

## PROGRAM 1

### The Lives of Performers (Before the Rehearsal)

#### Maya Schweizer

*Before the Rehearsal*, 2009, 16 min.

Maya Schweizer's short documentary *Before the Rehearsal* observes members of the L.A.-based comedy troupe *Slow Children Crossing* rehearsing a sketch in a private apartment, literally between a microwave and a refrigerator. After the rehearsal, the actors discuss (self-)marketing strategies for attracting greater media attention to their group. Thus the work demonstrates that the rehearsal of role models doesn't take place (anymore) in "real" life, but (for a long time now) in commercial media.

"Formed in 2006, and including mainly African-American writer-performers, this group describes itself as promoting a 'take-no-prisoners' approach to humor, dealing with subjects such as 'politics, race, sex, slavery, celebrities'. The video developed as a relatively spontaneous response to Schweizer's interaction with this group of aspiring television workers, and they participated in its production as a networking strategy. Schweizer was invited to record several of the group's rehearsals and meetings, in return for copies of the master tapes, which *Slow Children Crossing* could then potentially use for promotional purposes. The members of *Slow Children Crossing* consciously and continually present themselves to each other (and to Schweizer's camera) as savvy media professionals, in command of every aspect of their brand, despite the relatively limited material resources that seem available to them. So *Before the Rehearsal* features fragments of scripted performances, followed by moments of feedback and self-critique, in which the performers rapidly shift between the characters they are playing and other modes of equally constructed self-presentation." (Maeve Connolly, *TV Museum: Contemporary Art and the Age of Television*, Bristol and Chicago: Intellect Books, 2014)

#### Credits

*Slow Children Crossing*, featuring Ivy Lindsey, Brett J. Buttler, Tiffany Thomas, Alem Sapp, Saudia Rashed and Destini Meshak in *Before the Rehearsal*

Sound mastering: Thomas Wallman

Camera and editing, colour correction: Maya Schweizer

Translation: Frank Weigand

Thanks to *Slow Children Crossing*, Ann Kaneko, Laura Horelli, Clemens von Wedemeyer, Sylvia Schedelbauer and Christine Woditschka.

Produced with the financial support of the Goethe Institute Munich

Many thanks to Barbara Honrath, Renate Wagner, Ute Meta Bauer, Daniel Rothman, the Villa Aurora, and the Goethe Institute Los Angeles.

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### The Lives of Performers (Before the Rehearsal)

#### Eva Könnemann

*ensemble*, 2010, 83 min.

*ensemble* is a fictitious documentary that accompanies the troubled development of a stage production. Stefanie Diekmann writes:

“The film rehearses the rehearsal under real working conditions: after the actors were cast and before the (only) performance at Kampnagel in Hamburg. The rehearsal stage (often termed “laboratory” by theatre directors) here becomes the secluded setting of an experiment within which a working process has been solely launched in order to be observed.”

The filmic approach resembles a test arrangement: a group of actors specifically cast for the film spends six weeks in the black box of a theatre in order to work on Georg Büchner’s revolution drama *Danton’s Death*. The conditions of their encounter are fictitious, while the date of the planned opening night in front of a paying audience is real and unavoidable.

The play’s director is a performance artist from the independent scene who refuses the conventional role of a director, inviting the actors—all very different in their respective views of their profession—to work non-hierarchically. Only through the ideas and imaginations of every single individual shall the play be developed. By way of this freedom, which not all of the actors come to terms with in equal measure, the group’s self-reflection becomes increasingly central to the working process. Instead of advancing the *mise-en-scène*, the rules and regulations of procedure are being discussed. In the emerging deadlock, it is the ensemble itself that increasingly resembles the protagonist of *Danton’s Death*. The revolution is almost finished, and now it is time to establish a new social order. But how difficult it seems to conciliate the interest of the individual with those of the community. (Eva Könnemann)

#### Credits

Cast: Niels Bormann, Nikola Duric, Inga Fridrihsone, Charalambos Ganotis, Jacob Peter Kovner, Felix Kramer, Carsten “Erobique” Meyer, Jelka Plate, Michael Rastl, Vanessa Stern and Tom Stromberg

Direction, camera, editing and production: Eva Könnemann

Sound: Jens Röhm

Music: Erobique

Costumes: Jelka Plate

Production manager: Sabina Doerr

Commissioning editor: Bettina Kasten (ZDFkultur)

In collaboration with Kampnagel Internationale Kulturfabrik Hamburg

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#### Marlies Pöschl

*Sternheim*, 2011, 35 min. 9 sec.

Twelve teenagers find themselves in a remote, indistinct interior space. Which role they are to play here is still ambiguous to them. On the one hand, two theatre coaches, Frauke and Eva, are engaging them in a workshop for the development of their theatre project “Sophie 2.0.” At the same time, the young protagonists are asked to participate in auditions for director Christoph Martin’s next film. The teenagers find themselves on the interstice between those two contradictory educational settings, and still have to invent the parts they want to play. How do they deal with those different requirements, and how do they act out resistance towards them? Which roles do they develop for themselves in order to shape their space of play?

*Sternheim* is a semi-fictional film based on a coming-of-age novel (Bildungsroman) entitled *Die Geschichte des Fräuleins von Sternheim*, published in 1771 by German author Sophie von La Roche. Falling in between the literary movements of the German Enlightenment and *Empfindsamkeit* (Sensibility), this text is the first German *Bildungsroman* to focus on the development of a female protagonist. At the same time, the film refers to popular TV casting shows, which increasingly depict the development of their protagonists as a “make-over.”

In a dazzling meandering between reality and fiction, *Sternheim* intertwines historical and contemporary narrations of self-formation. The film partly replays dramaturgic elements of both formats so as to investigate their aesthetic and antagonistic potential, and at the same time to critique the ideas about education and subjectivation conveyed through them. (Marlies Pöschl)

#### Credits

Directing, scriptwriting and production: Marlies Pöschl

Cast: Valerie Angermayr, Lilly Bacher, Sophie Ferner, Selina Graf, Anna Schmeikal, Juliane Stadler, Verena Stümpfle, Sebastian Hartl, Andreas Kellner, Gabriel Staffa, Alexander Stockinger, Florian Macheiner, Frauke Steiner, Rosalin Hertrich, Alena Baich, Andreas Markus

Photography: Leopold Leskovar, Barbara Sas, David Rabeder, Philipp Kaindl, Carolina Machtynger

Sound: David Rabeder, Simon Rabeder, Martin Fisch

Sound design: Stefan Hajek

Editing: Sebastian Schreiner

Set design: Ivonne Stark

Assistant director: Melani Murkovic

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#### Maya Schweizer and Clemens von Wedemeyer

*Rien du tout (Nothing at All)*, 2006, 30 min.

*Rien du tout* can be seen as a commentary on the staging of Samuel Beckett's play *Catastrophe*, a work on the despotic power of a stage director—played here by a woman—over her assistant and the actor preparing to play the part of a condemned man in the Middle Ages. The young people who turn up to the open-call casting add their waiting and exchanges of everyday conversation to the work. The non-cinematographic reality of the extras gradually becomes the focus of the film: in a kind of spontaneous party, the actors take over the open-air car park to put on what becomes the real play.

The catastrophe in question is the rioting in the Paris suburbs that was going on while the film was being shot at the invitation of the Centre d'art contemporain (CAC) de Brétigny, itself located in the suburbs of the city, to coincide with a Wedemeyer exhibition taking place there. The casting for the film took place on the opening day of the exhibition, and the shooting, which was done in the CAC's theatre and car park, was programmed to coincide with the centre's opening hours, creating a confused meeting of spectators, actors and film crew, with an approach that comes close to the proposals of Relational Aesthetics. In this social experiment, visitors to the exhibition are caught up in the action together with the people waiting to become filmed, and it is they who generate the film, over and above the scripted narrative. To a certain extent, the film can be said to indirectly incorporate its own making-of: even though it has no hard-and-fast substance, its narrative gradually goes in an opposite direction to that which it initially appears to take: it turns back on itself until it reaches the final scene, a public tableaux vivant that is the real play that is being filmed. (Adapted from Manuel Segade, "Screen Affections", in: *Clemens Von Wedemeyer, Centro Galego De Arte Contemporánea*).

#### Credits

Cast: Inge Offermann, Yann Chermat, Sabine Kuntoff

Script: Clemens von Wedemeyer, Maya Schweizer

Camera: Frank Meyer, Rosario Romagnosi

Costume design: Clara Camus

Sound recording: Karim Sou

Sound design: Thomas Wallmann

Assistant director: Aurélio Cardenas

Production management: Florence Alexandre

Unit manager: Gaspard Hirschi

Produced by: CAC Brétigny, Pierre Bal-Blanc; BB4 Berlin Biennale, Château-Rouge production, Gaele Jones

Supported by: Filmstiftung NRW, Moblely-Springmeier Collection Suisse, Jocelyn Wolff, Paris

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## PROGRAM 2

### Passion in Work

#### Oliver Husain

*Item Number*, 2012, 16 min.

“Ladies and Gentlemen: The performance that you are about to see will begin in two minutes. The story is laid out for you right here: a straight line. It will unfold exactly like the line I’m walking on right now. A fine line between success, in our terms, and complete disaster.”

Two minutes before the show. An actress is waiting for her performance. Stuck in a repeating loop, her monologue with the mirror unravels—when the curtain opens, it will reveal the exit door instead of the auditorium. Kirtana Kumar’s styling—her pasty white face powder and the pale green dress—gives her a ghostly appearance, evoking Indian cinema of the 1950s and ‘60s. The overall colour scheme is based on *Navrang* (1959) by V. Shantaram. Its star Sandhya could be seen as the ghost *Item Number* wants to channel. (Oliver Husain)

#### Credits

Cast: Kirtana Kumar, Pia Bunglowala, Sneha Prabha, Avni Sethi  
Executive producer: Kalpana Kumar  
Assistant director: Shreyasi Kar  
Camera: Amith Surendran  
Assistants: Shabeer Ahammed, Meghana Srivastava  
Costume design: Julie Kagti  
Wardrobe: Sathish  
Hair and makeup: Anita Appu  
Assistants: Joanna Joseph, Eshwari  
Set construction: Vishwas Kashyap  
Assistants: Sunil Kumar, Ganesh Shankar  
Painted backdrop artist: Santosh Panchal  
Gaffer: Krishna  
Light and crane assistants: Selvam Saddiq, Anand, Farouq, Raghu Kumar, Guru Mallapa, Ambarish, Saveendra, Sanghamesh, Somashekar, Shivo  
Driver: Harish  
Filmed at YOLK STUDIO Bangalore  
Production assistants: Srinivas, Ravi, Nanjappa  
Production stills: Roy Sinai  
Sound recordist: V. Badrinath  
Sound design: Michelle Irving  
Acknowledgements: Shai Heredia, Jen Hutton, Suresh Jarayam, Mohit Kaycee, Mukul Kishore, Viola Klein, Sam Mohan, Iris Ng, Urfii Prasad, Charles Reeve, Marj Rodrigues, Yashas Shetty, Lisa Deanne Smith, Carol Weinbaum, Markus Ziegler

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**PROGRAM 2**  
**Passion in Work**

**Cana Bilir-Meier, Liesa Kovacs, Lisa Kaeppler**  
**in collaboration with Nora Jacobs**

*NORA*, 2014, 11 min. 28 sec.

A young woman tells of her restlessness and exhaustion resulting from her—allegedly—self-determined (artistic) everyday life. Within a monologue that is staged as a rehearsal, the text increasingly separates itself from the character of Nora. Possibilities regarding the deferral of perception and of modes of identification of the viewer with the protagonist are tested. *NORA* oscillates between seemingly authentic moments of a staging and a document of a rehearsal's performativity. The artists write: “*NORA* is a critical reflection of an increasing demand for authenticity in regard of the contemporary job (market) situation, where unlimited creativity, smart self-marketing, self-motivated productivity as well as innovative ways of living and working become increasingly important. One can hardly distinguish between “labour” and “non-labour” any longer. Is everybody an artist? Has the notion of “being an artist” turned into a model for capitalist society?” (Cana Bilir-Meier, Lisa K  ppler and Liesa Kovacs)

Credits

Script and direction: Cana Bilir-Meier, Lisa K  ppler, Liesa Kovacs  
Cast: Nora Jacobs  
Camera: Kilian Immervoll  
Editing: Liesa Kovacs, Lisa K  ppler  
Sound: Mira Lu Kovacs

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## PROGRAM 2

### Passion in Work

#### **Keren Cytter**

*The Victim*, 2006, 5 min.

Sabeth Buchmann writes on *The Victim*: “[The video shows] the methodology of rehearsal as a system-related format: it consists of soft beginnings and dangling endings. Script and film are short-circuited in a feedback loop, within which the resulting narratives emerge as an endless series of modulations.”

In *The Victim*, the production of the film (the shooting by the crew and the instructions of the director) intersects with its actual plot, in which a woman must choose between her lover and son, both of whom are played by the same actor. The blurry footage, bad acting, universal action and clichéd dialogues culminate in an explosive event: The son/lover commits suicide at the dinner table. But, without sentimentality, the loop of the video begins again and the whole scenario starts anew. Clichéd sentiments are a byproduct of great dramas, which are broken down into trashy home video aesthetics. The loop here is the quasi-technical metaphor of clichés; with each repetition the video suggests truth while simultaneously stripping itself of it. (Keren Cytter)

**PROGRAM 2**  
**Passion in Work**

**Susanne Sachsse**

*Serious Ladies*, 2013, 21 min.

“Because this ideal of an attractive but not whorish white woman, in a good marriage but not self-effacing, with a nice job but not so successful she outshines her man, slim but not neurotic over food, forever young without being disfigured by the surgeon’s knife, a radiant mother not overwhelmed by nappies and homework, who manages her home beautifully without becoming a slave to housework, who knows a thing or two but less than a man, this happy white woman who is constantly shoved under our noses, this woman we are all supposed hard to resemble—never mind that she seems to be running herself ragged for not much reward—I for one have never met her, not anywhere. My hunch is that she doesn’t exist.” (Virginie Despentes, *King Kong Theory*)

Credits

Story and script: Susanne Sachsse

Cinematography: Nazli Kilerci, Susanne Sachsse

Editing: Ruth Schönege

Cast: Susanne Sachsse, Juan Luis Milego Castellanos

This work was originally screened as a video installation as part of the *Living Archive project*, Kunstwerke Berlin, 2013.

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## PROGRAM 2 Passion in Work

### Carola Dertnig

*Some exercise in complex seeing is needed*, 2012, 3 min.

Whoever swims with the current has already lost. Whoever lets themselves drift along is wasting their energy. Some exercise in complex seeing is needed shows a person pushing back against the current, though they're apparently unable to move an inch. A contradiction? Not at all. Dertnig's film about swimming against the current creates an energetic resonance in the regularity and duration it renders, but this is above all a visual manifestation of the antonym of random, aimless action's senselessness. At the same time, no excessive demands are made of this duality as a basis of meaning, interpretation or content, as such expectations are far from this work's intention. The film has been reduced to a minimalism that enables it to convey the complex stress and strain of daily work done on it. The statement is put quite succinctly: It's better to swim against the current and mark time, as that sharpens the concentration and series of movements. Which brings us to the performative.

By means of the soundtrack, Dertnig reveals a highly personal index of past performances and with that an attitude toward reference systems. They're always subjective and reflect personal preferences and regard, etc., at best comprising a little cosmos that one can take part in. Their alphabetical almanac of terms, clichés and references—such as for the Suffragettes, Duchamp, the quote attributed to Emma Goldman (“If I can't dance, I don't want to be part of your revolution,” which long ago became the name of a mobile feminist curatorial platform again, though it also refers to her own work as a curator): Dertnig recites it in the particular rhythm of rap to give her tag cloud an additional frame of assertion, that of trial, the attempt as an essential moment in performance. Trial is also a struggle against the loss of the political; trial is Dertnig's constant state. (Carola Platzek)

Translation from German: Steve Wilder

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## **PROGRAM 3**

### **(Re-)Enacting Life: After the Rehearsal**

#### **Ana Hoffner**

*Transferred Memories – Embodied Documents*, 2014, 14 min. 35 sec.

*Transferred Memories – Embodied Documents* explores the possible impact of a different understanding of performativity on the politics of memory. The video deals with Omarska, the infamous death camp run by Bosnian Serb forces in 1992, but does so by creating a queer relation between two performers who join to confront images of the atrocities and articulate their own memories. They both describe their perspective on these images and observe each other's reactions, making room for the recognition of the affective responses the images elicit. This recognition, however, does not depend on an identification with the bodies shown in the footage, nor on an identificatory relation between the two performers. What does it mean to look for queerness in the very process of remembering, to take this dimension of memory as a call for a rethinking of affect and temporality in the cracks between memory and neglect, knowing and not knowing? (Ana Hoffner)

#### Credits

Cast: Vivienne Löschner and Ana Hoffner  
Camera: Judith Benedikt  
Light: Hannes Böck  
Sound: Lenja Gathmann  
Hair and makeup: Regina Breitfellner  
Concept, script and postproduction: Ana Hoffner

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## PROGRAM 3 (Re-)Enacting Life: After the Rehearsal

### Jasmina Metwaly and Philip Rizk

*Barra Fel'Share* (Out on the Street), 2015, 71 min.

*Out on the Street* is a film about a group of workers from one of Egypt's working class neighborhoods, Helwan.

In the film nine working class men are participating in an acting workshop. Through the rehearsals, stories emerge of factory injustice, police brutality, courts that fabricate criminal charges and countless tales of corruption and exploitation by their capitalist employers.

On a rooftop studio overlooking the heart of Cairo presented as a space between fact and fiction the participants move in and out of character as they shape the performance that engage their daily realities.

*Out on the Street* interlaces scenes from the workshop, fiction performances and mobile phone footage filmed by a worker intended as proof for the courts to stop the destruction of his workplace. This hybrid approach aims to engage a collective imaginary, situating the participants and spectators within a broader social struggle.

“The idea for this project started with a sense of limitation in the making of documentaries. We’ve been working together on short videos since 2011, filming on the streets, in factories, joining marches and sit-ins in cities across Egypt in an attempt to document the issue of a wide variety of struggles. In the case of workers we went to listen, to film, and to try to understand the different dimensions of their protests. Where better pay or better working conditions are the tip of the iceberg, we wanted to know the unseen battles; hierarchies and social manipulations, work-caused illness and injuries and, in severe cases, death. It is always about exploitation and systematic corruption, the effects of capitalism creeping deeper into people’s lives, the closing down of a public sector, privatizing public land and industry for the sake of growth, investment, and the ‘economy’ rather than people. We were inspired by how courageous people are, how strong in the face of their bosses. These workers risk being demoted, losing their jobs, or being beaten by police, military, or hired thugs, arrested or tried before military tribunals. Over time we realized that filming, editing, and posting our material online or occasionally screening it in neighborhoods has its limitations in the audience that it reaches and the effect it has on people. There is only so much one can do with an online intervention or a few street screenings. We don’t want to make a film that turns that harsh reality into a spectacle, a source of entertainment, but a re-evaluation of the past and an imagining of what the future could hold. We believe the film will travel

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### **PROGRAM 3**

#### **(Re-)Enacting Life: After the Rehearsal**

because the stories that emerge are not unique to a neighborhood or a country. The forms of exploitation, dispensability of people is happening across the globe, and this is our audience. It's this global audience that drives us to keep working on a project like *Out on the Street*.”

(Jasmina Metwaly and Philip Rizk)

Cast & Crew :

Actors: Ahmed El Rubaa Ahmed El Nubi Aly Gharieb Hassan Gharieb Khalaf Ibrahim Mahmoud

Afify Mohamed Mahmoud Saeed Ramadan Sabry Hakiem

Filmed & Directed by: Jasmina Metwaly and Philip Rizk

Produced by: Mostafa Youssef

Scenography: Hasan Sulaiman

Sound Design: Max Schneider

Editing: Louly Seif

Supported by: AFAC The Arab Fund for Arts and Culture, Crossroads Program Doha Film

Institute Rotana

Developed at: L'Atelier, Cannes Film Festival 2013 Dubai Film Market, 2012

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## PROGRAM 3 (Re-)Enacting Life: After the Rehearsal

### Marwa Arsanios

*Olga's Notes, All those Restless Bodies*, 2014, 3 min.

*Olga's Notes, All those Restless Bodies* is a video that takes as its starting point an article that appeared in *Al Hilal* magazine in January 1963 on the establishment of the ballet school in Cairo. The article describes the school, which was founded as part of Egyptian President Gamal Abdel Nasser's larger plans for modernization and reform at that time, as a "factory of the bodies." Supported by major figures including the Russian choreographer and director Leonid Lavrovsky, the school was to become an important institution in Nasser's nation-state building project. The film script juggles between different dances and small stories linked to this history. It looks at dance from historical and political perspectives, and also at the body from the perspectives of dance, labour and exploitation; thus dance becomes an excuse to think about labour, and labour an excuse to think about dance and movement. The effect of political ideologies on the identity of the individual is here reflected in the body of the dancer. After years of training, rehearsing and performing, the dancer's body has become damaged—a metaphor for the violence of state projects and nation-state building that accompanies a capitalist ideology and a consumerist approach to the human form. In the film, Pierre follows the main ballerina from *The Fountain of Bakhshisarai*—the first major production, performed in the presence of Nasser, by the ballet dance group in Cairo where dancers were awarded Orders of Merit. Sandra re-enacts Yvonne Rainer's classic *Trio A*, which she had learned by heart in dance school, Jasmine does her usual pole dancing, while Natacha fails to remember her part in the harem dance and improvises. Cynthia appears from behind, dancing alone, and Alia stands still, re-enacting certain positions of dancers while they are not dancing. In their own way, each of these bodies attempts to find a history: a fragmented story of a damaged, colonized and incoherent body that has failed to remember, failed to perform, and is just sliding on stage. Here, different histories clash together side by side. (Marwa Arsanios)

Credits

Cast: Natacha Antonellou, Sandra Iche, Alia Hamdan, Cynthia, Jasmine, Pierre Geagea

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## PROGRAM 3 (Re-)Enacting Life: After the Rehearsal

### Isa Rosenberger

*Espiral*, 2010/13, 14 min.

Isa Rosenberger is on a quest for the visual and performative means of representing the intertwined and blurred processes that comprise the contemporary economic and political machine. Her video *Espiral* discusses how the invasion of Austrian banks affects the transitional processes in Eastern Europe. The video adopts and re-interprets the work *The Green Table: A Dance of Death in Eight Scenes* by the German choreographer Kurt Jooss, the inventor of political ballet in Germany during the Weimar Republic and the rise of National Socialism. In the original, Death dances self-assuredly around a succession of powerless protagonists who, like politicians or gamblers, gather around a green table again and again.

Here, the role of death is performed by the Chilean dancer Amanda Piña. The viewer witnesses an intimate rehearsal situation in which the dancer runs through the choreography in front of a video projection of a historical performance of the work. In a different scene, Piña performs her dance of death in front of the National Bank of Austria. The subtitles quote euphoric statements on the expansion of Austrian banks into south-east Europe. The title, *Espiral* (Spiral), is a reference to the dance school of the same name established in Santiago, Chile, by Patricio Bunster, a student of Jooss, which enabled children of underprivileged parents to get an education. *Espiral* is the artistic realization of a complex research effort addressing both transformative processes and economic interests in Eastern Europe. (Isa Rosenberger)

#### Credits

Cast: Amanda Piña  
Camera: Reinhard Mayr  
Concept, directing and editing: Isa Rosenberger

Made possible by:  
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## PROGRAM 3 (Re-)Enacting Life: After the Rehearsal

### Eske Schlüters

*After the Rehearsal*, 2008, 7 min. 30 sec.

*After the Rehearsal* depicts the actress Delphine Seyrig in rehearsal recordings for Chantal Akerman's iconic film *Jeanne Dielman, 23 Quai du Commerce, 1080 Bruxelles*, about a housewife and mother who occasionally prostitutes herself, and whose everyday life is shown in real time: "The overlay of rehearsal and recording time is transposed onto the simultaneity of playback and editing processes, of working time and life time." (Sabeth Buchmann)

Based on excerpts from the making-of reel of Seyrig's rehearsals for Akerman's film, combined with fragments from a documentary film on Seyrig herself, the work becomes a reflection on different forms of rehearsal, expanded upon by excerpts of texts dealing with theatre theories. *After the Rehearsal* focuses on the moment of rehearsing everyday life-routines. The (Brechtian) alienation effect, already inherent in the filmic dramaturgy, emerges particularly through isolation of those very scenes in which the actress rehearses her role for the camera. Eske Schlüters reflects (on) the task of the actor/actress to genuinely embody a role also on the level of the soundtrack, where she translates various texts on theatre theory from different languages in order to assemble them into a self-standing composition.

Credits

Voice-over: Zarah McKenzie

Produced by Kunsthalle für die Rheinlande und Westfalen

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