
Danica Dakić, *Autoportrait*, 1999; video installation,
Generali Foundation Collection—Permanent Loan to
the Museum der Moderne Salzburg



Presented by GENERALI

**Museum der Moderne Salzburg
Mönchsberg 32
5020 Salzburg
Austria
T +43 662 842220
www.museumdermoderne.at**

#MuseumDerModerneSalzburg