



Ro Yalw Edding...

Royal Wedding, un essai vidéo réalisé
par la session 13 de l'école du Magasin:
Katia Anguelova, Julien Blanpied, Albane Duvillier,
Thierry Leviez, Guillaume Mansart et Clément Nouet.
Supervisé par Vincent Pécoil,
critique d'art et commissaire d'exposition.

9 juin - 12 septembre 2004, vernissage le 8 juin.
Au 3ème étage du Mamco, dans "l'appartement"
de Ghislain Mollet-Viéville.
Mamco, 10 rue des Vieux-Grenadiers, CH-1205 Genève

Ouvert du mardi au vendredi de 12h à 18h, les samedi et
dimanche de 11h à 18h, fermé le 1er août et le 9 septembre.
La session 13 de l'école du Magasin:
www.ecoledumagasin.com/session13

This card is a project for Royal Wedding by Liam Gillick

ROYAL WEDDING

"The bride gown (...) was not designed to be seen from in front, nor from behind, nor from the side, but from above, as we saw it in one of the last frames in which the architectural space of the cathedral was reduced to a circle dominated in the center by the cruciform structure of the transept and the nave, underlined by the long train of the dress.... Mallarmé once wrote, 'The world was made to end up as a book.' The broadcast of this royal wedding similarly implied, in its own way, that the British Empire was made to end up as an admirable television broadcast."¹

While over the last few decades art's core concern seemed to have been real space, the space of the artwork as the space of everyday life (the closing of the gap between art and life²), recent work privileges the question of time³ and more precisely real time.

In its endeavor to restore "raw" reality, art finds itself on a path parallel to that taken by formats generally associated with infotainment – documentary programs and movies, series, real TV and live broadcasts. In taking up these formats it might seem as though art were entering into competition with them, but in our opinion their use constitutes a certain kind of realism, which at first might seem very removed from the concerns of contemporary art. Live broadcasts, real time and multi-angle shots are some of the numerous mechanisms infotainment employs to produce an *effets de réel*⁴. In the domain of art, the same mechanisms (real time, simultaneity, scripting, first-hand accounts, a naked representation of intimacy) have the same effect, but in fact artists are using them to generate a critical discourse on these very procedures. At the same time, recent television programs have gone in for distancing,⁵ which once upon a time was believed to be a specific characteristic of art.

Then, should we think the end of reality and of art "by means of their mutual absorption,"⁶ as one writer suggested, marking the conclusion of the interplay of reciprocal influences between art (of the real) and TV reality? When art borrows from realist fiction, real TV and documentaries, does it simply operate a passage from an archaic form of realism to a revamped form of hyperrealism by integrating the temporal dimension, today's main preoccupation? Or does it produce situations, reality itself, rather than its representations or presentation?

"So were people so dumb before television?" Liam Gillick asked himself. Television is omnipresent and one of its latest formats (real TV) has become a widely-debated social phenomenon. People who work with forms, images and their mediation cannot rest indifferent: Session13 of the Ecole du Magasin put this issue at the center of its syllabus. We propose to give an account of this omnipresence of real TV concepts in the form of a video essay.

We have produced a visual object mingling the formal mechanisms set into motion by artists with those utilized in the domain of infotainment to foreground the articulation between these two spheres. This exhibition in the form of a video essay uses extracts (visuals, sound and text), treating them as quotations. The resulting examination was inspired by Dan Graham's *Rock My Religion* (1983-85).

The selection and editing of this previously-existing material allowed us to produce a postproduction discourse, an experimental form of curating.

¹ Umberto Eco, "Television: The Lost Transparency," 1983 essay.

² Allan Kaprow, "The Legacy of Jackson Pollock," *ArtNews*, 1958.

³ Liam Gillick, "The Corruption of Time, Looking Back at the Future," *Flash Art*, May-June 1996.

⁴ Roland Barthes called it "the reality effect" in his essay of the same name.

⁵ The mechanisms of distancing consist of revealing that what we're seeing is just television, that it is all artificial. This is done by showing off-screen elements that used to be considered something to hide. Revealing these artifices now, ironically, produces an even greater *effet de réel*.

⁶ Jean Baudrillard, "The Hyperrealism of Simulation" in *Revue d'esthétique*, 1976, p.143

ROYAL WEDDING, the script

The opening sequence, with *Biosphere 2* (1991), a human couple on view in a Danish zoo (1996) and Jean-Michel Barjol's experimental film *What a Flash!* (1971), signals the anteriority of experiments evidencing an obvious formal rapport with certain recent real TV programs (Loft Story). We've opted to match these **control mechanisms** with *Les Ateliers du Paradise*, an experiment at the Galerie Air de Paris in Nice (1990).

After that we take up television's favorite subject, **the family**. Starting off from comments by Dan Graham⁷ on the U.S.'s first real TV program (*An American Family*, about the Louds household, produced by Craig Gilbert and broadcast in 1973), we emphasize that in watching TV the family is simply watching its own reflection. Thus television produces what Roland Barthes called an *effet de réel*.

A voiceover by philosopher Olivier Razac⁸ subsequently allows us to introduce the questions raised by the use of «**true story**» **accounts** in real TV programs and talk shows. Foucault pointed out the imperative nature of confession (the so-called need to talk about one's self). We use artworks to underline this insight and provide a formal and conceptual counterpoint to these television shows. Rineke Dijkstra's *Buzz Club / Mystery World* (1995) captures intense moments that disclose the complexity of each individual's identity, which cannot be reduced to the stereotypical discourses at work in these broadcasts. Sylvie Blocher's *Gens de Calais* (1997) and *For Ever* (2000) are attempted accounts of certain fragile and unusual instants that reveal confiscated, impossible speech. Then there is shift toward the concept of the film diary with the documentation and continuous recording of reality in a sound piece recently made by Jonas Mekas.

Jonas Mekas opted to capture time on a real scale. He quite literally recorded the duration of an event filtered through a script, *A Pétrarque qui traversa les collines de Provence à pied* (2003). With *24 Hour Psycho* (1997), Douglas Gordon re-established a time frame that the work of fiction had necessarily contracted. Wolfgang Staehle relied on live footage to produce a piece that simultaneously accumulates the strata of time and anchors itself in the present, *Empire 24/7* (2001).

Finally, we turn our attention to attempts to **exhaust the image**. Contrary to the classical rules of fiction that eliminate all but the highlights of a plot, and to the real-time principle as well, some recent movies and art videos – here the films of Brian De Palma and Liisa Lounila's *Popcorn* (2001) – share a desire to look at a scene from every angle, to minutely observe every detail, sometimes to the point where time becomes unreal. Michael Wesely's *Postdamer Platz* (1997-1999) try to translate the time, bustle and hustle of the city in a static shot (pinhole).

The last sequence deals with the permeable relations between **fiction** and **reality**. In *The Third Memory* (2000) by Pierre Huyghe and Barbara Visser's performance as «Barbara Visser: Artist» for a Lithuanian TV series, here reality is influenced and reconstructed by fiction.

In the preface of his novel *Crash!* J. G. Ballard put forward the idea that «the equilibrium between reality and fiction has been radically altered in the course of the last decade, so much so that there has been a role reversal. We live inside an enormous novel. The fiction is already there.» These forms of fiction include advertising, pop science, etc., and «the right of pre-emption exercised by the television screen over any personal reaction to reality.»

This fiction needs to be verified, as Chris Burden does with his performance *Shoot* (1971).

⁷ Dan Graham, «An American family», in *New Observations*, 1985.

⁸ Olivier Razac, *L'écran et le zoo, Spectacle et domestication, Des expositions coloniales à Loft Story*, Denoël, Paris, 2002.

CREDITS

Excerpts of :

Views from an Another World, Earth Day in Biosphere 2 (1991), *Loft Story* (2001), *What a flash !* (Jean-Michel Barjol, 1971), *A Human Exhibit* (Copenhagen's, 1996), *An American Family* (Craig Gilbert, A. Raymond 1973), *The Sims™*, *24 heures chrono*, *E=M6*, *Matrix* (Larry et Andy Wachowski, 1999), *Snake Eyes* (Brian de Palma, 1998), *The Osbournes*, *Confessions intimes*.

Contributions by :

Les enfants gâtés de l'art, Georges Rey's film, 1990, about *Les Ateliers du Paradise*, the exhibition organized by Pierre Joseph, Philippe Parreno and Philippe Perrin, at the Galerie Air de Paris à Nice, Courtesy of the artist
Present Continuous Past(s), Dan Graham, 1974, Courtesy of the artist
Alteration to a Suburban House, Dan Graham, 1978, Courtesy of the artist
Wal Mart Videos, John Williams, 1997-2004, Courtesy of the artist
L'appareil photo, from the serie *Mes vidéos*, Joël Bartoloméo, 1994, Courtesy of the artist
A Network Life Simulator, Kolkoz, 2002, Courtesy of the artiste and Galerie Emmanuel Perrotin, Paris
Buzz Club / Mystery World, Rineke Dijkstra, 1995, Courtesy Galerie Max Hetzler, Berlin
Gens de Calais, Sylvie Blocher, 1997, Courtesy of the artist
For Ever, Sylvie Blocher, 2000, Courtesy of the artist
A Pétrarque qui traversa les collines de Provence à pied, Jonas Mekas, 2003, Courtesy of the artist
Empire 24/7, Wolfgang Staehle, Courtesy Postmasters Gallery, New York
2001, Wolfgang Staehle, 2001, Courtesy Postmasters Gallery, New York
24 Hour Psycho, Douglas Gordon, 1997, Courtesy Lisson Gallery, London
Popcorn, Liisa Lounila, 2001, Courtesy Galerie Chromosome, Berlin
Leipziger Platz, Michael Wesely, 1999-2000, Courtesy of the artist
Postdamer Platz, Michael Wesely, 1997-1999, Courtesy of the artist
The Girl Chewing Gum, John Smith, 1976, Courtesy of the artist
Réception, Mark Geffriaud et Julien Crépieux, 2004, Courtesy of the artist
The Third Memory, 2000, Pierre Huyghe, Courtesy Marian Goodman Gallery, Co-production: Centre Georges Pompidou, Musée National d'Art Moderne, Service Nouveaux Médias / The Renaissance Society à l'Université de Chicago. With the participation of Galerie Marian Goodman, Myriam et Jacques Salomon, Le Fresnoy, Studio national d'art contemporain.
Gimines, Barbara Visser, 1995, Courtesy Annet Gelink Gallery, Amsterdam
No More Reality, Philippe Parreno, 1991, Courtesy of the artist and Galerie Air de Paris
Shoot, Chris Burden, 1971

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ROYAL WEDDING, the card of invitation

Ro Yalw Edding... is the card project created by the british artist Liam Gillick.

ROYAL WEDDING, the session13

ROYAL WEDDING is a project produced by **Session13 of L'Ecole du Magasin**, the international curatorial training program run by the Magasin :
Katia Anguelova, Julien Blanpied, Albane Duvillier, Thierry Leviez, Guillaume Mansart and Clément Nouet, supervised by Vincent Pécoil, art critic and independant curator.

INFORMATIONS

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3rd floor, in the "apartment" of Ghislain Mollet-Viéville, Mamco

10 rue des Vieux Grenadiers, 1205 GENEVA, Switzerland

Open from Tuesday to Wednesday : 12 pm - 6 pm, on Saturday and Sunday: 11 am - 6 pm,
closed 1st August and 9th September

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