



CATHERINE SULLIVAN

June 8-26, 2005

MUSEE D'ART CONTEMPORAIN DE MONTREAL Quebec

PROJECTIONS

D-Patternwith score by Sean Griffin
2004Two-channel video projection, colour, sound
8-m nute loop

Catherine Sullivan studied drama at the California Institute of Arts, Valencia, then earned a Master of Fine Arts degree at the Art Center College of Design, Pasadena. As a drama student, she wrote and directed her own plays. She has since incorporated video and photography into a practice that combines theatre and the visual arts. In her recent work, Sullivan revisits key performances of the avant-garde and theatre pieces that have become a part of history or are related to a dramatic historical event;¹ she examines, recreates and films them together with other performances in order to make video installations.

D-Pattern consists of multiple shots of the theatre work titled *Aud max/Neustadt Manifestation* the last in a series of performances which Sullivan staged in 2003-2004 with a view to reinvestigating certain questions raised by a notorious Fluxus event. On July 20, 1964, in the *Aud max* at the Technica Academy in Aachen, Germany the performance of Eric Andersen, Joseph Beuys, Bazon Brock, Stanley Broun, Hennig Christiansen, Robert Filliou, Ludwig Gosewitz, Arthur Koepke, Tomas Schmit, Ben Vautier, Wolf Vostel and Emmett Williams caused an uproar. The tension and physical confrontation with the artists, and the pandemonium in the audience composed mainly of students from the Academy made the event a turning point in the debate on art. The photograph of a bleeding Joseph Beuys brandishing a crucifix in front of the crowd is certainly the best-known image from the event.

Sullivan considers this Fluxus performance one of the key moments of the avant-garde. "My initial interest was to re-address Aachen both as an artistic gesture and in terms of the social and political questions generated by its 'failure'. If one looks at Fluxus ideologically and stylistically what we refer to as the 'misfire' at Aachen is of great interest because it poses specific problems for a key Fluxus idea—the blurring of art and life. At Aachen, the student body (the life world of the festival) was deeply resistant to the art. This resulted in a spectacular misunderstanding, one which turned an evening of discrete 'actions' into an operative event. One which strangely articulated both the limits of reception and political address at the time"

The difficulties in interpreting this event, its mystification, avant-garde moments that have become art classics, the generalizations between theatrical and non-theatrical performance, the growing sophistication of the public between 1964 and 2004, and crowd dynamics, typology and expectations – these are the themes and issues of thinking which Susan set out to explore, with the idea of having the conflicts inherent in the actual event undergo a dramatization process. She invited several artists to take part in a theatre production, which she wanted to be a sprawling, orchestrated effort without any apparent leader. Sean Griffin, Mike Kelley, Ron Athey, Vera Maeder and Marek Cihuki responded to the invitation, and performed or contributed original material. The object was to find oppositions within a single collaborative undertaking, in order to establish a correspondence with the 1964 Fluxus event. “The end result was an infusion of strategies, stylistic impulses, some in opposition, some enhancing and informing one another” < < <

D-Pattern which may be seen as a “chemistry experiment,” incorporates all these impulses. The installation is made up of two projections. This dual video projection extends the “chemistry experiment” by integrating all the shots of the performances. One shot on top of the other, first of all, and then again through the overlapping of the two projections themselves <

LOUISE ISMERT

1 For *Ice Floes of Franz Joseph Land*, 2004, 120 min, she took her inspiration from *Two Captains*, the play being performed in a Moscow theatre when Chechen terrorists took the audience hostage.



PROJECTIONS

Projections is the title we have chosen for the ongoing film and video program presented at the Musée. Recent output is rich and diverse. Many artists from a wide variety of backgrounds — video makers, visual artists, photographers, playwrights, choreographers and composers — are drawn to the poetic power of the image projected on the big screen. *Projections* also refers to the energy of a thrust forward, toward the future of the moving image. <

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Born in Los Angeles in 1968
Lives and works in Los Angeles

Solo Exhibitions

- 2001 *Gestus Maximus (Gold Standard)*, Galerie Christian Nagel, Cologne, Germany
- 2002 *Five Economies (big hunt/ little hunt)*, The Renaissance Society, University of Chicago, Illinois; Hammer Museum, University of California, Los Angeles, California (cat.)
- 2003 *Five Economies (big hunt/ little hunt)*, Metro Pictures Gallery, New York, New York
The Chironomic Remedy, MATRIX 201d, UC Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive, Berkeley, California (cat.)
- 2004 *Ice Floes of Franz Joseph Land*, Gió Marconi, Milan, Italy
- 2005 *Ice Floes of Franz Joseph Land*, Kunsthalle Zürich, Zurich, Switzerland

Group Exhibitions

- 1995 *Gander Mountain High*, Room 10, Pasadena, California
- 1996 *SuperIntellectuals*, Three Day Weekend, Los Angeles, California
Video Povera, California State University, Los Angeles, California
- 1998 *Still and Otherwise*, Margo Leavin Gallery, Los Angeles, California
- 1999 Galerie Christian Nagel, Cologne, Germany
- 2000 *L.A.-ex*, Museum Villa Stuck, Munich, Germany
- 2001 *Cosima Von Bonin*, Kunstverein Hamburg, Hamburg, Germany
- 2002 *Crisp*, Maryann Boesky Gallery, New York, New York
- 2003 *In Between*, Centre d'art contemporain, Fribourg, Switzerland
Speech Model from 'The Flies,' Fruits of Crime, Goose Fair, Galerie Mezzanin, Vienna, Austria (with Lisa Lapinski)
Brightness, Museum of Modern Art Dubrovnik, Dubrovnik, Croatia
Baja to Vancouver, The West Coast and Contemporary Art, Seattle Art Museum, Seattle, Washington
C'est Arrivé Demain, Biennale d'art contemporain de Lyon, Lyon, France (cat.)
Silver Dreams, Screens, and Theories, Art Gallery of Greater Victoria, Victoria, British Columbia
Fast Forward, Media Art Sammlung Goetz, KZM, Karlsruhe, Germany (cat.)

- 2004 *Whitney Biennial*, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, New York
Playlist, Palais de Tokyo, Paris, France
Ice Floes of Franz Joseph Land, *House of Alex / House of Peter*
(and some of those crappy details), Kunstverein Braunschweig,
 Braunschweig, Germany

Performances

- 1994 *Lights First, Then Water*, Proto Theatre, Tokyo, Japan
 1995 *Unspoken Evil I*, Art Center College of Design, Pasadena, California
 1997 *Grisly Notes and Tones*, McKinley Auditorium, Pasadena, California
Dad's Ham, Trapdoor Theatre, Chicago, Illinois
 1998 *Let the Right Be a Vision of the Left*, Trapdoor Theatre, Chicago, Illinois
 1999 *The Chironomic Remedy*, Biltmore Hotel, Los Angeles, California;
 University of Southern California, San Diego, California (2000)
 2001 *Gold Standard (hysterical, melancholic, degraded, refined)*, Hammer
 Museum, University of California, Los Angeles, California
Grisly Notes and Tones, Le Consortium, Dijon, France
 2002 *Gold Standard*, The Renaissance Society, University of Chicago, Illinois;
 Hammer Museum, University of California, Los Angeles, California
 2003 *'Tis Pity She's a Fluxus Whore*, Wadsworth Atheneum,
 Hartford, Connecticut
Ice Floes of Franz Joseph Land, Biennale d'art contemporain de Lyon,
 Amphitheatre of the Opéra national de Lyon, France
 2004 *Ice Floes of Franz Joseph Land*, Angel Orensanz Foundation, New York,
 New York; S.W.A.P. Polish Army Veterans Association, Chicago, Illinois

Videos

- 1999 *The Chirologic Remedy*, 42 min
 2001 *Unspoken Evil III – Rites of Ascension and Obscurity*, 38 min
Gold Standard (hysterical, melancholic, degraded, refined), 12 min
Big Hunt, 22 min
Little Hunt, 15 min
 2003 *'Tis Pity She's a Fluxus Whore*, 20 min
 2004 *Ice Floes of Franz Joseph Land*, 120 min