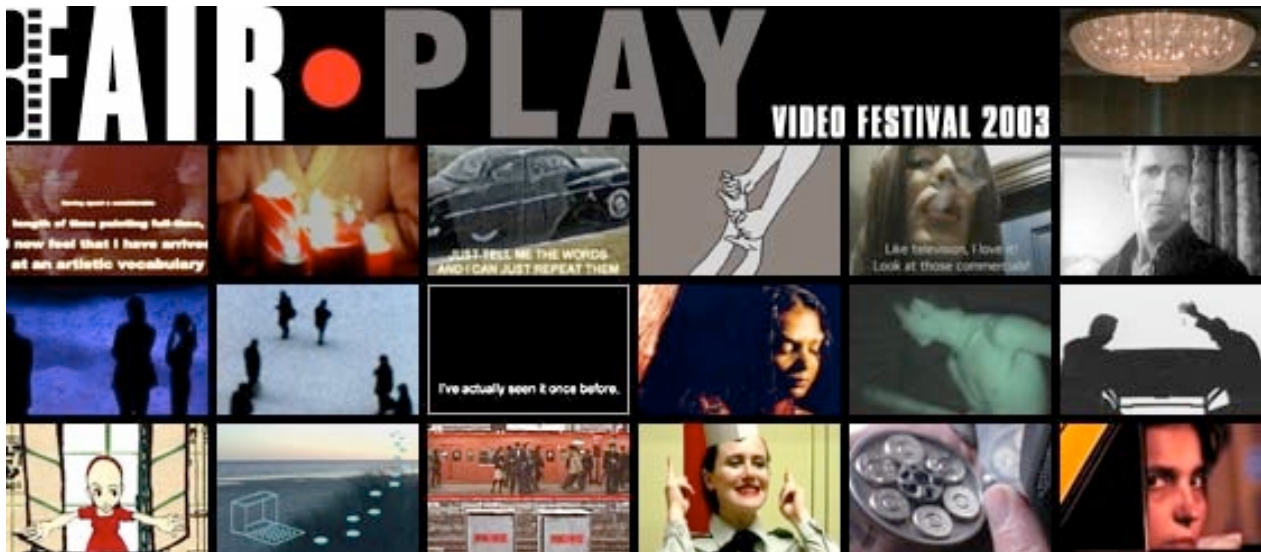


“FAIR-PLAY Video Festival 2003”

from 16th of June to 23rd of August 2003



“FAIR-PLAY” will be shown as an exhibition series, which will be held between the 16th of June and the 23rd of August in the PLAY gallery in Berlin.

PLAY Gallery for Still and Motion Pictures is a gallery and a showroom for art projects based in Berlin focusing on the relationship between film, video and art. The main goal of our gallery is to fascinate and stimulate visitors with new visual languages and narratives that represent an aesthetical and intellectual alternative to the flood of images transmitted by traditional media and advertising. To do it, we invite artists, curators and film-makers to submit proposals aimed specifically at Play space. The organization of workshops - in co-operation with universities and academies - fosters the definition of new ways to analyse contemporary art and the way it is experienced. In this very context, we screen the best works coming from festivals and ask experts to provide introductions and comments.

While working on the strategy for this new venture, we knew we would have used a non-traditional approach in showing artists' projects. The ideas and works we have been exposed to had a strong impact on our thoughts, influencing the way we consider our role and responsibility in the cultural field of our choice.

When we developed the idea of producing a public screening of 19 works by young or emerging international artists dealing with video-art, film and animation, we asked 8 curators and experts we believe have a big relevance in these fields to present us with their choice.

Ellen Pau (HK), Francesco Manacorda (GB), Kathrin Becker (Germany), Leng Lin (China), Michael Darling (USA), Michelle Maccarone (USA), Milovan Farronato (Italy), Ombretta Agro (USA).

Every curator invited different artists to send their most recent video and film work to the gallery. More than fifty artists responded. We screened over 170 videos, starting a process that eventually led us to recon-



“FAIR-PLAY Video Festival 2003”

from 16th of June to 23rd of August 2003

sider our way of evaluating art. We watched all works from the beginning to the end, enjoying the diversity and individuality of all projects. Some documented performative elements while, in others, artists talked about themselves and their work. All had different editing styles and narrative structures. We learned a lot about the impact of sound in general and about the human voice in particular: singing, telling stories or shouting. We learned about the driving force of those emotional moments that can mirror changes at personal, social and environmental level. We learned about the transformation of typography, graphic design and animation in a different context. We witnessed subjective attitudes and highly conceptual approaches. Everything we experienced will be written down and available for visitors.

The most striking sensation was feeling an incessant tension between us - as viewers - and the artists' subjective, different visual languages. After screening so many videos we remembered some while others vanished from memory. We valued the production of new, original images rather than the use of found footage, with the exception of those works where the use of ready-made footage or image-bank material was appropriate and conceptually consistent. After two months of deep research we came across 19 artists who stand out in our memory and 19 works we found of outstanding quality.

The selected artists are: Jón Saemundur Auðrson (Iceland), Vesna Bukovec (Slovenia), Cacciagrilli (Italy), Nuno Cera (Portugal), Shahram Entekhabi (Iran), Wu Ershan (China), Jonah Freeman (USA), GUP-py (Japan), Debora Hirsch (Brasil), Sayaka Kasahara & Kenji Kamoshida (Japan), Zhao Liang (China), Cecilia Lundqvist (Sweden), Johannes Maier (Germany), Chiara Pirito (Italy), Margaret Salmon (UK), Matt Saunders (USA), Nicolás Serrano (Spain), Stella So (HK), Gina Tornatore (Australia).

Our research is of course a very subjective and personal one, but we believe that undertaking projects like this we will develop our own 'learning by seeing' process. Now we can't wait to see the reaction of the public and to receive feedback on the selected material.

We wanted to create a festival situation, with a jury that would teach us - through their arguments, criteria and experience - a more objective way of defining what 'excellence' in art is. We believe that our work in 'learning in progress' and we think that experts can help us to understand why we like something in more analytical terms. Therefore we invited 8 experts we believe are exceptionally experienced in the field of video-art and film. We wanted a new generation of experts because we believe in their future and we are sure they will have an impact on future developments.

We nominated: Ahu Antmen (Turkey), Angelika Richter (Germany), Charlotte Mailler (Switzerland), Edgar Schmitz (UK), Heike Munder (Switzerland), Michael Darling (USA), Moser&Schwinger (Switzerland), Patrick Huber (Switzerland).

The jury consists of scientists, curators, academics and artists. We will have no say during the jury meeting, but will be there to listen and learn. The jury will award a first prize and a second prize. The first prize will be the a solo exhibition in 2004 at PLAY gallery for still and motion pictures in Berlin and the publication of a book by Fine Arts Unternehmen books. The second prize will be a solo exhibition in 2004 at PLAY gallery for still and motion pictures.