

PUBLIC

and

PRIVATE

secrets must circulate

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PUBLIC AND PRIVATE

*secrets
must circulate*

A collaboration between **Stills** and the
Institut Français d'Écosse, Edinburgh

Curated by **Alain Reinaudo**

Lea Andrews, Marion Bataille, Ania Bien,
Helen Chadwick, Simon Crump,
Matthew Dalziel and Louise Scullion,
Éric Emo, Hervé Guibert, Jochen Gerz,
Vincent Godeau, Jan Henderikse,
Edwin Janssen, Sharon Kivland,
Geoffroy Lahaye, Claude Lévêque,
Dany Leriche, Bracha Lichtenberg Ettinger,
Loodwicks Press Images, Moira McIver,
Philippe Mairese / Grèce Images,
Roberto Martinez, Olivier Menanteau,
Pierre Molinier, Tania Mouraud,
Jane Mulfinger, Françoise Nuñez
and Bernard Plossu, Pierre et Gilles,
Pink, Patrick Raynaud, Lydia Schouten,
Paul Stone, Stephen Willats, Olivier Zabat.

Edinburg
4 June - 17 July 1993

Newcastle
4 September - 23 October 1993

Fotofeis Exhibition 1993

FOREWORD

Martine Beugnet, Exhibition Organiser
Institut Français d'Écosse,
Rebecca Coggins, Exhibition Organiser,
Stills

'Public and Private; Secrets Must Circulate' is a collaborative project initiated by Stills and the Institut Français d'Écosse and curated by Alain Reinaudo of the Centre St Vincent, Herblay. Conceived to take place in gallery and non-gallery sites across the city of Edinburgh and subsequently in other cities in the UK and abroad, it is centred around the fundamental dichotomy between what is 'public' and what is 'private', a theme particularly relevant to photography which almost always presumes a subject (the photographer or viewer) and an object (what is photographed or looked at). The works in this exhibition span a broad range of contemporary photographic practice from the straight black and white print to photo-installation. They include key pieces by artists from France, Britain and the Netherlands as well as a number of site-specific commissions. Together these works weave a complex dialogue between the 'voyeur', who penetrates another's private space and the 'exhibitionist', who appears to reverse the power relationship between viewer and viewed. They also enter the domain of the family, that most intimate and yet most universal grouping of individuals and that of the media, inviting comparisons between public cynicisms and the experience of individuals. 'Public and Private' is not an inventory of artists whose work is relevant to the project theme, nor is it a didactic exhibition about the politics of representation. Instead it

has been conceived to 'provide a space open to the subjective interpretation of the viewer, giving almost free rein to the enigma' (Alain Reinaudo). It explores the interface between the public and private nature of the work of art, between meaning and interpretation, an area particularly relevant to photography which has the superficial appearance of truth but an infinite capacity for deception.

'Public and Private' will be recreated in a slightly different form in each city it visits. The combination of artists and works will vary according to the range of spaces available and the opportunities for commissions. This publication therefore has a unifying function, it presents each of the artists involved in the project and also provides a further development of the exhibition theme through the written word. The intention is for it to complement the exhibition as a work in its own right, a catalyst for further ideas rather than a record of what has occurred.

Stills and the Institut Français d'Écosse would like to thank Alain Reinaudo for developing the concept of the exhibition, selecting and coordinating the works on show and for coordinating this publication. We thank all the artists who have participated in this exhibition and the galleries who represent them, including Claude Fain, Samia Saouma, Michele Chomette, le Sous-Sol, Urbi et Orbi, Galerie de Paris, Agathe Gaillard, Crousel

Robelin/ Bama, Polaris, Gabrielle Maubrie, Maison européenne de la Photographie (Paris), Wanda Reiff, Apunto, Ram (Holland). We are also grateful to the galleries and non-gallery organisations who have provided us with a variety of challenging sites for the works, which in Edinburgh have included the Talbot Rice Art Gallery, the Old Town Renewal Trust, The Tron Kirk, British Gas, The Scotsman Publications, the Friends of the Mansfield Place Church and The Royal Lyceum Theatre. In Newcastle, the next city to show the exhibition after Edinburgh, the exhibition has been coordinated by Zone Gallery and further participators are anticipated. We are indebted to the following organisations without whose financial support this project would not have been possible: the Association Francaise d'Action Artistique, the Scottish Arts Council, International Initiatives, Visiting Arts, the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Air France. We also thank Fotofeis, the Scottish International Festival of Photography, within which context this exhibition has been launched. We are also grateful to the writers for their contributions to this publication and to the many other individuals involved in the project at all levels, whose support and commitment has been invaluable.

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SECTION 1

SECRETS MUST CIRCULATE

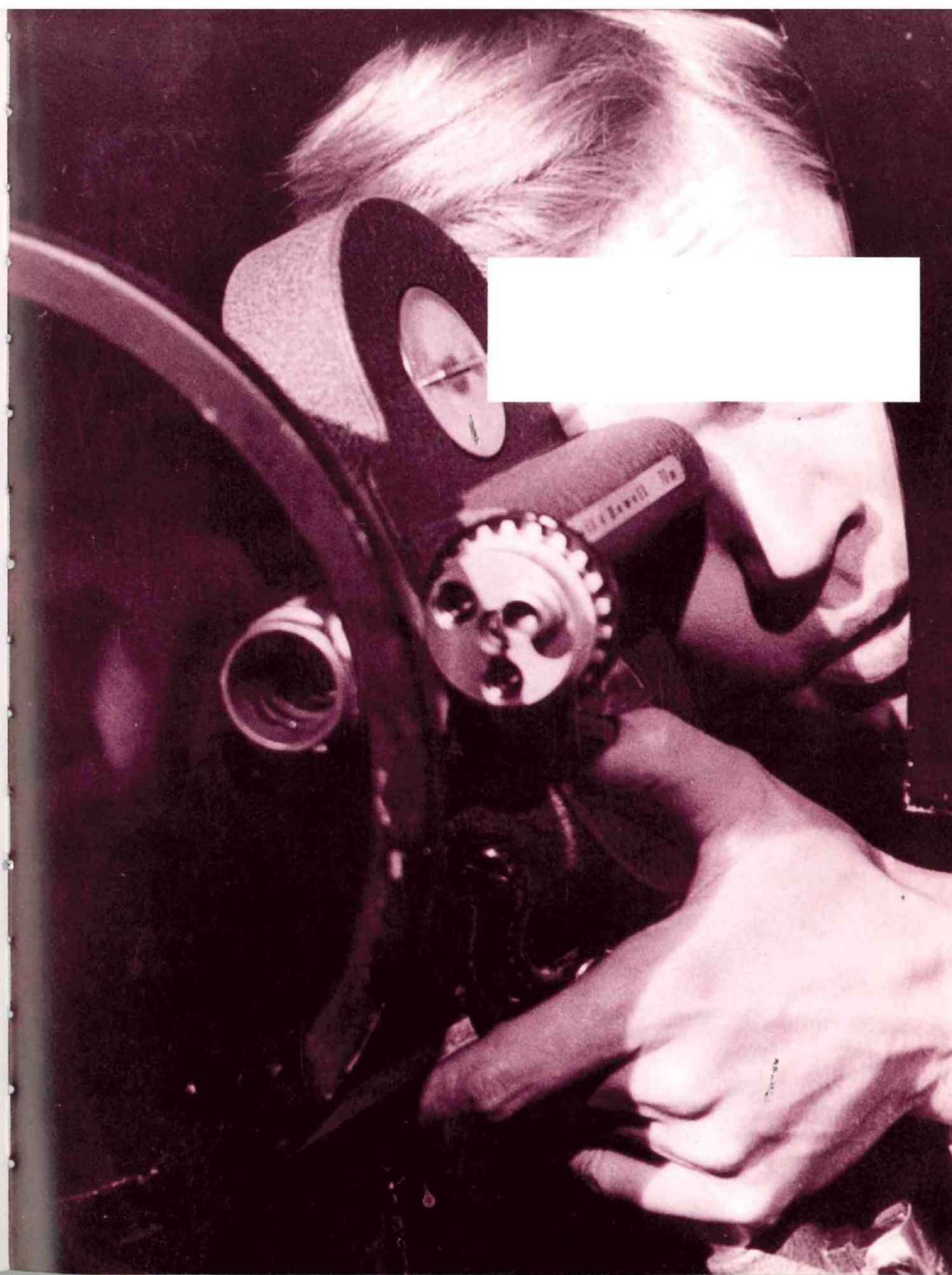
SHARON KIVLAND
HERVÉ GUIBERT
ÉRIC EMO
MATTHEW DALZIEL
and LOUISE SCULLION
SIMON CRUMP
ROBERTO MARTINEZ

The Secret

There is a seductive, initiative quality to something that cannot be told because it would not make sense; that goes unspoken and yet is in circulation. I know the secret of another but do not say so. They know that I know but do not lift the veil; the intensity between us has its origin in this secret secret. This complicity has nothing to do with hidden information. In fact, should either party wish to reveal the secret they would be unable to do so, since there is nothing to be said. Anything that can be revealed bypasses the secret. Because there is no hidden 'signified' the secret is not a key to anything. It circulates as an undercurrent in things that might be said, much as seduction flows beneath the obscenity of language. It is the opposite of communication, but can be shared. It draws its power solely from the fact that it remains untold, just as seduction operates by remaining unspoken. The vocation of what is hidden or repressed is to manifest itself, which is not at all the vocation of the secret. The secret is something into which one is initiated, it is implosive. You can enter into it but may never leave.

There is no revelation, no communication, not even a 'secretion' of the secret (Zemplyny, *Nouvelle Revue de la Psychanalyse*, N°.14). This is the source of its strength; the power of allusive and ritualistic exchange.

Jean Baudrillard
De la Séduction,
(Éd. Denoël)



ON THE SECRET

Christine Buci-Glucksmann

'Having told you this story I feel drained.
This story is my secret, do you understand?
And so?

I cannot say to you 'please don't tell
anyone ...

No. But now your secret has also become
my secret. It belongs to me and I will treat it
as I do all my secrets; I will make use of it
when the time comes and then it will become
someone else's secret.

You are right, secrets must circulate ...'

Hervé Guibert

The fact that a secret depends on a story
told to someone else, that it is communicated
and becomes the other person's secret, theirs
either to keep or divulge, is a paradox which
underlies every story and every image. If
secrets circulate, how then can they still be
secrets? From state secrets to secret love, from
the prisoner 'mise en secret' (put in solitary
confinement) to the act of 'keeping' a secret, the
secret always appears as something that is
concealed or unrevealed, hidden away or
underlying, kept unseen or untold. Whatever
the words used, the secret separates, as its Latin
etymology suggests; 'secretus', 'scernere'

meaning to divide, to put asunder. Even more
appropriately the secret 'cuts', according to its
root, the verb 'skar'. As a 'cutting' the secret is
an experience of separation, never more acute
than when confronted with death, one's own or
that of another. If however the secret remains
forever secret, sealed, total sacrifice or total loss,
unspeakable and above all unnamed, can it
truly be a secret?

Is it not confounded by the impotence of a
language that will always be a private one, to
the point where keeping the secret demands
such secrecy, such inutterability and such effort
that it becomes very tempting to divulge it
obliquely? The unknown 'I' will announce his
or herself by means of a pseudonym, or
heteronyms, the secret will be suggested but not
acknowledged, it will become possible, as with
sects, to be 'initiated' and finally, as it becomes
apparent that a secret exists, it will eventually
be confessed or told as a story.

Thus the secret resembles a circle - one sets
oneself apart in order to share in it. It is a circle
without a centre, as in Pascal, an unstable
situation. This paradox upon which the secret
is founded is the constant 'object' or 'subject' of
photography, and certainly its passion.
Because it is a 'prise' (a 'hold' or 'take') on a
presupposed reality, even if a false reality, and



Sharon Kivland

L'une sans l'autre
Les ateliers Nadar, Marseille 1992
Photograph : Olivier Menanteau

also a 'surprise', a capturing of this same reality which may appear fortuitous or strange, photography is a voyeuristic eye which places the object within a permanent game of veiling and unveiling, hide-and-seek. Photography has appropriated intimacy to a greater extent than any other medium - the intimacy of stories, of childhood, of traces, sex and death. But can the 'intimate' still remain 'secret' when it enters the public domain? Unlikely, according to Walter Benjamin's analysis. Is not photography, with its reproducibility, its instantaneousness, destroying the secret nature of things, their veil and the mystery, snatching from them the 'unique appearance of distance' which is their 'aura'? Does the loss of aura leave any secrets intact, and if so which ones?

Confession and the Surface

Can the 'intimate' still be a secret when it assumes the status of an exhibit? It rather seems that the image is trapped between two traditions of the secret which are characteristic of Western civilisation: confession from the depths and surface evidence. Because it is concealed, hidden from view, the secret is potentially culpable. According to Foucault - Foucault in his 'intimate' dressing gown and reflected in the fragmentary images of Hervé Guibert - the secret is part of the discourse of the confessional. Inquisitions, confessions: trials in Moscow or elsewhere; the secret - true or false - must pass through language, must indeed be 'ex-cited', intensified by all the 'micro-powers' that give voice to it. 'Man in the western world has become a creature of the confessional' - confession of the flesh, in which everything must be told in order to extirpate 'evil', to rid oneself of unwholesome interiority and make the private comply with a public norm. It is easy to understand therefore how the sexual secrets, to use only this

example, can become a 'public issue' when they occupy the ground between the individual and the State.

Contrary to the simple and repressive assumption that secrets are caused by something forbidden translated into inhibition, the confession of secrets, this false principle of 'truth' actually deepens the divide between the private - the intimate, familial self and the public - the 'domain of appearances', of the formalisation of words and images and the excitation of secrets. In the most extreme case - which would be quite unbearable - death would be shown live on television. So one tells oneself, like Barthes, that 'striptease has a similar structure to a revelation, it is part of the western hermeneutic'. As a consequence of this telling-everything, confessing-everything, showing-everything, we soon reach the level of 'kitsch', as in the works of Jeff Koons, where an intimate relationship is paraded as a simulation of itself. Is this a critique of re-emergent conformism or a conformist-kitsch-mercantile staging of the confessional's most recent incarnation?

In contrast to this religio-mercantile tradition, in which secrets must be revealed at all costs, there exists another tradition, more Nietzschean, where secrets are constantly brought to the surface on the assumption that the most profound thing about a person is their skin... Following the model of Edgar Allan Poe's *The Purloned Letter* and the commentaries of Lacan and Derrida, the secret becomes even more secret when it is made evident. Where better to hide something than in a place so obvious that it becomes invisible? Exposed, the secret is no longer a dissimulation, no longer something for a conscious person to bury deep within their beautiful (or evil) interiority. In this way it evades the guilty conscience and the false depths - the hinterland - which Nietzsche criticised so much. Everything is stated, displayed and yet remains secret. It is present, like a mysterious object,

¹ Michel Foucault, 'Histoire de la Sexualité', *La Volonté de Savoir*, Gallimard.



Hervé Guibert

Photograph
Courtesy Agathe Gaillard

like the smooth and empty gazes of Bronzino's paintings. However, if there are empty depths (and everyone has their little secrets, what of it?), there is also a vain superficiality, which eventually extends into the terrain of the 'visual' (Daney) the province of screens and ghosts. Having seen too much, one becomes unable to see and as the surface is the site of sensation, Gilles Deleuze's 'effet de surface', it leads to a lengthy analysis of the 'blocs de sensations et d'affects' specific to art. The secret can only exist as a result of restraint and withdrawal; it is proffered but never wholly abandoned to the consuming process of exhibition. To expose a secret, to give it an image no doubt punctuates the blank spaces mentioned by Pascal de Duve in *Cargo Vie*, and is an acknowledgement of the obscenity of 'transparency'.

And so we return to the question of the intimate in photography. Is this a happy narcissism, accompanying the emergence of a more democratic, more liberated individual or is it a brittle narcissism, an exiling of oneself within oneself, where the forces of dislocation are transposed to the image and thus brought into play? This detour through a staged intimacy could be seen as a realisation of the programme of Pessoa's *Amant Visuel* which is to see the world and oneself as a 'picture gallery' to make love against a backdrop and to use one's inner space as a site for projection and voyeurism. All in all there is not enough of the 'self', or rather the self has been wounded, fractured into a 'Maniérisme du Moi' (Mannerism of the Self²) which explores its own failing narcissism within and by means of the image.

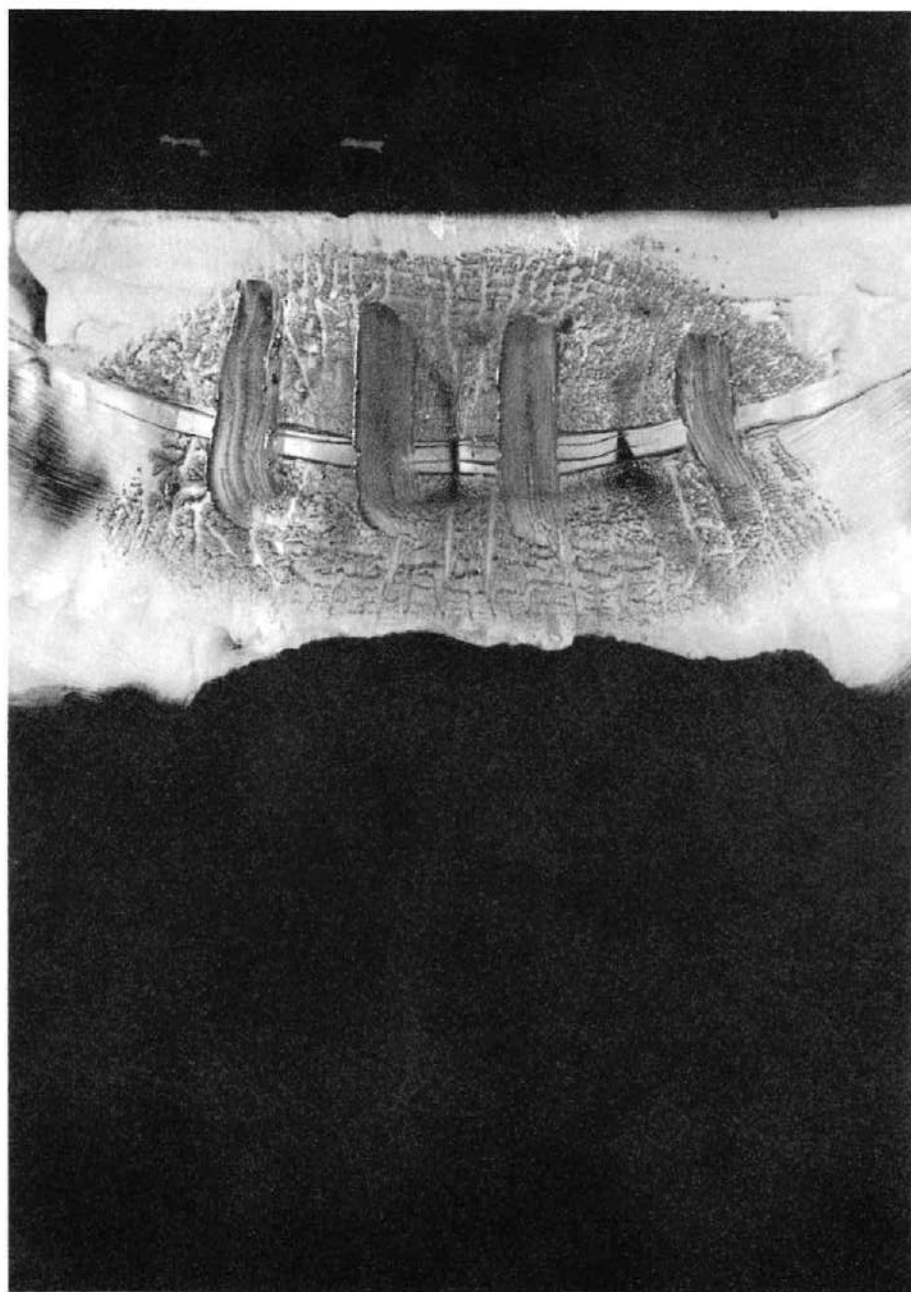
If a secret 'circulates' it does so accompanied by an entire theatre of operations, where intimacy is held in abeyance, unresolved - an abstract image, a scenario somewhere between truth and fiction, conceived at a certain distance. As Hervé Guibert wrote in *Le Seul*

Visage, 'the body I love is always within reach, even in everyday Paris, but it is only when I am at a distance, contrasted, alone on foreign ground that I feel like photographing it. Free from convention, lost in the mist of incomprehensible consonances it takes on the character of a travel journal'.

To circulate a secret while keeping it for someone else demands this same distance, both actual and fictional, this same 'estrangement' from an 'incomprehensible consonance' which mimics and transfigures the paradoxical structure of the secret. It is from this that all the procedures, the games of truth and deception between the fictional and the image which are at work in this exhibition are derived. Staging oneself as a pieta or as a nude between one's parents, as in the works of Lea Andrews; here the secrecy of childhood is masked, laid bare and killed. The ritual of a nondescript baroque ceremony; intimate pictures on black velvet with a bunch of roses to which we are forbidden access by splinters of glass (Claude Lévêque). Iconoclastic ritual; a play on icons and a mock religious theatricality (Simon Crump).

The false division of the family, apes imitating humans and humans becoming apes; such is the key to Edwin Jansen's familial imagery. The 'chimerical' play on the woman-self in Sharon Kivland's images or inversely the false self of Moira McIver's attributes of military masculinity. The 'intimate' slips into the space between the images, into the ultimate ambiguity of their fictional power, their theatricality and their installation. Everywhere the fiction of a true/false reality brings into question the obscure object of desire and reveals a crisis of gender identity, narcissistic and/or familial. Violence is thus disclosed and travesties brought forth (Pierre Molinier). We are left with nothing but the ephemeral enclosed images of a Patrick Raynaud, where the 'mirror stage' reverts to the stage of the

² On the 'Maniérisme de Moi' I would refer the reader to my publication on Shakespeare and Mannerism: *Tragique de l'ombre; Shakespeare et le maniérisme*, Galilée, 1990.



Éric Emo
 Photograph
 Courtesy Galerie POLARIS

transparent coffin....Or to go further still, there is Vincent Godeau's dual and delusive game of 'good mother' and 'bad mother'. The perverse gentleness of the 'real' photography on the left is disrupted by the aggression of the cinema 'shots' on the right. Incestuous gentleness can however lead to suffocation, rape and murder.

Where is the self located in this theatre of operations, where it appears to be simultaneously exposed and absent? Perhaps within what I have referred to, with reference to Bracha Lichtenberg Ettinger, as images of absence³. The self as absent from the self; each day a little photograph, then a montage of sequences, a series of photobooth images arranged by Marion Bataille to form a picture where the quasi-anonymity of the self is as 'unnarcissised' as it is 'unnarcissistic'. The self blended with itself interior - exterior, efflorescent flows of internal juices (including urine) moulded in snow, confronting the body-flowers of Helen Chadwick.

The self filed like the names of the disappeared, erased forever from its persecuted memory (Ania Bien) and the Ego/non-Ego of Bracha Lichtenberg Ettinger's pieces where intimate images are effaced by the 'magical object'; the photocopy machine. Cut out, mounted and marked with an hebraic or latin letter, these images materialise absence and thought, and testify to an unfocused gaze, a gaze which cannot be focused and is cancelled out; the secret gaze. In order to stay secret the intimate self loses its intimacy.

If intimacy is our 'différence' in its pure state, then this intimacy can ultimately be contained within the state of anonymity. It's limits - the photographer's paradox - are reached with the staging of a self-suicide, an act of derision and uncertainty (Geoffroy Lahaye). The event is depicted as a mixture of dream and reality, self-portrait and death, as if the act of mourning has reached the image and hence the life of the self.

Between true and false, reality and fiction, intimacy and anonymity, through all the nuances, where a woman can become Danae, a Saint or the fake body of a Cranach - can secrets circulate here? Yes and no. In times like our own, when we have reached the limits of the intolerable and the outrageous and have encountered extremes of physical violence, AIDS and death, the secrets of a life already touched by death *must* circulate, for as the secret is divulged it is aimed at the life of another, at another's secret. The secret must therefore maintain its infinite restraint, its 'incomprehensible consonance'. To quote Hamlet, the tragic man of secrets, possessor of the great Secret: 'But I have that within which passeth show, these but the trappings and suits of woe'.

Nothing but a word, a story, an image.

³ Cf 'Images d'absence' by Bracha Lichtenberg Ettinger, *Matricial Borderline, Cahier des Regards*, 1993.

The Bathers

And so the 'swimmer' has come gradually to represent characters with a heightened sensitivity to the promises of life, who are spiritually dissatisfied with worldly ambitions and find it hard to compromise. For the 'swimmer' the ordered forms of everyday life seem inadequate and therefore intolerable.

Charles Sprawson



Matthew Dalziel and Louise Scullion

In a new work commissioned by Stills Gallery and the French Institute, Edinburgh, Matthew Dalziel and Louise Scullion have worked together for the first time to create an installation that touches the explorer within us all. They have used Pilkington rolled glass to create cubicle type spaces, within which tiny moving images can be contemplated. This work takes a refreshing look at the conflict between the individuals inner world and the pressure to conform to the routine of real life.



Simon Crump
Elvis Victims
Triptych
Detail



Roberto Martinez

The Messengers
1993
Installation

'To play with the tongue, to play with his tongue'
With his series of photographs, texts and arrangements, Roberto Martinez carries us along a game about the intimate language: the attempts, traces and games which characterize human exchanges.

Éric Arlix

SECTION 2

THE TRAPS OF REFLECTION

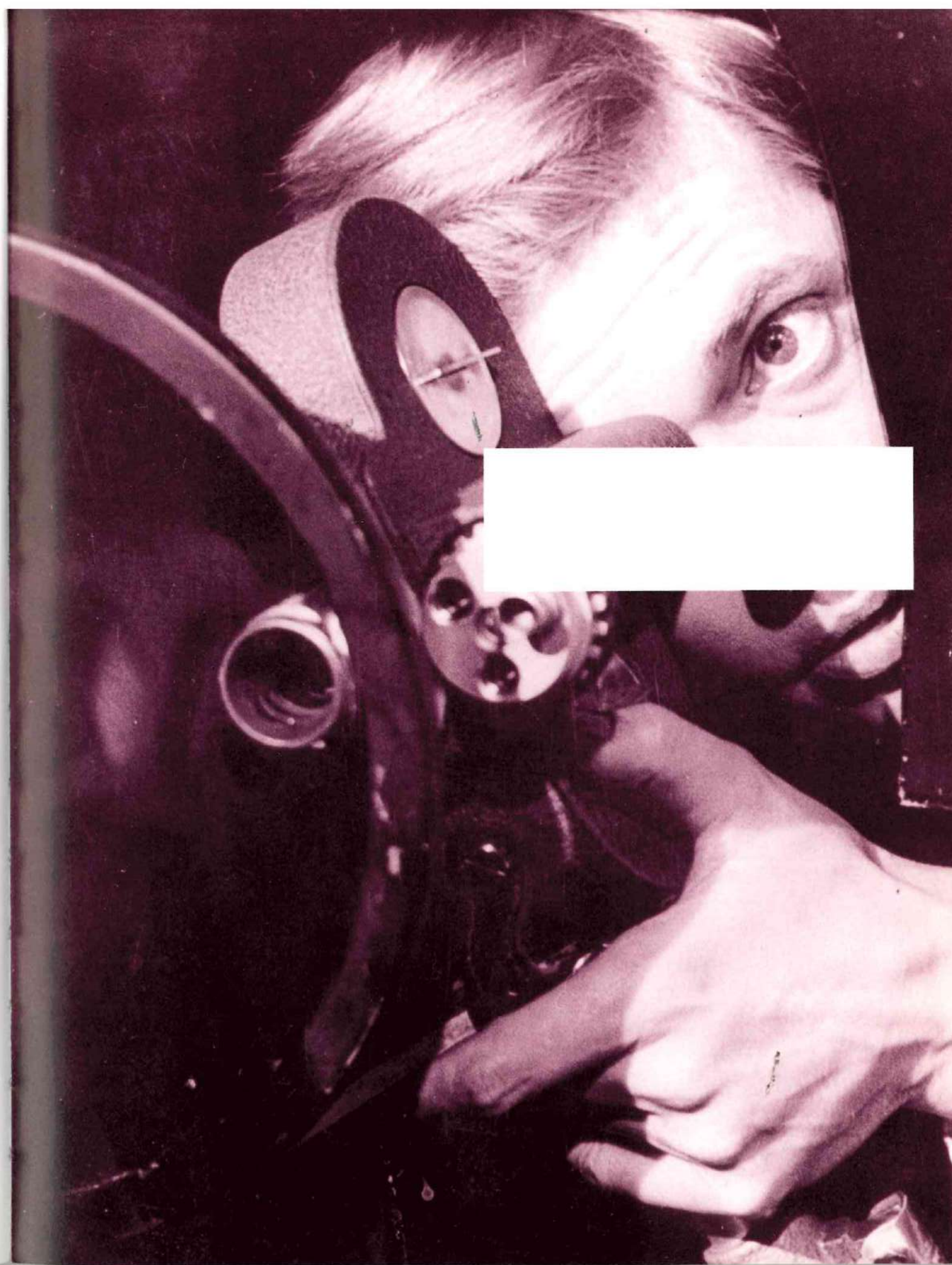
LYDIA SCHOUTEN
GEOFFROY LAHAYE
MARION BATAILLE
CLAUDE LÉVÉQUE
MOIRA McIVER
HELEN CHADWICK
PAUL STONE

Of all the prostheses which mark out the history of the body, the 'doppelganger' is probably the most ancient. However the doppelganger is not in fact a prosthesis. It is an imaginary figure which, like the soul, the shadow or the mirror image, haunts the subject in the form of his 'other'. The fact that it is himself and yet does not ever quite resemble him, haunts the subject like a subtle death perpetually avoided. But not for ever: when the doppelganger materialises, when it becomes visible, then death is imminent. The imaginary power and richness of the doppelganger, where the subject's simultaneous unfamiliarity and intimacy with himself is at play, rests in its immateriality, in the fact that it is and will remain a fantasy. Everyone can dream, and must have dreamt all their lives of a perfect duplication or multiplication of their own being, but these are merely dreams and will self-destruct if one tries to forcefully enter the dream in reality.

....Everyone lives by the traps they set for the 'other'. Both exist within a boundless affinity, which must last until their strength is spent. Everyone wants their 'other'; in both an imperious compulsion to reduce it to nothing and a feverish desire to make it last in order to enjoy it. The adverse logics of falsehood and truth merge in this dance of death, which is merely pleasure at the 'other's' demise. For desire for the 'other' is also the desire to put an end to it...as late as possible? The only question is who will last longer, occupying space, speech, silence, even the interior of the 'other', dispossessed of himself at the point of being summoned into his 'difference'.

....An otherness, an ultimately unintelligible strangeness. Such is the secret of the shape and the singularity of the event of the 'other'.

Jean Baudrillard
La Transparence du Mal,
(Éd. Galilée)



THE TEXT'S IDENTITY MEN BEFORE THE MIRROR

David Hopkins

Many a time the mirror imprisons them and holds them firmly. Fascinated they stand in front. They are absorbed, separated from reality and alone with their dearest vice, vanity. However readily they spread out all other vices for all, they keep this one secret and disown it even before their most intimate friends.

There they stand and stare at the landscape which is themselves, the mountains of their noses, the defiles and folds of their shoulders, hands and skin, to which the years have already so accustomed them that they no longer know how they evolved; and the multiple primeval forests of their hair. They meditate, they are content, they try to take themselves in as a whole. Certain traits appear too small, and it is well so, but others are too large and it is magnificent so. Women have taught them that power does not succeed. Women have told them what is attractive in them, they have forgotten; but now they put themselves together like a mosaic out of what pleased women in them. For they themselves do not

know what is attractive about them. Only handsome men are sure of themselves, but handsome men are not fitted for love: they wonder even at the last moment whether it suits them. Fitted for love are the great ugly things that carry their faces with pride before them like a mask. The great taciturns, who behind their silence hide much or nothing.

Slim hands with long fingers or short, that grasp forth. The nape of a neck that rises steeply to lose itself in the forest's edge of the hair, the tender curve of the skin behind an ear, the mysterious mussel of the navel, the flat pebbles of the knee-caps, the joints of their ankles, which a hand envelops to hold them back from a leap and beyond the farther and still unknown region of the body, much older than it, much more worn, open to all happenings: this face, always this face which they know so well. For they have a body only at night and most only in the arms of a woman. But with them goes always, ever present their face.



Lydia Schouten

Shattered Ghost Stories
1993
Installation
Courtesy Gallery Wanda Reiff
Photograph: Annet Delgaauw

Those who have kept track of the work of Lydia Schouten during the last twelve years, will notice a marked change since 1989/1990. In the eighties, her work featured the use of video, photography and mixed media, recent means of expression that sometimes bring the creative arts close to the performing arts. At the beginning of this decennium this artist, who is also a sculptor, has at a different level returned to work in real dimensions in real space.

The mirror looks at them. They collect themselves. Carefully, as if tying a cravat, they compose their features. Insolent, serious and conscious of their looks they turn around to face the world.'

ROSE SELAVY

A strange text this, 'surreal' in the sense that it took its place alongside texts by Breton, Eluard and Tzara, interspersed with photographs, in Man Ray's *Photographies 1920-1934* (Paris 1934). Forget about its author for the moment; such a peculiar name in any case. Male or female? Probably the latter. Confusing spelling. LETS TRY TO DO WITHOUT AUTHORS. Anyway; the viewpoint in this text seems impersonal, omniscient. Although its tone is intimate, the text has an unearthly scope to its vision. The private habits of men are laid bare as though observed through bathroom and dressing room walls, scrutinised by mirrors.....

This text, then, violates privacy. It moves in close like a movie camera ('the mountains of their noses'). It pans across vistas of skin caressingly. It photographs the male sex in the very process of constructing itself ('they put themselves together like a mosaic'). Maybe it is a text about photographic looking and the way, culturally, this infects constructions of self. It might therefore deal with the way personal identity is informed by representations in the public sphere. Think of Lacan (an 'author', I know, for which I apologise). Two years after this text was written he penned a lecture which was later to be published as 'Le stade du miroir comme formateur de la fonction du Je'. Here he discussed the 'mirror stage' in child development as a prelude to the later experience of self as derived from an external sphere of visual identifications. The child's oscillation between a fragmentary or dispersed

self-image and its perception of the inverted 'imago' or 'Ideal - I' in the mirror creates a split within the subject and the preconditions for processes of identity formation which are expressed, in terms of phantasy, in images ranging from 'a fragmented body-image to a form of its totality'. Turn back to our text: 'they try to take themselves in as a whole'.

But this is to lose track of the theme of gender. After all, the text is exclusively about men; vain men; self-obsessed men. Freud's analytic notion of primary narcissism - which involves him in the notorious claim that male homosexuality is the outcome of a fixation at this stage of psychological development, involving subjects taking equivalents of themselves as love-objects - surely precedes this text, as it does Lacan's, (excuse me, the authors are proliferating).

Similarly, Joan Riviere's notion of Masquerade, originally applicable to women but translated into male terms as the concept of 'parade' in recent work by Lemoine-Luccioni, (it seems authors are unavoidable) may be at issue. Basically, this concept dealt with the way gender characteristics may be exaggerated in certain individuals and 'enacted' as a form of display. Women may thus foreground or flaunt 'femininity' in order, unconsciously, to ward off masculine impulses. Men, alternatively, may decorate themselves with hypermasculine attributes: 'as if tying a cravat, they compose their features'.

But is the text really so detached in its treatment of masculinity? At times it assumes the tender, solicitous tone of a female lover ('the mysterious mussel of the navel'). At times only a man could be writing, given that only someone of the same sex could be privy to such secrets. In this sense, the text assumes the voice of a man conscious of the need to say something about the underlying vulnerability of male identity. There is perhaps even a degree of urgency in the disclosures; a need to



Geoffroy Lahaye

Emblème
Photograph

overturn gender stereotypes; to home in for once on male narcissism rather than the conventional vanity of women. This text could almost have been written yesterday about the concerns of artists in this exhibition with identity, display, gender instabilities, the domain of the private But by whom? Whose interests are at stake? WE NEED AN AUTHOR.

Come clean. The author's name beneath the text is bogus; hence all this play on authorship. Rose Sélavy (*Eros c'est la vie*) was a female alter-ego for Marcel Duchamp. Duchamp was to take on other identities throughout his life - R. Mutt and Slim Pickens are two of the male options - but Rose was special. When Duchamp abandoned art in the early 1920's in favour of chess, Rose facilitated his disappearance from the scene, signing the 'assisted readymades' produced during the period. Photographs of her by Man Ray show a fashionable society woman, like something out of *Vogue*; Duchamp masquerading as a woman masquerading. Particularly revealing, given the text in question, is the fact that Duchamp was also photographed by Man Ray at that time with his face covered in shaving cream; a man before the mirror. Perhaps Rose Sélavy, the author of our text, was not only a gender reversal, but also a mirror reversal, of Duchamp.

Our text, as suspected, is thus bi-gendered. Does it offer a predominantly masculine or feminine point of view? It's hard to tell. Is Duchamp seriously attempting to write as a woman, as Rose? Or is he revealing something of his personal discomfort with traditional constructions of masculinity and using the text to deconstruct the ideology of the strong outward-looking male? Just as Duchamp's (masculine) persona was that of the

narcissistic Dandy, so he could be exploring such character traits through the persona of Rose. Or perhaps the text reveals Duchamp's subjectivity as split or divided far more radically than the above comments might suggest. Removing authorial presence he adopts the position of a man looking through a woman's eyes at men looking at themselves. Where does *he* stand in all of this? The author is rendered internally fissured, unstable

Finally it has to be admitted that the text itself is unstable, unreliable even. I have saved this piece of information until last (assuming that you, the reader, are reading in the conventional manner) because only recently did I (notice the I; I want to reassure you of my presence) discover that, contrary to all indications in Man Ray's book, the text was in fact appropriated by Duchamp - or rather by Man Ray, who allegedly purloined it from a German female friend (whose identity, unsurprisingly, remains uncertain). It is therefore a readymade, signed - like other objects of the period - by Rose.

After all this, our critical investment in the text surely dwindles with our realisation of the 'author's' lack of investment. What are we to make of it now? Do we 'believe' in the text or in the author or in neither? Is it worth pursuing Duchamp's 'intentions' further? Is he hijacking not just an anonymous female's text but also, in some sense, femininity; and femininity doubled to the extent that both the anonymous author and Rose stand in for Duchamp? Is his duplicity such that all of this apparent deconstruction is simply a further shoring up of his masculine 'control'? Is he in fact using his distance from authentic authorship to poke fun at a poeticised mode of writing about male sensitivity that is perhaps no better than kitsch modes of describing



4 novembre 1991



mercredi 27 novembre 1991



jeudi 28 novembre 1991



vi 8 novembre 1991



samedi 9 novembre 1991



dimanche 10 novembre 1991



Marion Bataille

A Selfportrait

female introspection in romantic novellas ('women have told them what is attractive in them, they have forgotten').

In this connection, it should be noted that, in Man Ray's book, the text precedes photographic portraits - often in close-up - of influential early twentieth century male artists. This makes its original author's viewpoint somewhat more 'obvious' and possibly slightly sentimental, although ambiguities of meaning still clearly remain.

Well, when it comes down to it, I (who you might expect to provide a point of view) abdicate responsibility. After all, the text, speaking for itself, seems so seductive - why not go along with it? Sent out into the public realm, it offers a glimpse into the confessional booth where men, normally so inscrutable, bask in delirious self-absorption. And maybe in the end it is just another text amongst texts, reliant on other modes of writing/representation for its 'identity'. Whether, gazing into it like a mirror, you choose to see it as 'empty' or 'full' (although mirrors are never truly 'empty') depends on which author's reflection (if any) you see. Your own? Mine? Lacan's? Man Ray's friend's? Duchamps? Rose's....?

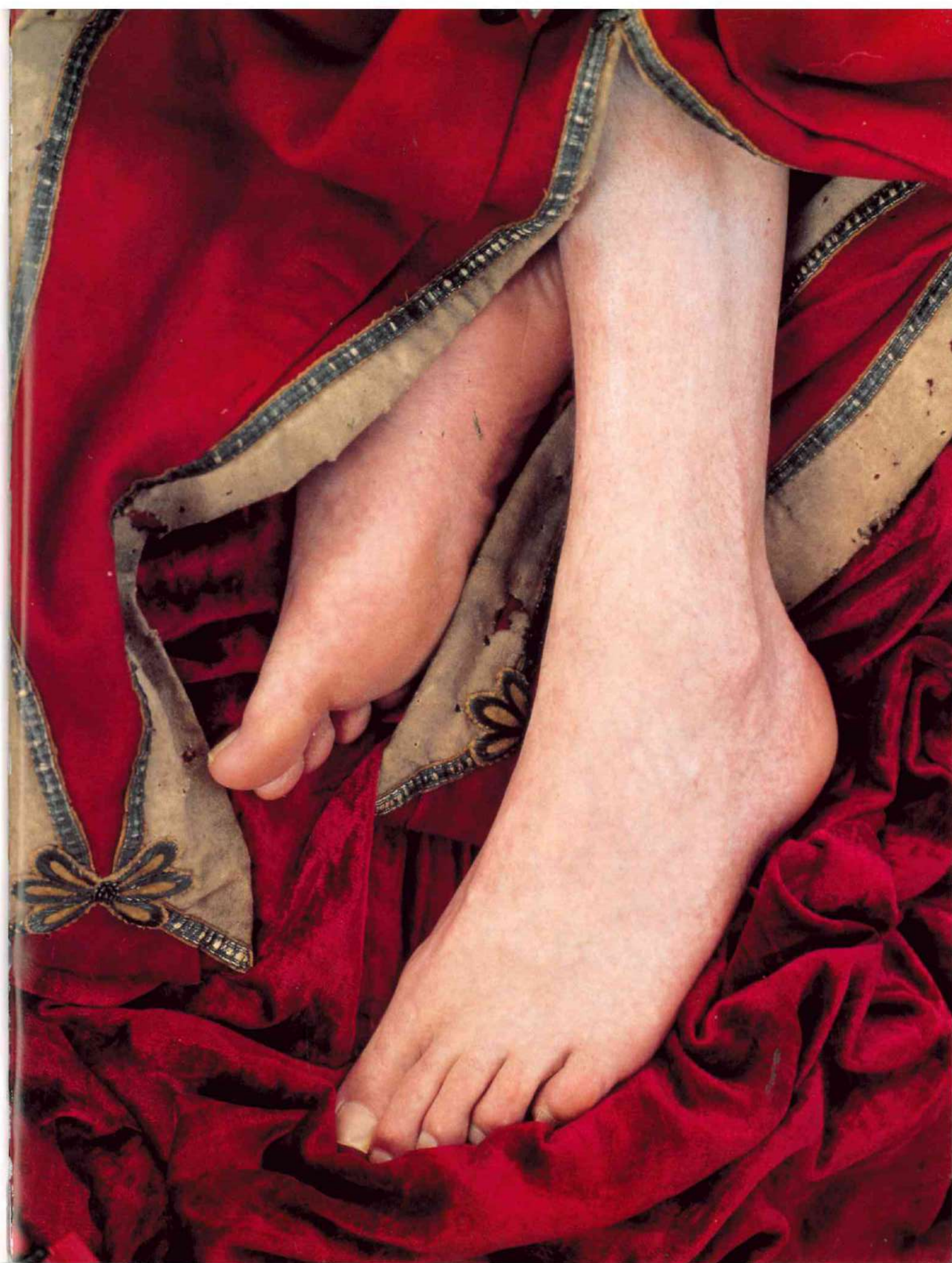


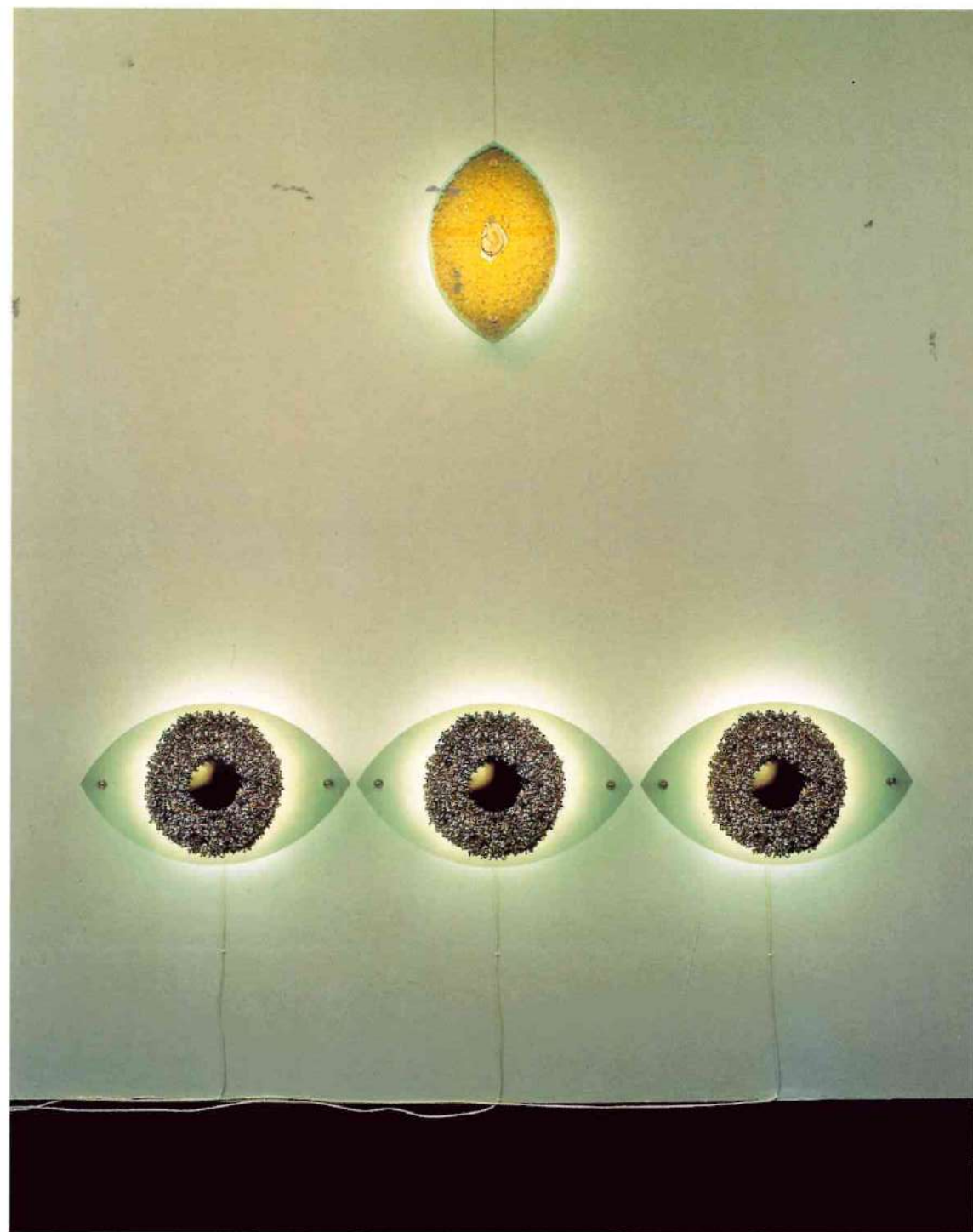
Claude Lévêque

Grand Hôtel
1981
Photos-installation

Moira McIver

Seductive Myths I
1992
Cibachrome
Detail





Helen Chadwick — *Eat me* — 1991 — Cibachrome transparency, glass, aluminium, electrics



Paul Stone
Baby Boys
1992
Cibachrome

SECTION 3

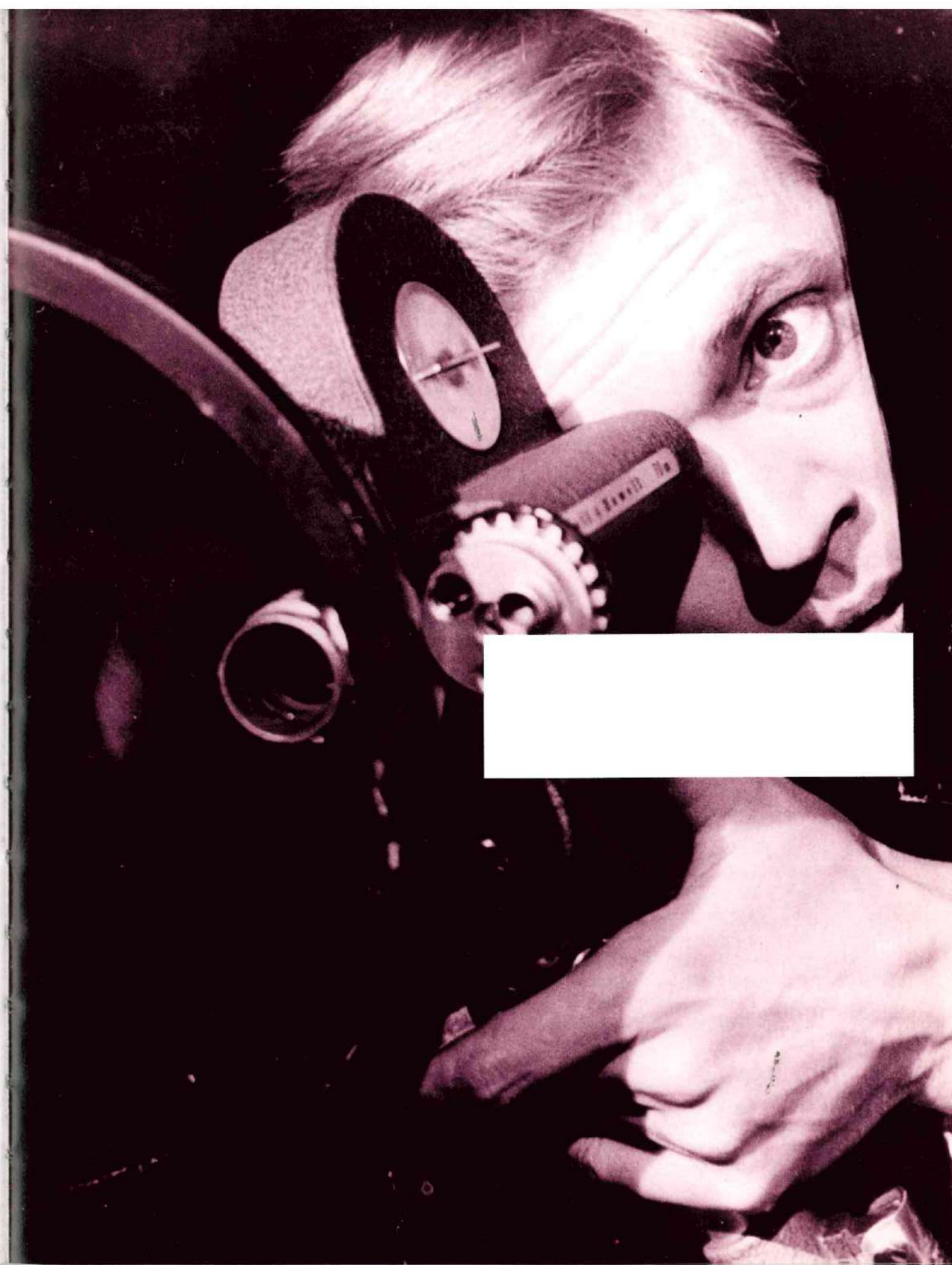
SOLITARY
OBJECTS OF THE
GAZE

LEA ANDREWS
VINCENT GODEAU
PIERRE MOLINIER
PATRICK RAYNAUD
DANY LERICHE
PIERRE ET GILLES

'I will be your mirror image' does not mean 'I will be your reflection' so much as 'I will be your delusion'. To seduce is to cease living in terms of reality and to become a delusion. It is to delude oneself, to move in an enchanted world. Here lies the power of the seductress: she is deluded by her own desire and bewitched by her own delusion, which then deludes others. Narcissus similarly loses himself within his own delusive image. He turns away from his own truth, and setting it up as an example, he becomes a model of love, leading others away from their truth. Seduction's strategy is that of delusion.

....Seduction lies in wait for the unconscious and for desire, and recreates them as mirror images. Because desire merely removes the urge and the pleasure, and leaves enchantment intact, one becomes bewitched by one's own desire. It is this delusion which fortunately saves us from 'psychic reality'. It is also the delusion of psychoanalysis, which bewitches itself with its own desire for psychoanalysis. It is seduced and seduces itself, diverting its powers towards its own ends.

Jean Baudrillard
La Transparence du Mal,
(Éd. Galilée)



THE CELIBATE GAZE

Alain Reinaudo

'We believe that we are always following the course of nature when in fact we are merely moving alongside the shapes by means of which we observe nature. We were captivated by the image and could not escape it because it was embedded in our language, a language which seemed capable only of inexorable repetition.'

Ludwig Wittgenstein
Philosophical Investigations

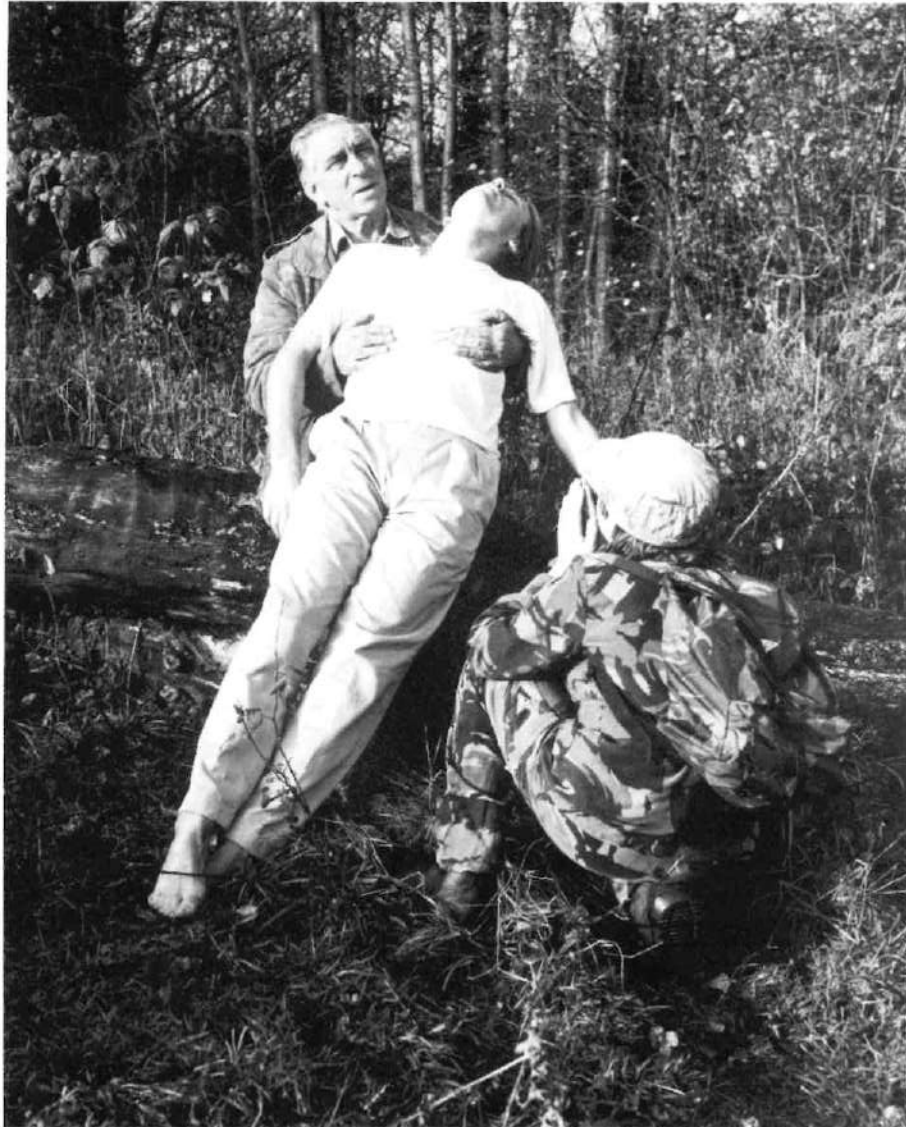
Spectator/actor on the melancholy stage of appearances, trapped between two mirrors which open onto the abyss of infinite similitude, caught up in a game of images intruded upon by one's own gaze. The reflecting space of silvery glass or the square of paper impregnated with silvery dust - the former with its false impression of distance and the latter with its contracted dimensions - lead one to vertiginous heights of absurdity, to reality of doubt and doubt of reality, where there is nothing but the paradox of impossible perspectives. One can only ever see partially, a mere part of the self, always mediated by the object, the deforming prism of the mirror, the image, or the gaze of the other. Disorientated,

the viewer is caught within the geometry of a vicious circle.

To see - beyond oneself. The body becomes autonomous - but is this a body, this flesh which has escaped, riddled with illusions? Contemplative, guilty, feared, vanquished, peaceful, holding its breath, almost motionless - the image is an empty space suspended in the passageway which leads to the silence of the world. To see - beyond the eyes. Into the secret, chaste solitude of adolescence, the powerless, resigned terror of old age, into dirt and pain, the hallucinatory glare of the object of desire, the blindness of lies.

The voyeur hunts down the vain ideal of the body, unbearable beauty, metastasis colonising the field of vision. Voyeurism, self-contemplation, the space between the lines of the gaze where the subliminal signals of codes slip in - false friends, pretences, double lives, secret compartments, false floors. Burning mirrors, magnetic bodies, the beloved body, the metaphorical body.

I look at myself, I kill myself, I invent myself, I transform myself; liar, faker, I insult myself, hate myself, ignore myself; find myself



Lea Andrews

For a Dead Boy
1987-1988
Triptych

objectionable, despicable, ironical, ecstatic. I drown in myself, elucidate myself, I am the 'I' and the 'you', the overexposed facsimile, the rejected gift, the analogous contrary, the virus in the cell, the convict in the prison, the fragment and the whole, the devil's advocate, nothingness and life, the unsensing self, the eternity of the other.

Narcissus looks into the pool, watching for his twin Ophelia, dead within him but projected as an aquatic simulacrum. Perfection is merely the shadow of artifice, the trappings of boredom, a barbarian imposture.

In the visual no-man's land it is to be merely a sweet shipwrecked sailor, so transparent that the sand cannot even hold the imprint of the cheek, to be a sleeper in the valley of dreamless sleep, in the parental arms.

Abandoning oneself in one's double, sign of the quest for and the loss of self. One must travel back, kill the child, marry oneself in order to be reborn into the world. Learn to play tricks, gaze into Medusa's eyes, hope for the kiss of the spider woman. Morrissey sings 'This Charming Man' in a peep show booth, the world exhausts itself amongst the chimera of holograms, falls in love with virtual heroes, with the lost otherness of conquered images.

Bewildered attractors demagnetise the compasses, peacefulness is only blurred anxiety. Time and again human beings attempt to possess one another to the point of murder, try exhaustively to recapture themselves...flies in the ointment....Narcissus dies by the side of the pool from delusions of reality.



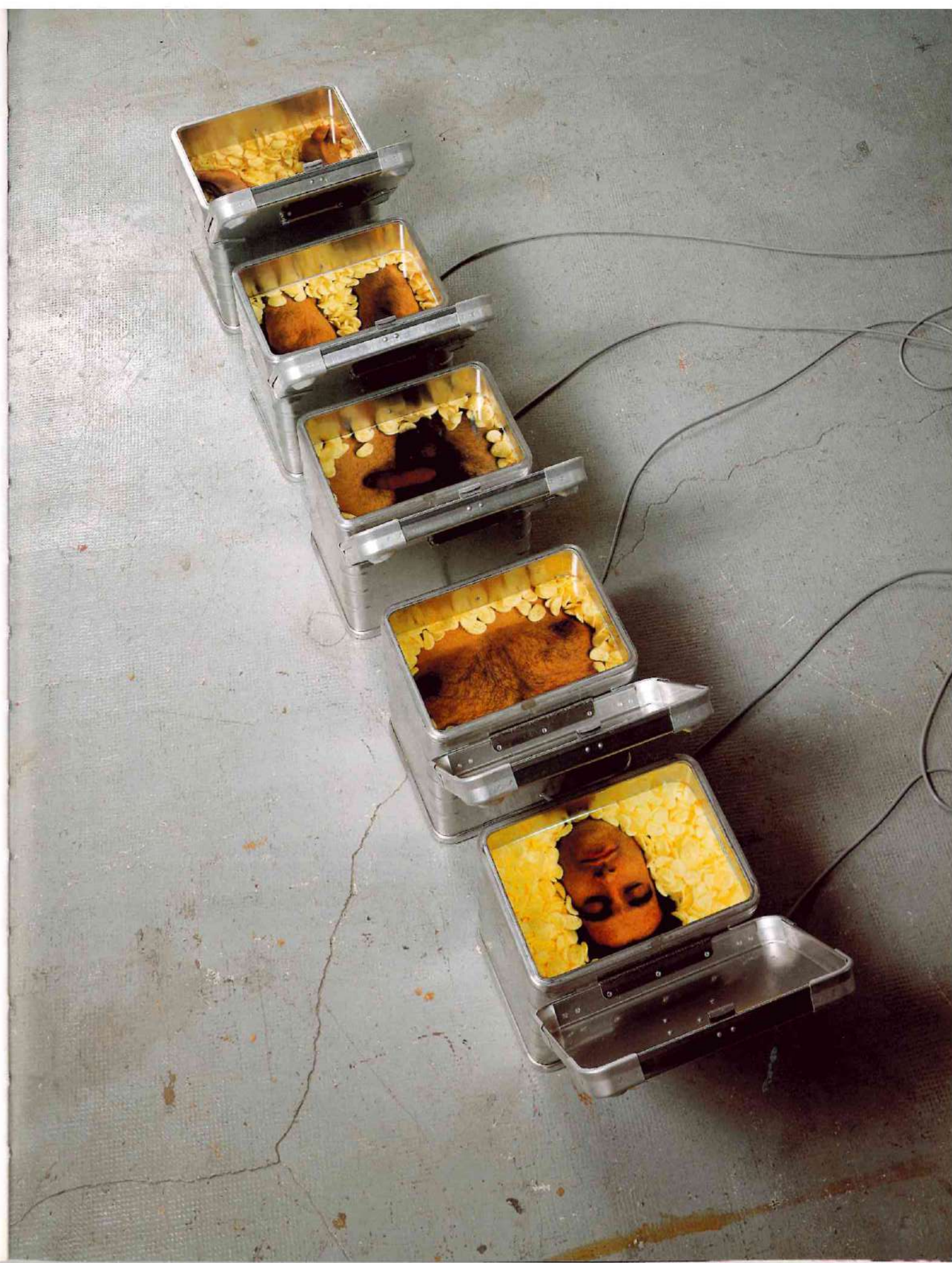
Vincent Godeau

Narcisses
(from the series)
Photograph
Courtesy Galerie Agathe Gaillard

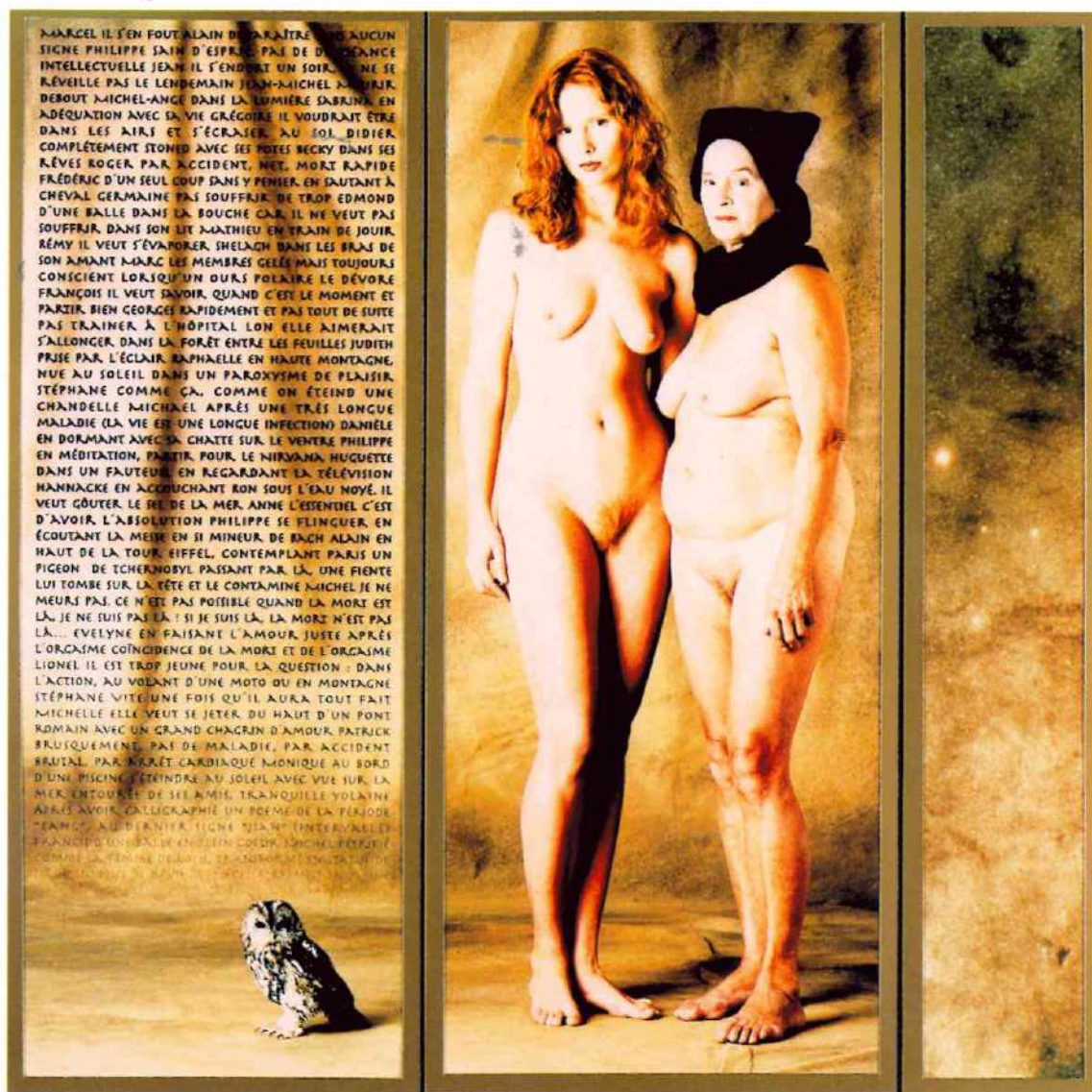


Pierre Molinier

Pantomime Narcisse
1967
Silver print
Courtesy Galerie Urbi et Orbi



Patrick Raynaud
Anatomy Lesson
1991
Aluminium, cibachrome, neons
Courtesy Galerie Claude Fain



Dany Leriche

Portraits sous influence
 Kerstin et Inga
 1992
 Triptych
 Courtesy Galerie Claude Fain



Pierre et Gilles

Naufragé (Hamid)
 1986

Naufragée (Claire Nebout)
 1986

Painted photographs
 Courtesy Galerie Samia Saouma
 and Maison européenne de
 la photographie Collection.

SECTION 4

THE INTRUSIVE
GAZE

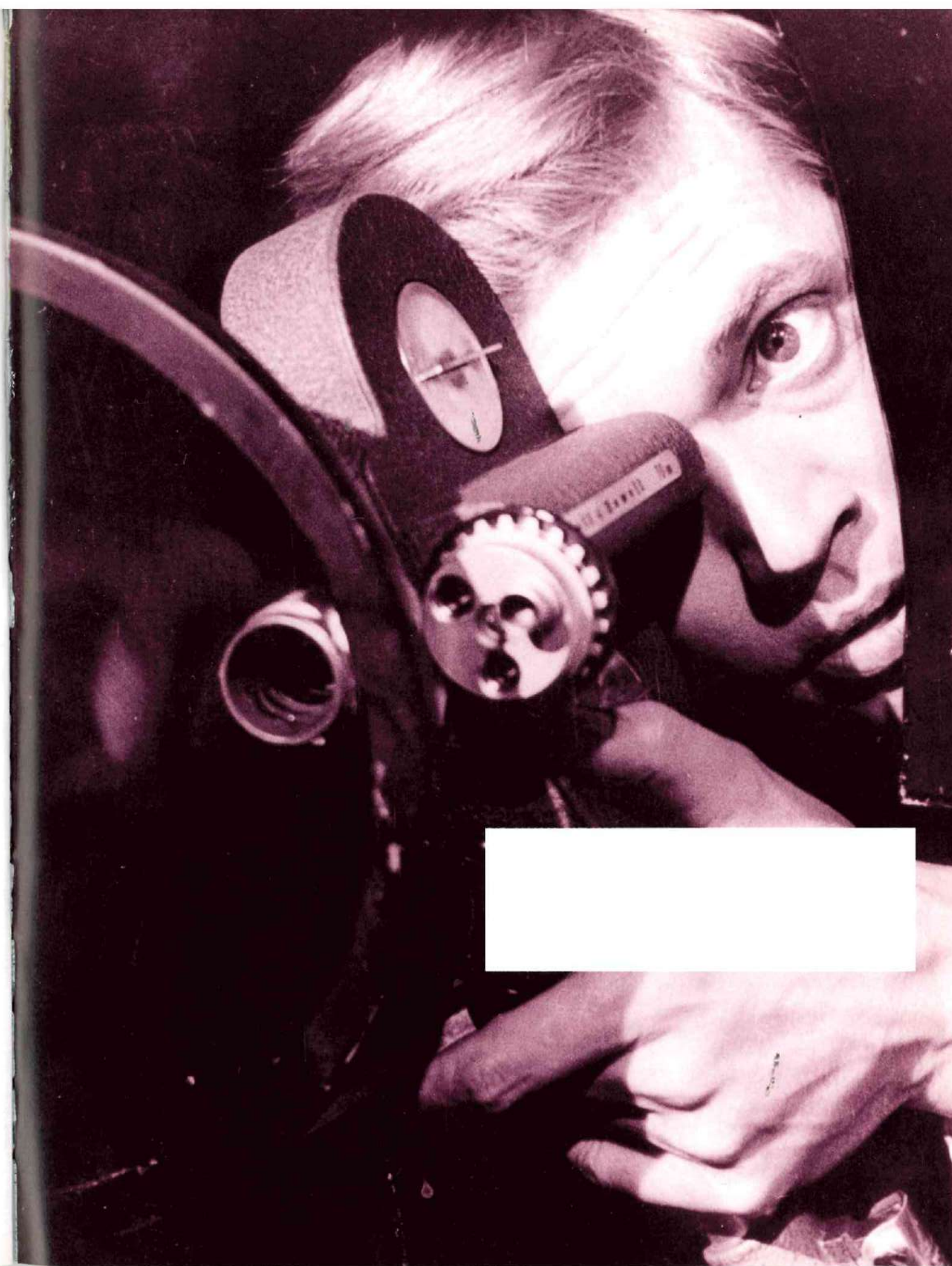
FRANÇOISE NÚEZ
and BERNARD PLOSSU
PHILIPPE MAIRESSE / GRORE IMAGES
PINK
JANE MULFINGER
OLIVIER MENANTEAU
BRACHA LICHTENBERG ETTINGER

A strange pride leads us not merely to possess another person but to force out their secrets, making ourselves both dear to them and a threat to their life. The voluptuous pleasure of the 'eminence grise': the art of eliminating people; this requires a whole ceremonial.

..You seduce yourself into believing that you are nothing more than the mirror image of some other, unsuspecting person; like Kierkegaard's mirror, hung on the opposite wall: the young woman thinks nothing of it, but the mirror does. You seduce yourself into believing that you are the other person's destiny, following an identical path. For the other person the path has a sense of direction but this sense disappears as the path is duplicated. It is as if the person following the other knows that it leads nowhere. In a way, it amounts to stealing the other person's sense of purpose: an evil spirit slips subtly in between the two.

...Fate emerges only in this enigmatic context. My secret is somewhere else. No one is the keeper of their own secret - a mistake of all psychologies, including that of the unconscious. Outside myself, everything that is set in motion (in dreams as well as in language, events and catastrophes) is a fatal object. Even if it does not lead to death it still implies a dispossession of the subject; it leads the subject into the secret, beyond his own end, outside himself in spite of himself, it leads him, here too, into a form of ecstasy. The enigma goes as follows: how can one be part of the secret without being aware of it? The enigmatic solution goes like this: only the 'other' knows, only God knows, only fate knows. The secret envelops you without your knowing it.

Jean Baudrillard
Les Stratégies fatales,
(Éd. Grasset)



THE IMAGE AND THE SECRET

Serge Tisseron

The truth of the image is that in it one can see more than the image itself. Through their capacity to refer to something beyond the boundaries of what they depict, images are always, in some way or another, related to secrets. In photographs, more often than in any other images, we often discover a picture of ourselves that we do not recognise - and sometimes would rather keep hidden. Such is the double dimension of what we call 'secret'. On the one hand, 'secret' designates what is known and understood by only a few and often is not known even to itself (as in the 'secrets of the heart' or the 'depths of the soul'). On the other hand secrets are a part of the communication we have with others; in other words we can choose to divulge or conceal depending on the person and the situation. Thus while the secret is located at the interface between our conscious life and the unconscious psyche, where Freud places the inhibitions of censorship and repression, it is also situated at the interface between what we secretly know about ourselves and what we choose to communicate to certain people or under certain

conditions; that is to say, at the interface between our private and public lives.

In relation to this double polarity of the secret, the image intervenes in two complementary fashions. Early in the ninth century, Nicephore pointed out that any image is a 'pros ti', that is to say a 'being which tends toward something'. Depending on whether it is the 'being' or the 'tendency' which is given prominence, the image unleashes its power in the direction of either recomposition or transformation.

Recomposition concerns the way in which an image represents an absent object and plays a particularly important role in the act of mourning. This mourning takes the form of the making of an image; always a psychic image and sometimes a material one in the form of an effigy of death. In fact the word 'image' derives from 'imago' with which the Romans referred to the wax mould of a dead person's face which was worn at funerals. To a greater or lesser extent, this function of the image places the presence of the person represented within that which represents them (at one extreme the



Françoise Nuñez — Photograph

Bernard Plossu — Photograph
Courtesy Galerie Michèle Chomette

image may be identified with the person and charged with all of their qualities, as in idolotry; at the other, it may have no relation whatsoever with what it represents, as in the iconoclastic abhorrence for images of Christ and the Saints).

The image's function of recomposition, or better maybe, its function of 'resemblance', is not merely visual. It also includes the ability of an image, material or psychic, to capture and contain memories, emotions, and sensations attributed to the object. The power of the image, lies in its capacity to invoke the emotional recomposition of what it represents. This recomposition, taking an important place in the memory of lived and shared experience, bestows on the image the conviction of a psychic exchange; the image imposes both its obviousness and the conviction that this obviousness is shared with others.

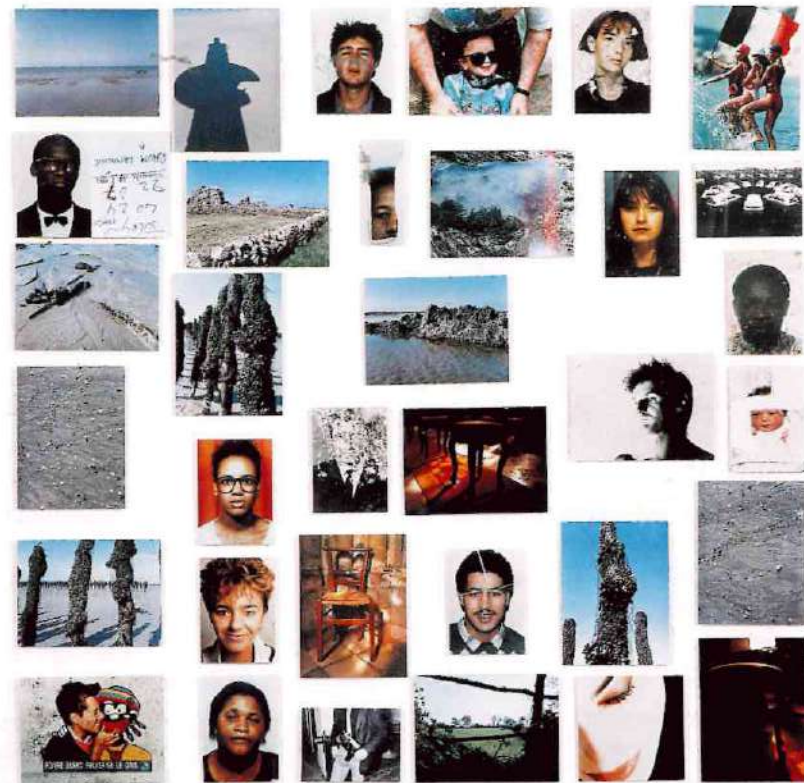
By means of this dialogue that everyone has with themselves - this dialogue upon which is based our acceptance of what we recognise or our refusal to see what is there - the image's function is called to the aid of the secret. The words we try to hide from ourselves come back in the form of images which haunt our dreams and reveries and sometimes impose themselves on us in the form of hallucinations as in the hysterical patients studied by Freud. Assailed by images these women learned the virtues of 'speech therapy'; they spoke and allowed their inner voices to form the words smothered by shame. It is the words that others - parents, mentors, intimates - have tried to hide that come back in the shape of images, metaphors successfully or unsuccessfully disguised as a secret.

In the case of transformation, however, the image indicates a direction to follow, a sense of a movement, a necessary evolution. This polarity within every image finds its purest form in the pictograms used in modern signage, which point the way towards something. The image then calls attention to a movement. It

does not speak of what is hidden in a disguised manner as in the case of the image working towards recomposition *in spite of a secret*. It indicates a direction to be taken. When the image develops naturally in the act of mourning, its capacity for transformation may be exploited for the purposes of magic. Images can chase away bad spirits, cure illnesses, lead you to a loved one, attract game to a trap all activities which imply one or more transformations.

When it implies a third party, also a keeper of the secret and also at risk from its revelation, this function of the image becomes more like playing a game with the secret. In this instance the compromise is not located between the desire to communicate knowledge and the repression of this desire by the subject's self-imposed prohibition, but instead is situated between the desire to communicate knowledge and the social prohibition that others (or a privileged other) impose upon the subject. The first compromise, a conflict between psychic instances, produces the image as a metaphor for the secret; the second, which implies obedience to a social norm for fear of being denied by it, works through partial erasure. Here the image is not, as in the metaphor, a door to be opened with the help of a key so that the secret can be unveiled; it is rather the indication of a path to follow which will bring us closer to an enigmatic end, a finger pointing towards an unknown horizon....

At once opaque and silent, obedient and sly, transparent and hypocritical, the image mobilises its explosive powers in the service of our conscious or unconscious secrets. Images of all forms participate in this enterprise but photography does so in a way which makes it, according to Diane Arbus, 'a secret about a secret'. Photography necessitates a number of operations, not all of which can be controlled, such as the movement of objects before the lens, the effects of light and shadow, composition

**Philippe Mairesse***Grore Images*

Created by Philippe Mairesse and structured as a photo agency, *Grore Images* proposes to select and show reproductions of pictures out of a stock made up from photographs found in public places. The selection of pictures to be reproduced was submitted by the *Sous-Sol* to the seven company heads who are sponsoring them: Rugel, Tollens, Kis, Mory-TNTE, RCI, Comatel, Fugl Hung. Five of them chose pictures out of the Agency video-catalogue and decided on the sizes of the prints.

and so on. These are related in part to chance and in part to subconscious choices, all of which are motivated by the desire to take a photograph - this particular scene, this face, this situation, something impossible to express and often all but lost in the final outcome.

There are two characteristics essential to photography. First the final image is never exactly the one intended. Photography captures light and shadow on a sensitive surface and needs to be developed for the results of the action to be revealed. In this obligatory passage through the chemistry of the developing process all images become something of a surprise, even for the photographer. In some cases things are revealed that have been captured on film completely unwittingly, as in Antonioni's film *Blow Up*. In the beginnings of photography this particularity contributed to the belief that photography might contain a subject's secrets, secrets undetected by physical contact. Since it shows more than what we see it also seemed possible that photography might 'reveal' (the verb 'reveler' in French is also a photographic term, meaning to 'develop') what could not be seen. Hence the belief that photography could objectivise the presence of spirits and the dead, materialise our immaterial aura and reveal the hidden personality of the subject photographed. These things would not be asked of a painting made by the human hand where the subjectivity and the skills of the painter have so obviously been at work. Moreover the photographer reacts to the fragmentary and arbitrary character of all photographic images by reassembling them. Arrangements in 'series', or 'montages' in the case of artists, can also be a simple regrouping of selected clichés in an amateur photographer's album, the family album being the most common prototype. Whatever their justification, the logic behind such sequential groupings is to accentuate the images' mirror effect through which the author discovers a

reflection of his perception of the world.

Consequently any gathering process must exclude those photographs which deny the artist's vision, or deny the vision of the group to which the artist belongs. Thus the failed photograph relates to the classifier's inability to find it a place within a desired order because it disrupts the usual markers, the various processes of identification used when considering images of the self, the other, or cultural preferences. For each grouping of photographs one could imagine another made up of the images that failed, or were excluded. Once assembled as a totality these might form a successful ensemble, that is an homogenous one. If a member of a family is ill, pictures that show the progress of the illness are often put aside while the person is alive and then gathered together after the person's death as a testimony to their suffering or bravery. Similarly pictures that capture the expressions or gestures of a couple in disagreement can be put aside as 'failures' when the relationship is officially a successful one. Once the relationship itself has failed, these images will be considered 'successful' because they are seen as a premonition. The artist, on the other hand, bases his choices on his perception of his own work and style and on his perception of himself and others.

This reconstitution places any photographic grouping mid-way between falsification, where deceiving others is paramount, and the family story, where self-deception is the most essential element.



Pink

At Home
1984

Man Woman Child (alias the artist, her husband and four-year old daughter) lived for hundred days in a garden - completely fitted out according to ideals of *Better Homes and Gardens* and *Schöner Wohnen* magazines - on an artificial lawn before their dream house, in its full scale, though, as a realistic two-dimensional painting. The project is set up in the center of the city. Arriving at the plaza one sees the family enjoying the garden. Behind the painting (15 x 7m) is a motorhome in which the family spends the night. Photography: Frans Halsmuseum, Haarlem

Pink

Et in Arcadia Ego Sum
1990

In the middle of a large space with a green ground stands a door in a frame. The space is marked by four green trees (3 m high) on the corners. Between the trees are four huge flowergroups. All elements are made like Lego but in an expanded scale. Under one of the trees stands a basket filled with apples. Every day at 12 o'clock arrive Man Woman Child, alias the artist, her husband and their ten-year-old daughter, carrying a small rabbit in her arms. They take off their shoes. Man Woman Child enter Arcadia. After wandering around in Arcadia the Man refills the basket with fresh apples, the Child eats an apple and plays with the rabbit, the Woman stands. Then Man Woman Child Stand for some time in pose in Arcadia. *Rheinisches Landesmuseum Bonn, 1990*
Kunsthau Hamburg, 1991
Photography: Ed Lohman





Jane Mullinger

Cumulous
1989

The projected image of a found 1930's school portrait is intercepted by a number of found mirrors which are standing on stilts of metal rod. The mirrors are spread about the space to allow passage between and around them. The intercepted faces reflect up to the ceiling where an ominous collection of household and personal items hang from the beams. They are wrapped in white cloth and plastic as one would find in a storage room or in a closed house. A bed, tables, chairs, an ironing board, a bicycle, clothing, etc. are identifiable as well as the reflected, quivering faces from the group portrait - suggesting what we may and may not redeem in life. The accumulation of objects are parallel to a stockpile of memory; the divided portrait forecasts their inevitable dispersion.

Immediately upon entering the Bellevue Church a kind of concert appears to be in progress. The props, characters and instruments of this particular "ensemble" - chairs, books, oscillating fans and slide projectors - perform a carefully structured but dissonant symphony, a delicate balance of cause and effect. Many precariously stacked books, although labelled in the familiar Roman alphabet, contain stories whose specificities are inaccessible to a sight-orientated reading since the text of the books uses the embossed Braille alphabet. Similarly, anonymous found photographs projected onto the pages of Braille suggest but ultimately deny a familiar narrative. These stories are further disrupted by the random movement of pages stirred by the intermittent breeze of the whirring, humming fans. The conscious human subject sensing and constructing meaning from physical experience, apparently both the subject and the audience of this work, is often frustrated in attempts at interpretation, and at the centre of this installation finds only the restrictions of its own subjectivity.



Olivier Menanteau

Sylvie
 From the series n° 1 : Claire, Marie-
 Jeanne, Brigitte, Sandrine, Pomme,
 Laurence, Isa, Stéphanie, Sylvie
 1981-1992
 13 silver prints
 32 x 42 cm



Bracha Lichtenberg Ettinger

Narcissism
Borderline, n° 6, 7, 8, 10
 1992
 Photographs

SECTION 5

BEHIND THE
SCREENS

TANIA MOURAUD
EDWIN JANSEN
OLIVIER ZABAT
ANIA BIEN
JOCHEN GERZ
LOODWICKS PRESS IMAGES
JAN HENDERIKSE
STEPHEN WILLATS

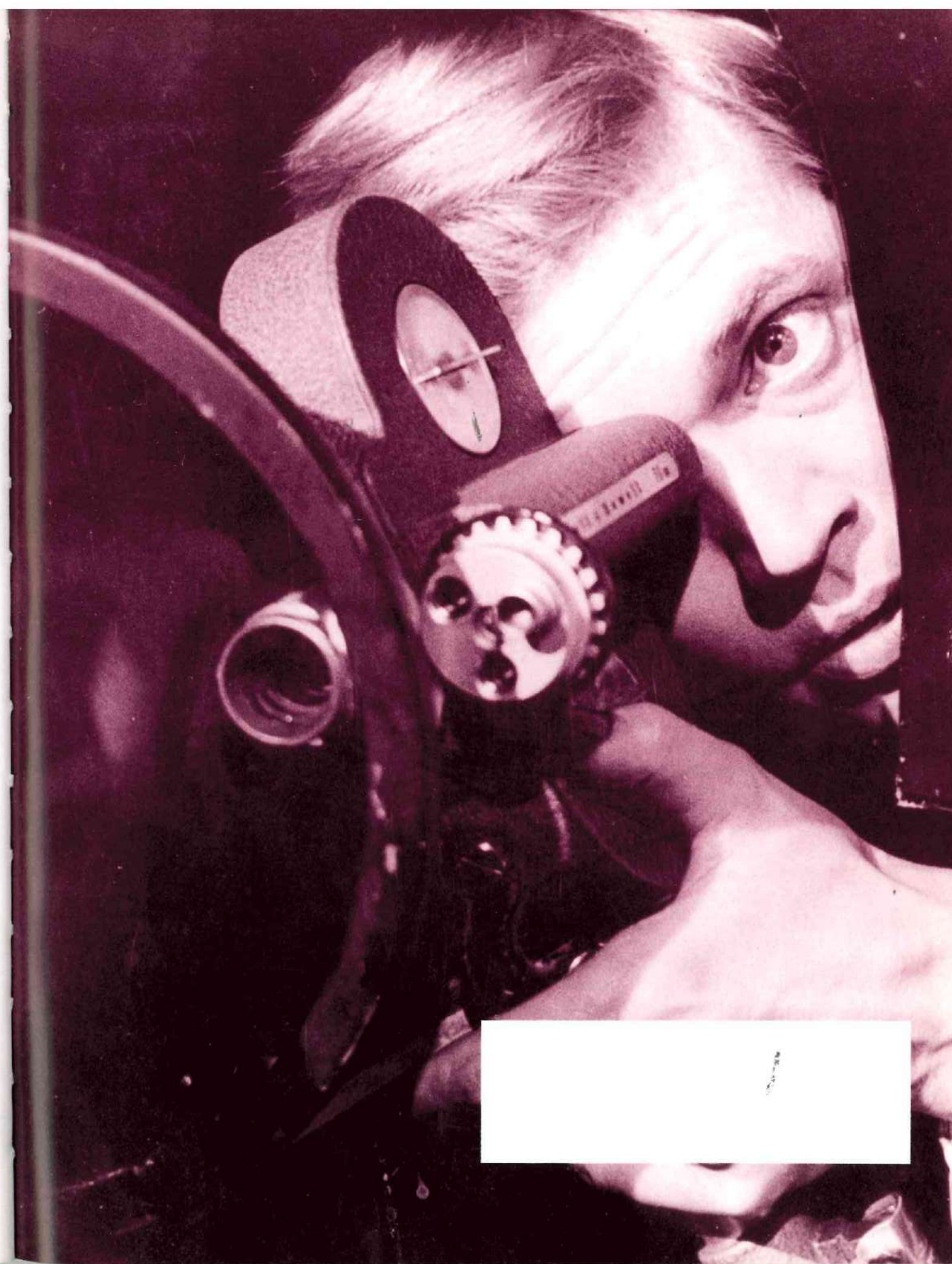
In the beginning, there was the secret, and this was the era of the game of appearances. Then there was inhibition, and this was the era of the depths. Finally there was obscenity, the era of a universe devoid of both appearances and depth; a transparent universe. A white obscenity. Here everything rises to the surface but there are no secrets left in such superficial things. What was kept secret, what did not exist, even, was expelled forcefully into 'reality', 'represented' beyond all necessity and plausibility.

....In order for something to have meaning, it needs a setting. For a setting to exist an illusion is required, the tiniest illusion, the tiniest shift of the imagination, the tiniest challenge of reality sufficient to transport you, to seduce you or to revolt you. In the absence of this specifically aesthetic, mythic or ludic dimension there cannot even be a political setting against which events can happen.

....Today there is no longer any transcendence, merely the more imminent surface of operations in progress; the smooth, operational surface of communication. From the Faustian, Promethean period of production and consumption there follows the protean era of the network. From the narcissistic, protean era follows the era of connection, contiguity, feed-back and generalised interface. In the television image the entire universe and our own bodies become control monitors.

....We are no longer taking part in the drama of alienation but are in an ecstasy of communication. Alienating - the private universe was certainly this, in that it set one apart from others, but it also reaped the symbolic benefit of alienation, which is that 'otherness' can be manipulated for good or for bad. We have been living in a society of consumption where alienation is pre-eminent, as it was in the society of the 'spectacle'. But spectacle, indeed, is still spectacle; it is can never be obscene, for obscenity starts where the stage disappears, where everything becomes inexorably transparent.

Jean Baudrillard
Les Stratégies fatales,
(Ed. Grasset)



TRUTH IS STRANGER THAN FICTION

Hilary Gresty

The unrelenting power of the photographic image to corrupt time, to protect itself against its own loss within the wastes of the forgotten and to plunder the depths of the "private" was all too poignantly brought to mind by the high profile media coverage of the funerals of the young victims of a recent IRA bombing. Aside each coffin stood framed portrait photographs, definitive moments of lives now doubly removed from the progression of time. Recorded and transmitted by cameras from around the world, they invited us to share publicly in personal loss, to know these children through their images, through their absence.

The Polish artist Ania Bien writes of her work, *Hotel Polen*, 1987: "By using elements, some of which are from my own history, I attempt to make the viewer see something, remember something, and reflect upon something that happened not once, but which happens again and again, today as well as yesterday."¹ The work, a set of miscellaneous images - portraits, landscapes, objects - with no logical sequence, no pre-given format or

unifying scale weaves a narrative, which although it on one level concerns the artist's personal history as a Polish Jew, is also dependent upon each viewer "bringing his [*sic*] own experience to bear upon the story" and so to reflection beyond any single interpretation or historical event. The denial of a singular History, a structured and factual account of the past in favour of acknowledgement that fact and fiction are not in exclusive opposition is one of the underlying premises of the work in this exhibition, which suggests the possibility of many different stories. To coin a phrase "truth is stranger than fiction", not *truer*, not more *factual* but just *stranger*. History with a small h, history as story telling, history before the spawning of the industrial age with its grounding in Enlightenment and Rationality, ideals of progress and modernity and the invention of photography which enabled its achievements to be both revealed and recorded, knew many truths.

The photograph has a very special place in our daily lives. It is well recounted that many primitive peoples feared the photograph for its

¹ Ania Bien, statement in *Outer space: 8 photo video installations*, London: South Bank Centre, 1991, p.13



Tania Mouraud

Made in Palace
1981
Installation view

potential to steal a part of themselves; likewise we treasure photographs of those we have lost or are far away, fearful to keep a fragment of their being.

We use the click of the camera to record for posterity occasions of importance, structuring through our choices our private histories, our particular truths. We cannot possess and preserve the moment but we can trap the image. Photography is characterised by an actual contiguity or connection in the world, to use a term from CS Pierce's semiotics, it is *indexical*. That is, the image of a photograph is the direct result of a chemical reaction when the film is exposed to light, similarly lightning is the *index* of a storm. It is this contiguity, this freezing of a physical event, encapsulation of a past moment that is so singularly distinctive and attributes to the photograph the duplicity of being at once dependent upon what *was there* and at the same time conditional upon its absence.² Thus a photograph, like death depends upon the concept that something that *was*, is no longer. It provides a more accurate mirror of our own 'reality', of the disjunctions and fragmentation of time, than that which we carry with us from day to day. Yet it is this very knot with 'reality' with a particular physical state that is also the photograph's undoing, for hand in hand goes a shaky, misplaced claim to veracity and a pretence to record and provide evidence of a reality which can all too often be misrepresented and abused as *the one and only reality*, the depth behind the surface. Pierce employs two further terms of relationship between the signifier, in this case the photograph and its referent: the *iconic*, that of similarity and the *symbolic*. The symbolic is the relationship conferred by social convention, the codes of framing, cropping, choice of content etc. to which the image is subjected by the photographer. The supposed 'veracity' of the photograph is commonly exploited at the expense of the symbolic to reinforce and

confirm existing ideologies, to structure the public world and suppress records in the nineteenth century, to contemporary celebratory photographs of family anniversaries and gatherings, identities have been cast to conform with the prevalent political and cultural ideology.

The critical discourses of postmodernism have revealed the fragility of representation. The concepts of a unified presence a totality or fixed identity of which the photograph is by implication the absence, have all been dispelled to leave images that only refer to other images, signs that only refer to other signs. The work in this exhibition disturbs, disrupts and shifts the given parameters of meaning, posing instead deferral and layering. Roland Barthes writes in *Camera Lucida*, a treatise which explores the photograph's intrinsic relationship with death, that his "private life" is nothing but that zone of space, of time where I am not an image, an object"³

In many different ways the artists here assert the possibility of the individual, of the viewer and the viewed as subject rather than object and allow the space for many truths, for many private readings. They proclaim the photograph not so much as representation but as one term amongst many within the complexity and richness of storytelling. They defy the inscriptions of History and the surface of the photograph becomes a threshold beyond which there are many possibilities.

² Roland Barthes describes the "that-has-been" as "the very essence, the noeme of Photography". *Camera Lucida*, New York: Hill and Wang, 1983, p.76/77.

³ Barthes *op.cit.*, p.15



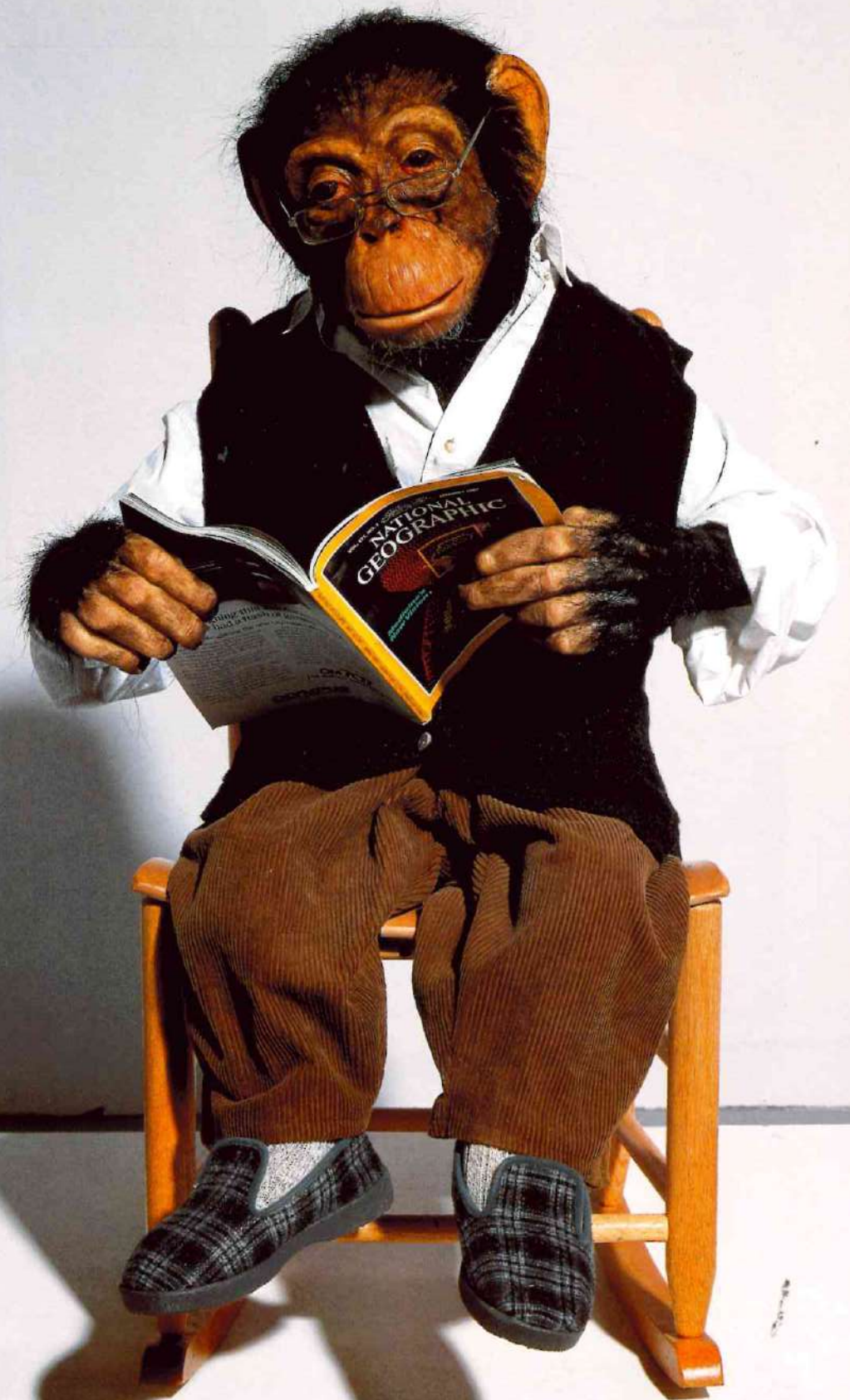
Edwin Janssen

Monkey Business

Monkey Business will be visualized through the use and means of different media. Sculptures, paintings, drawings, videos, photos and text constitute a large installation. The sculptures are three dimensional, realistic dressed monkeys. A variety of postcards will serve as an example. One of the sculptures will be a monkey dressed as an artist. During the show paintings of his hand will be exhibited. Drawings of young chimpanzees are to be seen, difficult to distinguish of the work of young children. Work is in progress on a video with commercials and fragments of films and tv-programs in which a dressed monkey plays the key part.

Large black & white photos will be combined with texts and shown on the walls. We will try to obtain some original paintings in consignment during the show.

Monkey Business will extend itself outside the confinement of the exhibition space. The *Monkey Business* masterplan could feature a magazine, commercials and even billboards. These forms of presentation, used by the advertisement-agencies are essentially linked to the project. In cooperation with the third parties *Monkey Business* generates editions ceramic plates, silkscreens, posters. In this way *Monkey Business* will be made accessible to the general public (Art for All, Gilbert & George).
Courtesy Galerie Apunto Amsterdam



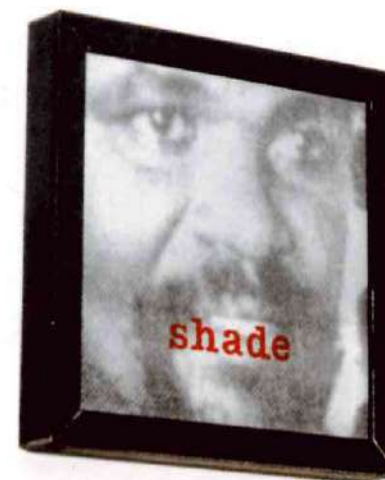


Olivier Zabat

Untitled
1993
Acrylic-Photograph
100 x 88 cm

Ania Bien

Amnesty 1991
Detail
The work *Amnesty 1991* (in Memoriam Villem Flusser) is based on the publication of Amnesty International *No More Excuses*, which was prepared for the occasion of its thirtieth anniversary. The work uses portraits of thirty political prisoners, who symbolise the thirty years of Amnesty's activities on their behalf. Cast iron frames, reminiscent of prison windows, drive home the loss of freedom and movement. To catch portrait the artist has joined a single word, as homage fitting the life of the particular prisoner, word such as dignity, health, memory, bond, light. The words are a symbol for the dialogue between the viewer and the imprisoned, words which can bring awareness to the viewer, solace and support to the prisoner. The injustice and its consequences which are perpetrated daily are brought home to us in this work. The words remind us of the quest for freedom and our responsibility towards "the other".





NOT FEARFUL OF LIBERTÉ
 ORPHEUS TURNS AROUND
 FOR COMPLETION
 ACCOMPLISHMENT STEP BY STEP
 LONGING FOR DEATH NO MAS

NO QUEST, ASK HERE

SCRUTINIZE AS A SIMPLE OPTION
 AS LIFE APPEARS (TO BE) A
 FAILURE TO DIE FROM POISON
 OR WEAPONS VITA POST
 MORTEM DELIVER PONDER WAYS
 TO MOVE ON FROM HERE WITH
 NO DIRECTION IN MIND

Jochen Gerz

No Quest
 1990
 Courtesy Galerie
 Crousel Kobelin / Bama
 Photograph: Philippe Chardon



Loodwicks Press Images

From the series:
First Flight Photographs
From Hemingway's study
Collection of the
Henry Luce Museum

Los Angeles
1953

Henry Luce, American magazine publisher gave Hemingway the First Flight Trophy after he had received the Pulitzer Prize for his short heroic novel *The Old Man and the Sea*.

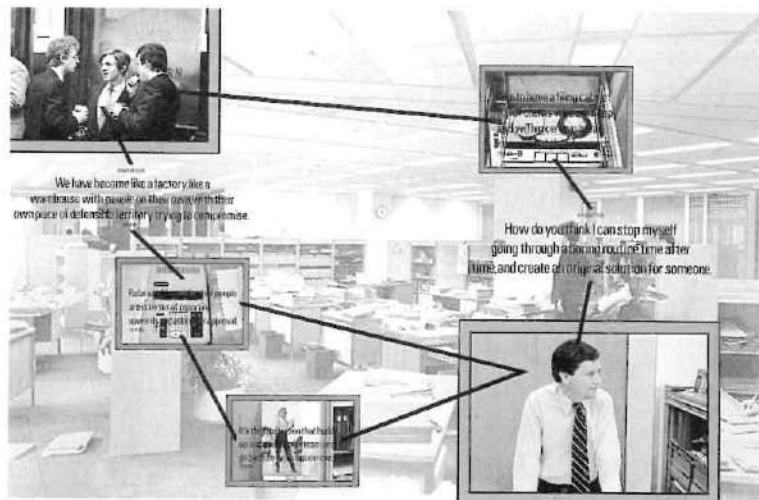
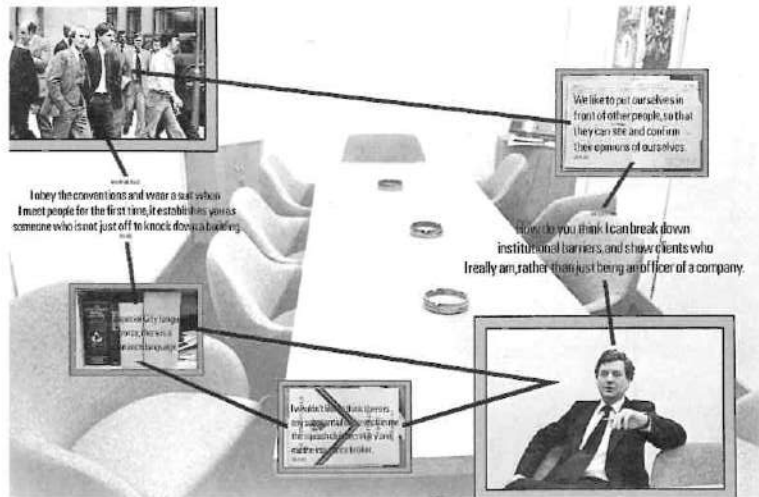
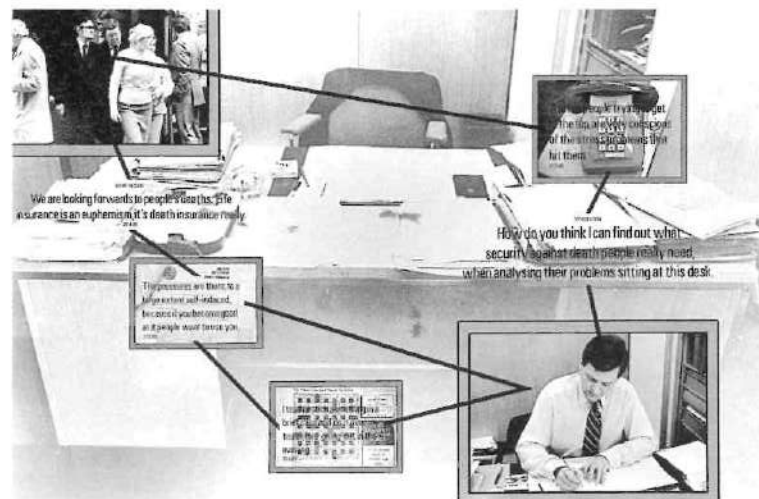


Jan Henderikse

War
1992

Henderikse shamelessly uses whatever materials come his way. The originality of his work lies in its method: serial composition and his presentation of slices of reality without further comment. Searching for his materials amongst the cast-off and the coincidental, he long preferred the relics of "small" human needs. In his more recent works, however, he has occupied himself more with the threatening aspects of world events.

Courtesy Gallery Apunto, Amsterdam



Stephen Willats

Looking at it from the Inside. It's Death Insurance Really
1980

Photographic prints, photographic dye, Letraset text, gouache, ink on card

'Life Insurance' is a totally artificial creation of the economic and ideological fabric of our society. It presents itself as an established need in our perceptions of how we should safeguard wealth against death. In the relationship between client and broker there are two discreet worlds, and while the former is subject to a conforming pressure from the life insurance business, so in turn is the broker within the confined context in which he works and the network of colleagues with whom his daily process of work is undertaken. The office environment and the special languages and behaviours that are extant there help create a distance, the process of work being established as a desk bound process where relationships with the external world of the client are formalised through set meetings. The isolation of the professional is given a further boost through intermediary agents such as the telephone, letters, manner of dress etc., all of which psychologically buffer the inner world of the office from the external world of the client. The professional is not only physically fixed behind his desk, but is also socially and psychologically located there too, locked into his deterministic process of work.

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