



# ANICCA

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A video installation by Daniel Dion.  
Organized by the Musée d'art  
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her collaboration with the movement  
sequences.

For more than ten years, video artists, like painters, have asserted the right to fill entire spaces, to occupy them, to transform them and make dwell therein experiences specific to the viewer. We have seen for example a sculptural work by Nam June Paik which, again very recently, employed the principle of an accumulation of video monitors in order to bombard the viewer with a profusion of images which were greatly transformed through digitalization or manipulated colour.

Other video artists, notably Marina Abramović, choose not to modify the original image but to enhance its rapport with ambient noise or a modified soundtrack. This privileged rapport is complexified inasmuch as the artist often chooses to incorporate supplementary

elements from other artistic disciplines such as photography, painting or cinema. Moreover, video installation artists also introduce found or made objects into their works.

Almost in opposition to this tendency, Daniel Dion's video installation, *Anicca*, uses a very great economy of means. The artist uses nothing more than video image, sound and monitor.

This austerity of presentation is significant, however, when one knows the writings which lie at the origin of the work. In the course of readings in the history of religion Dion discovered the concept of "anicca". This word, from Pali, an ancient religious language of southern India, signifies a vibratory state of transformation and change. It forms the point

of departure for the philosophical reflection illustrated here in this video installation.

According to Daniel Dion the concepts of stability, movement, and change are tied together. In effect, all the actions which animate the course of a life are linked to one another by these concepts, where interactions give way to a ceaseless dynamic.

In order to explain what he means, Dion interprets the concepts of stability, movement and change by turning his gaze toward the world and those who inhabit it. Nature inspires him and, like the body, itself in constant evolution, holds his attention.

Thus *Anicca* manifests the artist's preoc-

cupation with these two universes — different but complementary — namely, Nature and the human being. In concrete terms, one finds on both sides of the circle of suspended monitors the images and sounds inspired by this reflection.

Mountains, in essence immutable, seem nevertheless to move, as though animated by an invisible force. They symbolise the concept of stability as do the buddhist chants which accompany their image. Movement, in turn, finds its illustration in the representation of water, coupled here with the sound of a flute, barely recognizable it has been so modified by aural superimposition. Finally, the image of clouds symbolises change while percussion accentuates the sensation of speed and instability.

In other respects as well, it is quite evident that all these images, and the soundtracks which accompany them, put into play the notion of temporality, the idea that the time modifies the nature of things and beings.

The counterpart of this inventory of natural symbols of instability is a reflection on the body. The corporeal envelope of a spirit which manifests itself through gesture and regard across an organized physiological system, the body moves, displaced, constantly motivated by one objective or another. The sound which accompanies each of these images marks the end of the viewer's movements with a deliberately metallic resonance, in order to imply trajectory.

Through the technically sophisticated

strategy at work in this installation, Daniel Dion implies that it is necessary sometimes to stop, listen and meditate to understand things and beings. This is why it is impossible for us to view the work in totality. Each of these conceptual elements reveals itself successively as the viewer moves through the space triggering the soundtrack of the respective images.

*Anicca* leaves us to ponder Dion's humanist preoccupations. Interested in art — in the history of art, as in those who make it — he is not posing as the disciple of a spiritual master. Risks organized by the logic of inquiry orient his interests and his journey as much as the choice of image he employs. For Daniel Dion is an artist who is always, absolutely searching. Yet, at exactly the

inverse of the primary thematic concerns of *Anicca*, he proposes a solution which replaces superficial rapport: the work itself.

Manon Blanchette  
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