

VIDEO PERFORMANCE: Models of Self-Reflection

1 November – 11 January 2008

Preview: Friday 31 October 19.30

Screenplays for the Eye of the Camera

Video performance – that's more than just the filmed document of a performative activity. Surreal laboratories or bare plain studios, simple experiments test arrangements or complex and poetic stories – in recent years, performances have been designed for the eye of the camera. The mode of presentation directs the viewers' attention to experimental uses of media and artistic activities that draw on a quite specific method of production and thus have developed a recognisable style. In most video performances, the artist acts single-handedly and without any audience. The technical resources are usually modest. Very early on, this set of conditions facilitated the development of a new art form that is neither a simple recording of a performance nor an elaborated video. In the 1970s, Marina Abramovic, Bruce Nauman and others developed the video performance as a provocation and a challenging of taboos. Today, this art form seems timeless: It is sophisticated and profound, and it constantly produces new models of self-reflection.

The exhibition shows videos of international artists from the last five years and, in the form of a prologue, their classical precursors. While the pioneers of video performance took their bodies to the limit, even injuring themselves in the attempt to overcome taboos, at least some of the contemporary artists are more light-hearted in their exploration of their own identity.

Classical Positions: Marina Abramovic, Sanja Ivekovic, Bruce Nauman, Michael Smith and Klaus vom Bruch. **Contemporary Positions:** Marc Aschenbrenner (Germany), Harriet Dodge/Stanya Kahn (USA), Patricija Gilyte (Lithuania), Freya Hattenberger (Germany), Nadja Verena Marcin (Germany), Stefanie Ohler (Germany), Bjørn Melhus (Germany), L.A. Raeven (Netherlands), Johanna Reich (Germany), Ene-Liis Semper (Estonia), Jaan Toomik (Estonia), Mariana Vassileva (Bulgaria), Richard T. Walker (Great Britain) und Paul Wiersbinski (Germany).

The exhibition is a co-operation between the Ausstellungshalle zeitgenössische Kunst Münster and the guest curator Georg Elben (Cologne), director of the Videonale Bonn. As part of the Mediations Biennial, the exhibition project is simultaneously shown at the Ethnological Museum/ National Museum Poznan (Poland).