

**Benjamin Ramírez Pérez**

Selected Works

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## Summer Heat An Early Frost

Installation. Inkjet-Prints, Wood, HD Video/16mm Film (16:9, color, stereo, 14 min), 2020.

The video and installation SUMMER HEAT AN EARLY FROST (2020) originated in a research at the Sexual Representation Collection of the University of Toronto, which stores a collection of gay and queer porn magazines from the 80s and 90s that have been partly censored by custom officials.

Employing processes of subjective as well as algorithmic selection and censorship, the archive is connected to a VHS Tape of the first mainstream film about the AIDS crisis and a lecture on digital infrastructures in the porn industry. Theories of Film montage and digital interface design are examined for their potential of regulating desire through algorithmic mediation in order to softly persuade viewers into continuing to search for an “imagined perfect image.”

In Cooperation with:

Adelheid Heftberger (Filmhistorikerin, Brandenburgisches Zentrums für Medienwissenschaften), Patrick Keilty (Faculty of Information/Technoscience Research Unit, University of Toronto)

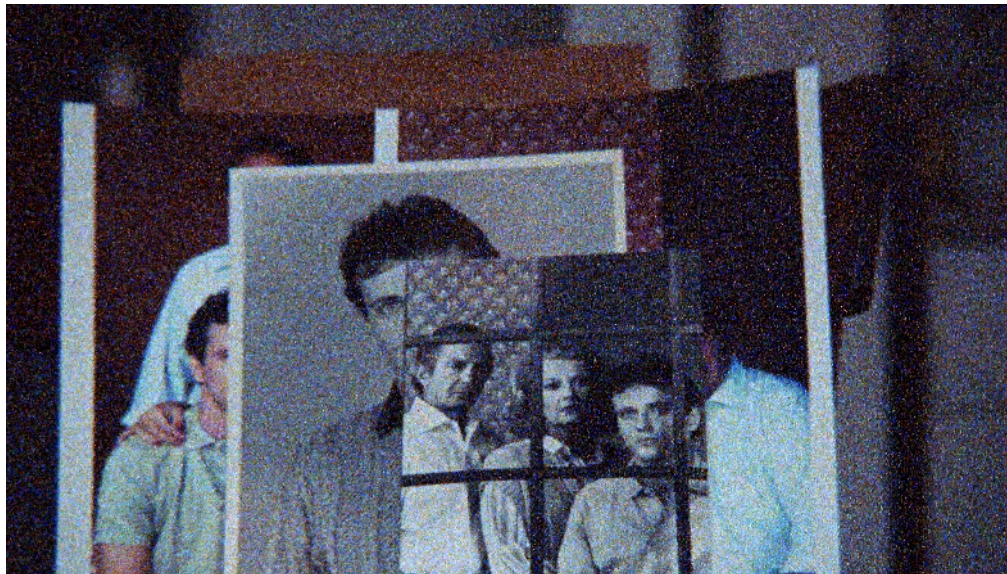
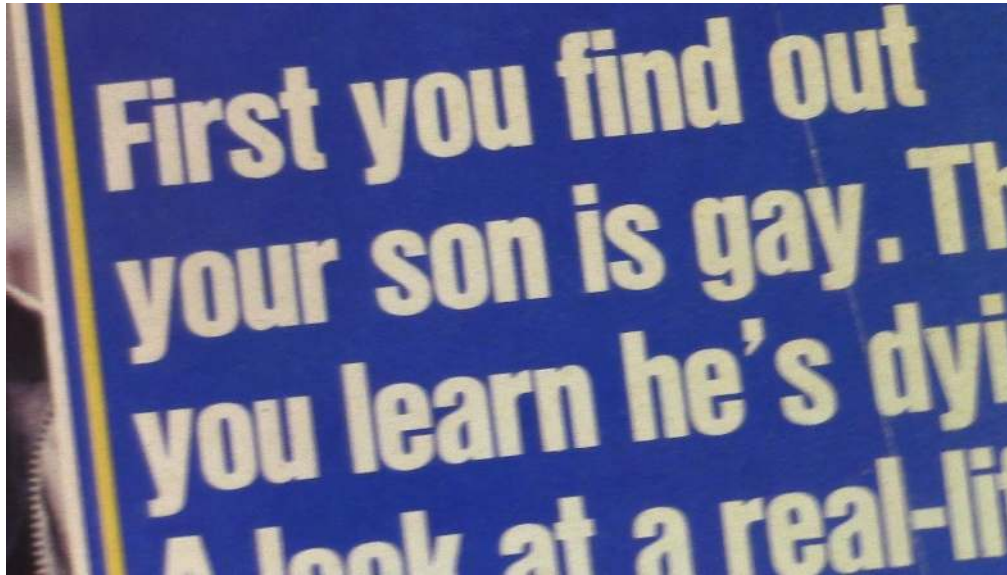
Online Preview on request:

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Installation View:

Summer Heat An Early Frost, Galerie Markus Lüttgen, Düsseldorf, DE, 2020





Created based on research conducted during a 2018 residency in Toronto, Canada, these works by Benjamin Ramírez Pérez (born 1988) combine the narrative structures of film, documentation, photography, cinematographic staging, and interview into a collage on the organizational principles of our perception. It does so via a visual interpretation that does not purely use montage to address our ideas on film and the moving image and which rather, in a collision of images, dissolves montage's customary boundaries between narrators, protagonists, and historic fact. The structures that emerge in Ramírez Pérez's filmic and photographic works also make visible and legible a further, unconscious subtext hidden within the structures of the film materials used—in the associative world of their in-between spaces and their levels of meaning.

Observant, the component parts of the film fit into and around each other in a constantly changing pattern. They do so with almost analytical precision and a focus on the tangible, as with the grid of a frame visible at the start and whose structural echo is likewise transferred into the spatial interventions made by the exhibition; a multiple and holistic concept whose levels mesh both textually and physically into a dense network. Within this, constantly renewed and at times dissonant image and film sequences based only on associative outlines respond to questions posed on thematic interrelations and narrative realignments. The film's collage is not the only outcome of this; it also makes manifest a directly linguistic quality in the newly revealed images, a poetics that unfolds visually among the structured surfaces of narration, recording, and staging.

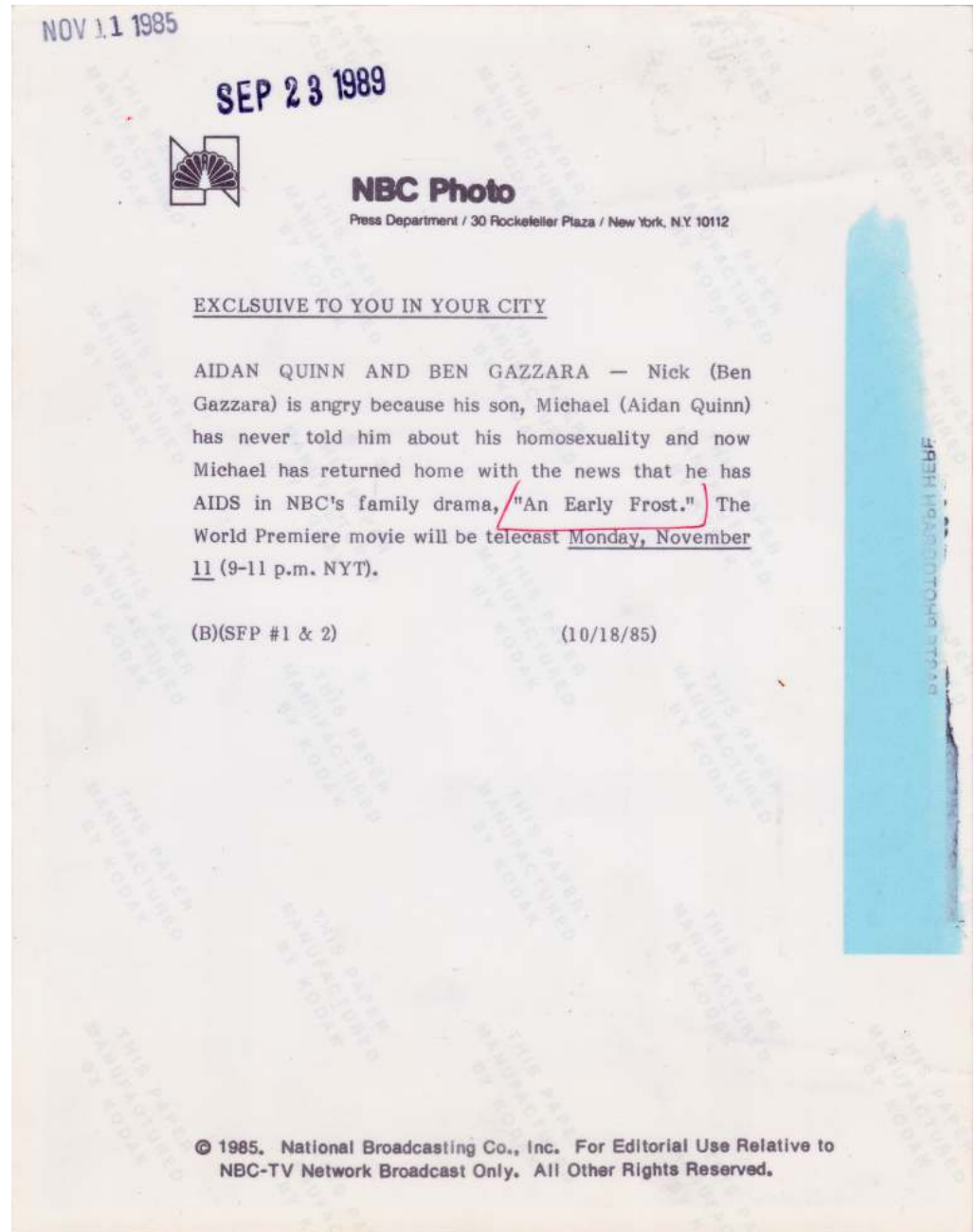
Similar to a stream of consciousness formed of constantly expanding recordings that proceed as the common denominator between a partially sensory, partially mechanically narrative voice and a screen text that fluctuates in intervals between narration, commentary, and subtitle, the image flow Ramírez Pérez initiates comprises a number of visual resources: arranged rhythmically behind an archival setup of vintage pornographic magazines from the University of Toronto's Sexual Representation Collection, the marked text passages on film theory are taken from a collection of essays by Russian formalists. A multi-layered and narrative complement is present in the form of excerpts from "An Early Frost" (1985)—the first mainstream TV feature film to address the emerging public, social, and political crisis surrounding the spread of HIV/AIDS as part of the everyday life of a US family. Quietly and with an almost static austerity, set pieces from early silent films of the 1920s such as those from Jean Epstein and Dziga Vertov are superimposed

across from sexually fetishized sequences of self-produced montages from tooth and mouth recordings, only to be expanded upon in the form of a new cut expounding on the pornographic industry's digital infrastructure.

Massed like a cluster of findings from a multimedia, multi-thematic search for the internal logics of filmic and documentary mechanisms of production and affect—whose focus potentially also stretches to include the representation and repression of queer desire, longing, and craving—the seamless montage within Benjamin Ramírez Pérez's work opens up a different access to images and their language; a language whose essence is concealed in the multiplicity of the information gathered and which, transferred via data-mining technology into the artistic process of the film, facilitates the recognition of patterns of regularity and of hidden interrelations. As in the prints shown on the rear of photographic promotional materials for "An Early Frost," another understanding of narrative emerges here in sublime manner, located between markings, summaries, and notes. This is part of both the general and the detail image presented and remains unseen, with its layers however reminding us—via the inherent processes of reference, memory, and making-visible—of our own immersion in cinematic images.

"It's about the relationship between the object, the viewer, and the camera. How you know, how the camera functions in this triangle to reveal almost like another layer of truth about this object"—this text fragment, one of several here inserted, thus does not only name the fundamental features of cinematic staging. It also articulates the unspoken truths that, within Benjamin Ramírez Pérez's presentation, poetically unfold the structures of our own perception via the filmic nuances of censorship, documentation, and analysis; controlled by algorithmic systems, such as subjective selection, that disguise themselves as principles of order hidden behind familiar on-screen images and which never truly reveal to us the image seen.

– Philipp Fernandes do Brito









## Sun Surface

HD Video and 16mm Film transferred to HD Video,  
16:9, color, stereo, 25 min, 2020.

Produced with Support from CNAP (FR), Mondriaan  
Fonds (NL) & Kunststiftung NRW (DE)

A Science Fiction film set in Ordos, inner Mogolia,  
in the Chinese Gansu Desert, as well as in Shanghai,  
SUN SURFACE merges various narrative and  
thematic threads, linking aesthetic and sociopolitical  
discourses around the concept of accelerationism and  
its connection to solar energy and the image of the sun.

### Credits:

Co-Directed with: Vincent Ceraudo; DoP: Victor Zébo,  
Production Assistant: Yu Gu; Producer: Bertrand  
Scalabre - Nuit Blanche Productions, Paris

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## Despair

HD Video and 16mm Film transferred to HD Video,  
16:9, color, stereo, 22 min, 2018.

Produced with Support from Dommering Foundation

Taking Rainer Werner Fassbinder's film of the same title from 1977 as its starting point and drawing on various complementary sources, DESPAIR explores the theme of the cinematic double and raises questions of identity, identification and alienation alongside an inquiry into the political and cultural legacies of the German Autumn.

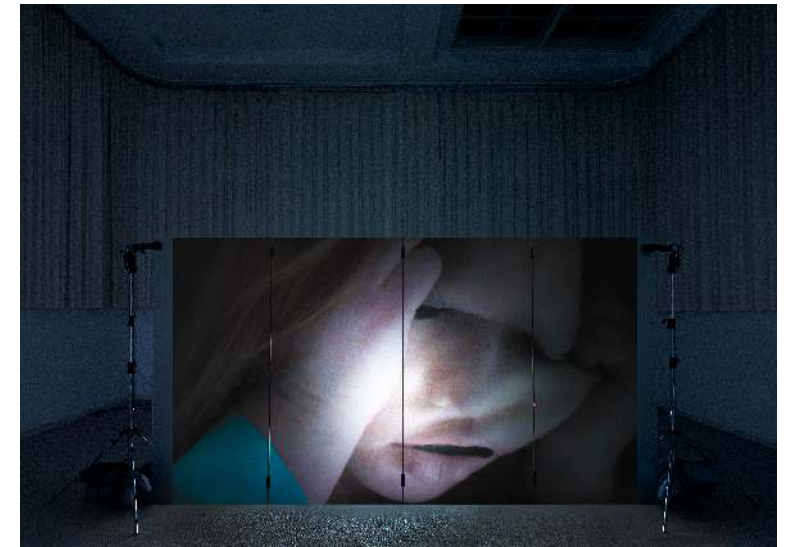
### Credits:

Performance: Alexander Pascal Forré, Nils Herzogenrath, Clarissa Kopanitsak, Deborah Kopanitsak, Johannes Wohnseifer; DoP: Paul Faltz; Additional Camera: Ian Purnell; Artistic Assistance: Stefan Ramírez Pérez; Key Grip & Gaffer: Paul Reinholz; Camera Assistance: Stephanie Englert; Sound Recording: Tim Gorinski; Color Grading: Fabiana Cardalda

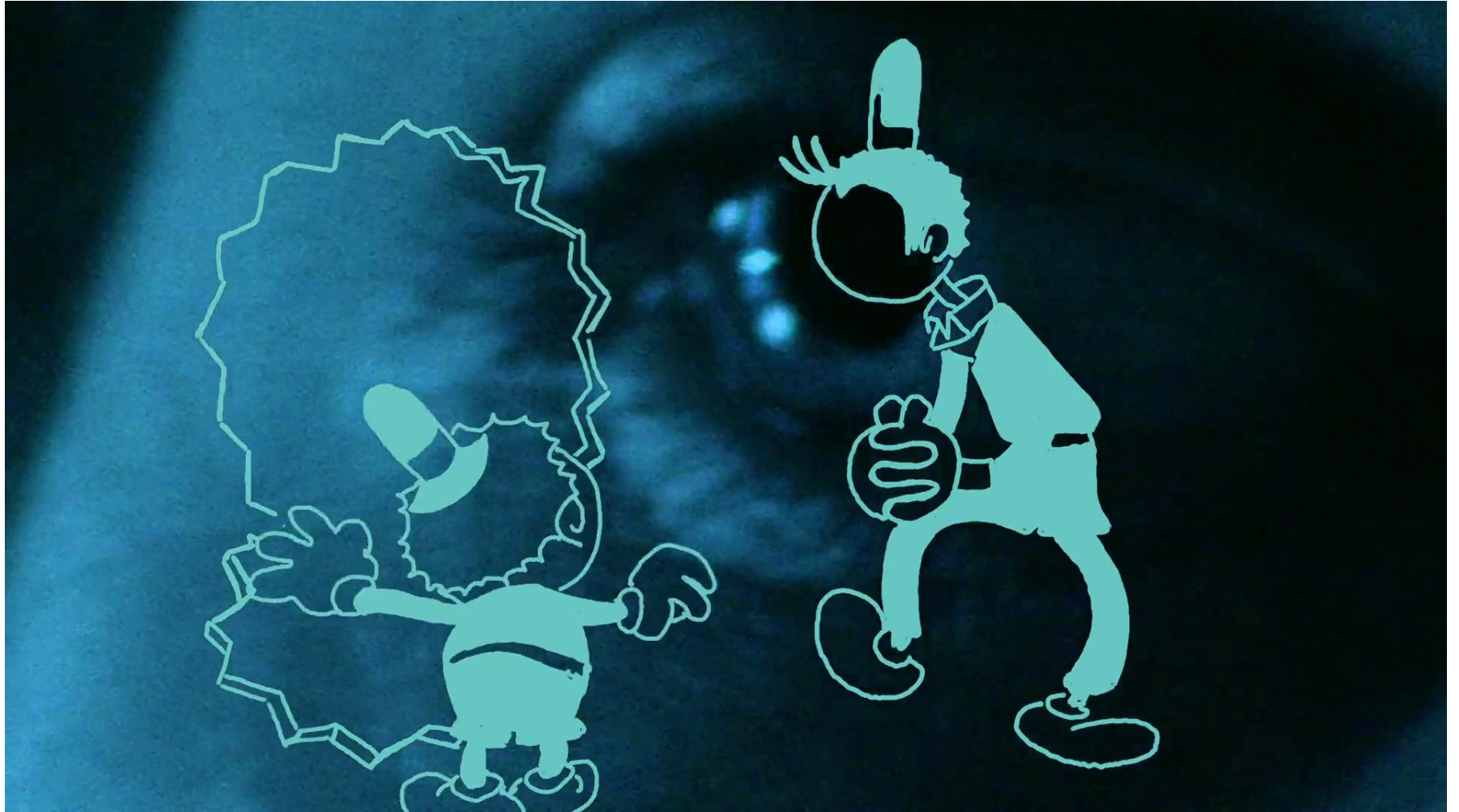
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### Installation View:

Good Morning Midnight, De Ateliers, Amsterdam, NL, 2018











Installation View:  
Good Morning Midnight, De Ateliers, Amsterdam,  
NL, 2018





## Confluence

HD Video, 16:9, color, 5.1 or stereo, 21 min, 2018.

co-directed with Stefan Ramírez Pérez

CONFLUENCE centers around Serbian pop singer and former child star Doris Bizetić. In a mixture between pop and lecture performance Doris' biography is conflated with histories of architectures in Belgrade. As Doris recounts memories of her childhood in front of cameras and talks about war trauma, her biography is linked to the history of Belgrade's CK Tower, in which her life stages as well as the transitions of political systems in Serbia are mirrored.

### Credits:

Starring: Doris Bizetić; DoP: Mahmoud Belakhel; Additional Camera: Ian Purnell; Assistant Director: Ale Bachlechner; Key Grip & Gaffer: Martin Paret; Camera Assistance: Stephanie Englert; Sound Recording: Jonathan Kastl; Sound Design: Tim Gorinski; Sound Mix: Daniel Paulmann; VFX: Luca Kawe & Patrick Buhr; Color Grading: Fabiana Cardalda

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### Installation View:

FADE IN 2 : EXT. MODERNIST HOME – NIGHT.  
Museum of Contemporary Art, Belgrade, RS, 2017











Much concerned with the porous membrane that separates reality and fiction, the two films presented by Benjamin Ramírez Pérez in 'Good Morning Midnight' reflect on both the process of image making, and the way it is shaped by, and shapes, our relationship to the socio-political landscape. While on one level they respond to episodes from recent European history, they nevertheless speak to a set of contemporary concerns. In these works, identities – both individual and collective – are never fixed, and authenticity is always in doubt.

*Confluence* (2017/8, co-directed with Stefan Ramírez Pérez) centres on the Serbian former child star Doris Bizetić, who came to prominence in 1992, when at the age of seven she sung on a charity single for UNICEF, benefitting children orphaned by the Yugoslav wars. Now an adult, Doris continues to perform and release music, in which she subverts generic pop conventions with her purposefully DIY aesthetic, and disarming emotional directness. Making use of both staged and documentary scenes, *Confluence* draws a parallel between Doris' biography, and the history of Belgrade's Modernist CK Tower, a building that was originally designed as a Communist party HQ, played host to TV and radio stations under Slobodan Milošević, was destroyed during the NATO bombardment of the city in 1999, and has now been rebuilt as a shopping and commerce centre, under the new name of the Ušće (meaning 'confluence') Tower.

The second work in Ramírez Pérez's presentation, *Despair* (2018), takes as its starting point Vladimir Nabokov's 1936/65 novel of the same name, and its 1977/8 film adaption by Rainer Werner Fassbinder, which starred Dirk Bogarde as Hermann Hermann, a chocolate factory proprietor who, on meeting a vagrant whom he believes to be his doppelgänger, persuades him to swap identities. Having been troubled by a series of visions in which he floats free from his own body, Hermann's plan is to murder his double, collect on a life insurance policy, and escape what he calls 'this trap of identity' once and for all.

While Ramírez Pérez's film takes certain visual cues from Fassbinder's adaptation (its set design is echoed, for example, in the printed glass panels that both appear in the artist's work, and provide the surface on to which it is projected in the exhibition space), it also points to other cultural artefacts: cel animation, David Cronenberg's horror movie about twin gynecologists *Dead Ringers* (1987), the rubber mask disguises employed by secret agents in the American TV show *Mission: Impossible* (1966-73), and Fassbinder's contribution to Germany in Autumn (1978), an omnibus film in which a number of directors responded to the bloody end game of the far-left group, the Red Army Faction (RAF). Watching Ramírez Pérez's *Despair*, we might think of him as an archaeologist of sorts. Sinking a trench deep into recent history, he patiently notes the dense layering of its strata. Now and then, he locates something precious – an image, a mood, an unexpected chime – then brushes off its debris, and holds it up to the light

– Tom Morton, Catalogue Text: Good Morning Midnight.

## Embellishments

16mm Film transferred to HD Video, 16:9, color, stereo,  
8 min, 2016.

in collaboration with Liad Hussein Kantorowicz

Reenactments of cinematic strategies, images and fantasies tied to sex work and stage performance are layered on top of each other. They intertwine and form a new entity in a female drag performance referencing 1970s cinema, sex work activism and pop choreography, which was developed in collaboration with the performance artist Liad Hussein Kantorowicz.

### Credits:

Performance: Liad Hussein Kantorowicz; DoP: Marie Zahir ; Artistic Assistance: Stefan Ramírez Pérez; Focus Puller: Jule Cramer, Martin Paret; Key Grip: Chantal Bergemann; Gaffer: Mahmoud Belakhel; Lighting Technicians: Christian Kochmann, Martin Paret; Color Grading: Fabiana Cardalda

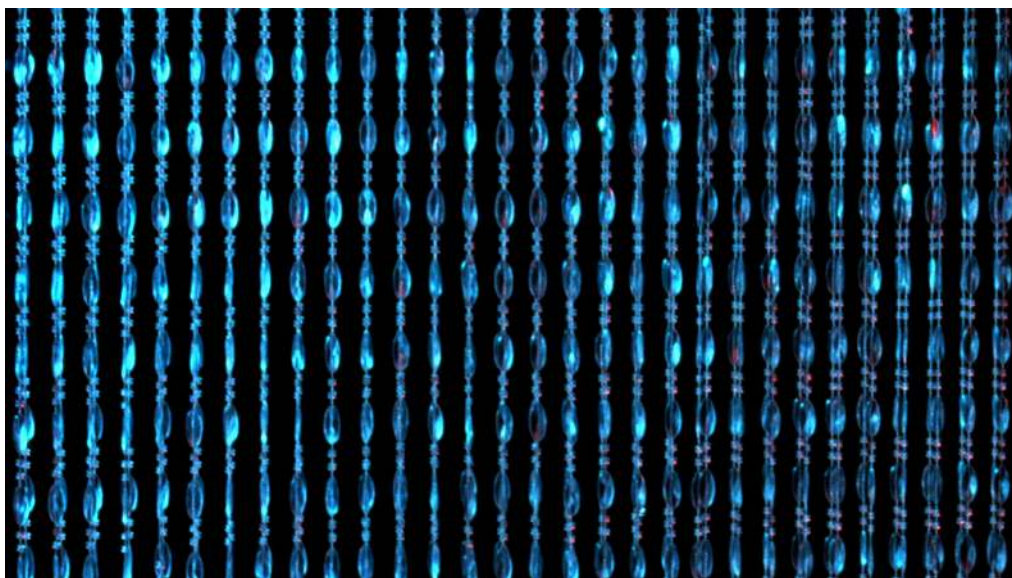
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Installation View:  
Videonale.16, Kunstmuseum Bonn, DE, 2017

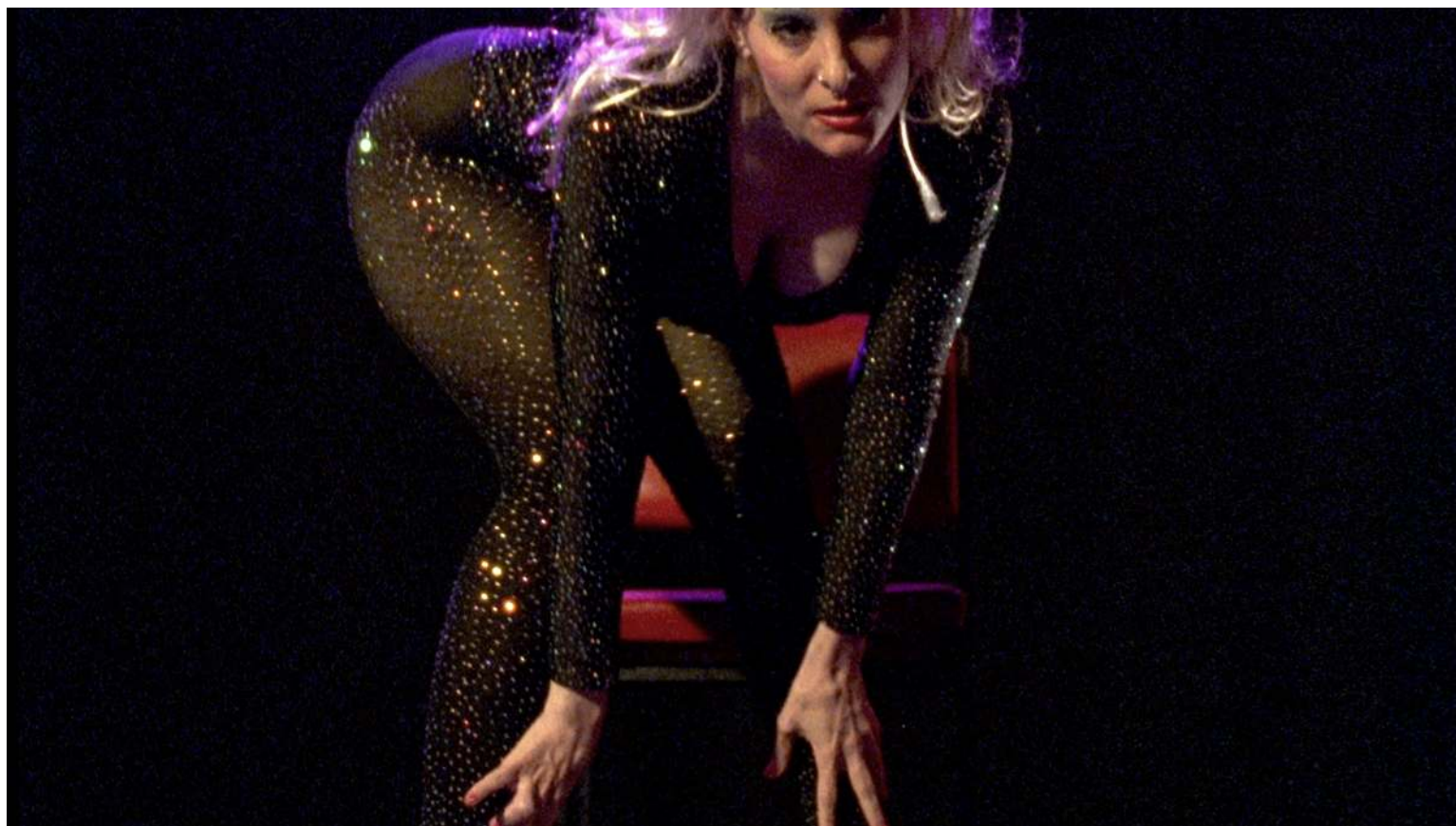












## Body Snatcher

16mm Film transferred to HD Video, 16:9, color, stereo,  
17 min, 2015/16.

"Body Snatcher" takes Barbara Loden's film "Wanda" (1970) and its title character, that seemingly passively navigates the world and refuses to function as expected, as a starting point for an abstract and associative narration about emptiness, failure, and identity construction. Conflating fragments from the film itself and new 16 mm material, a sort of parasitic science fiction remake of "Wanda" emerges - a layer of meaning that lies behind the film's plot and surface is imagined and constructed.

### Credits:

DoP: Claire Jahn; Artistic Assistance: Stefan Ramírez Pérez; Camera Assistance: Laurentia Genske; Steadicam Operator: Alexander Pauckner; Music: Tzeshi Lei; Sound Mix: Tim Gorisnki; Color Grading: Yannis Davidas

Supported by Lightcone Atelier 105 Video Postproduction Residency, Paris, FR

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### Installation View:

That's what I've been trying to tell you. I can't do it.  
artothek - Raum für junge Kunst, Cologne, DE, 2015











above:  
 Installation View: That's what I've been trying to tell  
 you. I can't do it. artothek - Raum für junge Kunst,  
 Cologne, DE, 2015

right:  
 Galaxie I, C-Print, Diasc, 120 x 90 cm





## **A Fire in My Brain that Separates Us**

HD-Video, 17 min, 4:3, color, 5.1 surround, 2015.

In an initially deserted room objects slowly begin to move; they are manipulated from the off-screen space, being pulled and dragged by strings, cables or the carpet. This is accompanied by superimposed subtitles, which consist of a collage of existing film dialogue taken from 'gaslighting' films: A text assemblage on seduction and betrayal unfolds in relation to signifiers and performative re-enactments of codes associated with classical cinema.

### **Credits:**

Performer: Ale Bachlechner, Kate Dervishi, Tzeshi Lei,  
DoP: Paul Faltz; Artistic Assistance: Stefan Ramírez Pérez; Camera Assistance & Lighting: Nora Daniels, Stephanie Englert, Felix Schon, Andreas Wißkirchen, Felix Zilles-Perels; Production Sound & Sound Design: Jonathan Kastl; Sound Mix: Jonathan Kastl, Ralf Schipke; Color Grading: Quimu Casalprim

Online Preview on request:  
[b.ramirez.perez@gmail.com](mailto:b.ramirez.perez@gmail.com)

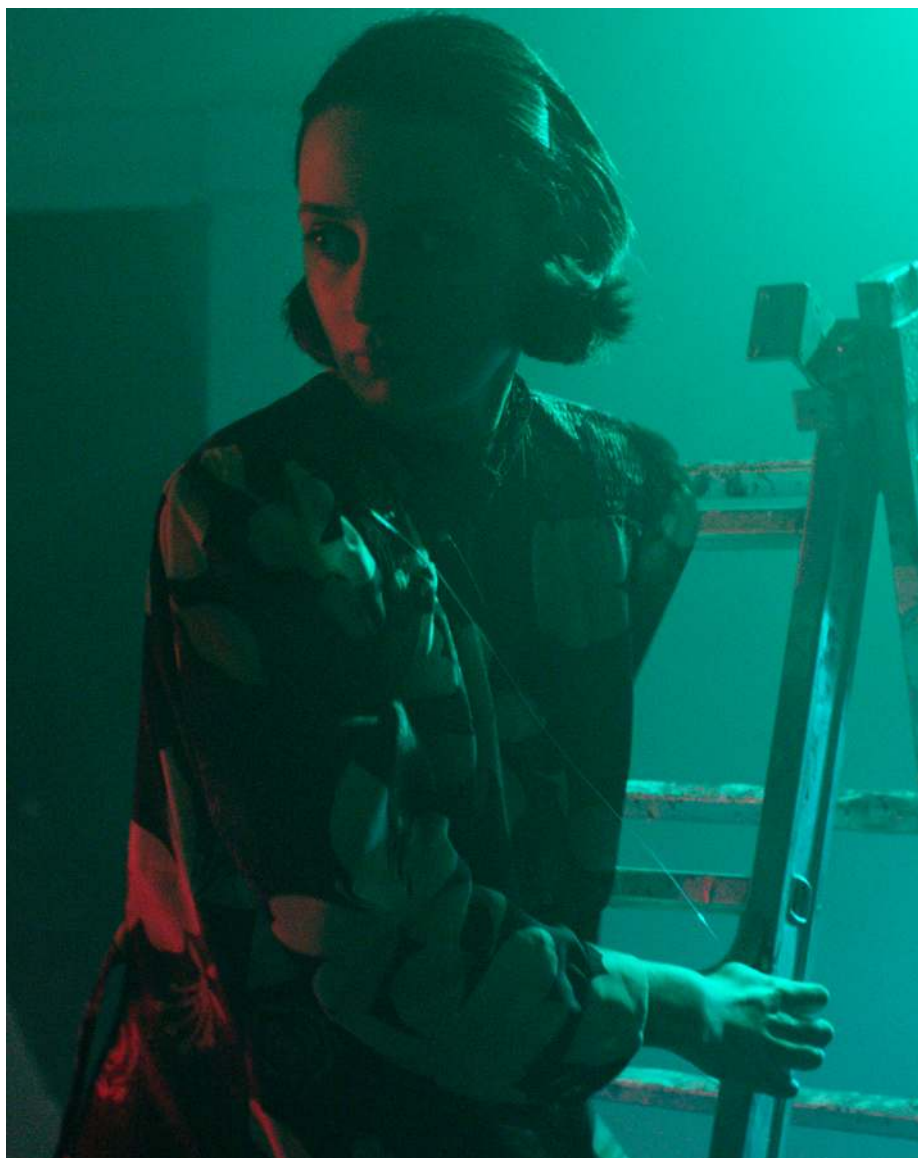
Installation View:  
New Talents Biennale, Cologne, DE, 2016













## CV

b. 1988  
DE

2016 – 2018 Residency & Fellowship, De Ateliers, Amsterdam, NL  
2015 – 2016 Research Assistant to Prof. Matthias Müller  
2015 Diploma with honours (Phil Collins, Matthias Müller, Stephanie Lauke)  
2009 – 2015 Academy of Media Arts Cologne, DE

### SELECTED DISTINCTIONS AND AWARDS

2020 Kunststiftung NRW – Sonderfonds  
2020 Research Scholarship, BBK Köln, DE  
2020 Artist in Residence - Rupert, Vilnius, LT  
2020 Kunststiftung NRW - Project Grant  
2020 Studio Stipend, City of Cologne, DE  
2019 LOOP DIscover Award Barcelona, ES - Finalist  
2019 Bucharest International Experimentel Film Festival, RO - Special Jury Mention  
2019 IKOB Feminist Art Prize - Special Mention  
2019 Berlinale Doc Station  
2019 Main Jury Award – Stuttgarter Filmwinter, DE  
2018 Goethe-LIFT Artist in Residence, Toronto, CA  
2018 Dommering Foundation – Production Grant, NL  
2018 Special Jury Mention – Int. Short Film Festival Hamburg, German Competition, DE  
2018 Special Jury Mention – Int. Competition Videoex, Zurich, CH  
2017 Main Award: Now&After, International Video Art Festival, Moscow, RU  
2016 Individual Stipend – Ministry for Family, Children, Youth Culture and Sport NRW  
2015 Chargesheimer Scholarship (for Media Arts) of the City of Cologne, DE  
2015 Lightcone Atelier 105 Video Postproduction Residency, Paris, FR  
2013 Artist in Residence at the Academic Film Center, Belgrade, RS  
2013 DAAD-Scholarship for Academic Exchange to Beirut, LB  
2013 Prize of the German Federal Association of Film Journalists 2013, DE

### SELECTED SCREENINGS (S) AND EXHIBITIONS (E)

2020

Summer Heat An Early Frost, Markus Lüttgen, Düsseldorf, DE (E, solo)  
Les Rencontres Internationales. HKW Berlin, DE (S)  
Skalvija, Vilnius, LT (S)  
Video Works, Ruhr Universität Bochum, DE (A)  
Les Rencontres Internationales. Grand Palais, Paris, FR (S)

2019

*LOOP Discover Award*, GlogauAIR, Berlin, DE (E)  
*ATHOME WITH 2*, Helsinki, FIN. curated by Magnús L. Kristinsson & Sini Pelkki (E)  
*Sehnsucht nach Sodom*, Fructa Space, Munich, DE. curated by Philipp Gufler (S)  
Bucharest International Experimentel Film Festival, International Competition, RO (S)  
Kurzfilm Festival Köln, DE (S)  
LOOP Discover Award, Antiga Fàbrica Estrella Damm, Barcelona, ES (E)  
IKOB Feminist Art Prize, IKOB, Eupen, BE (E)  
European Media Art Festival Osnabrück (EMAF), Int. Competition, DE (S)  
Julia Stoschek Collection Düsseldorf, DE (S)  
Internationale Kurzfilmwoche Regensburg, German Competition (S)  
Stuttgarter Filmwinter, Stuttgart, DE (S)

2018

Flensburger Kurzfilmtage, DE (S) – Main Jury Prize (Non-Fiction)  
Marler Videokunst-Preis, Skulpturenmuseum Glaskasten, Marl, DE (E)  
*Zeitgeist: Video Generation*. Alt. Space LOOP, Seoul, KOR. curated by Sun A Moon (E)  
20th Belo Horizonte International Short Film Festival, Belo Horizonte, BR (S)  
*Good Morning Midnight*. De Ateliers, Amsterdam, NL. curated by Tom Morton (E)  
Videoex, International Competition, Zurich, CH (S) – Jury Mention  
International Short Film Festival Hamburg, German Competition, DE (S) – Jury Mention  
International Short Film Festival Oberhausen, German Competition, DE (S)  
European Media Art Festival Osnabrück (EMAF), Int. Competition, DE (S)  
*Ghost Shopping*, Art Cologne, DE (E)

Visions du Réel, Opening Scenes, Nyon, CH (S)  
International Film Festival Rotterdam, NL (S)

2017

Let's See Where Were We? In the Pit of Despair. De Ateliers, Amsterdam, NL (Curation)  
FADE IN 2 : EXT. MODERNIST HOME – NIGHT. Museum of Contemporary Art, Belgrade, RS (E)  
Flashback '17. Now&After, International Video Art Festival, Moscow, RU (E)  
Les Rencontres Internationales. Haus der Kulturen der Welt, Berlin, DE (S)  
San Francisco Sex Worker Film and Arts Festival, San Francisco, USA (S)  
Then I Saw... Nothing. Kino der Kunst. Kunstraum München, DE(E)  
Les Rencontres Internationales. Gaité Lyrique, Paris, FR (S)  
Videonale.16, Kunstmuseum Bonn, DE (E)  
New Talents: Destination Kunsthaus NRW, Aachen, DE (E)  
29th MIX NYC Queer Experimental Film Festival, NYC, USA (S)

2016

National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., USA (S)  
Les Rencontres Internationales. Berlin/Paris, DE/FR (S)  
Where Are We? That Depends. Art Cologne, DE (E)  
Int. Kurzfilmtage Oberhausen, German Competition, DE (S)  
New Talents Biennale, Cologne, DE (E)  
Bonner Kunstverein, DE (Screening & Artist Talk)  
Capturing Dance. Galerie Patrick Ebensperger, Berlin, DE (E)  
Museum Folkwang, Essen, DE (S)  
Junge Kunst aus NRW. Kunsthalle Recklinghausen, DE (E)  
Arctic Moving Image And Film Festival, Harstad, NO (S)  
Now&After, International Video Art Festival, Moscow, RU (S) – 1st Prize

2015

Standing on the Shoulders of Giants. Pluriversale II, Cologne, DE (E)  
Edinburgh Int. Film Festival 2015, Black Box Shorts ,Edinburgh, UK (S)  
Toronto International Film Festival, Wavelengths CA (S)

Wie Wir Sehen, B3 Biennale des bewegten Bildes, Frankfurt, DE (S)

MIT European Short Film Festival, Boston, USA (S)

That's what I've been trying to tell you. I can't do it. artothek – Raum für junge Kunst, Cologne, DE (E, solo)

2014

European Media Art Festival Osnabrück (EMAF), Int. Competition, DE (S)  
Eden Was Never So Close. Art Cologne, DE (E)  
Full Saturation. Kunstpavilion München, DE (E)  
Kombi 2. Kunstquartier Bethanien, Berlin, DE (E)

2013

Festival del Film Locarno, Fuori Concorso, CH (S)  
X Apartments. Beirut, LD (Performance)  
My Eyes Hurt. Art Cologne, DE (E)

2010

Los Angeles Film Festival. Los Angeles, USA (S)

## SELECTED PUBLICATIONS & PRESS

2019 Marler Videokunst-Preis 2018, Exhibition Catalogue  
2018 FADE IN – NEW YORK, SWISS INSTITUTE / BELGRAD, MoCA – Catalogue. Ed. by Simon Castets & Karen Marta  
2018 Good Morning Midnight, Exhibition Catalogue  
2017 Vdeonale.16, Exhibition Catalogue  
2016 New Talents Biennale Cologne, Exhibition Catalogue  
2016 Kunstforum (Issue 242) – New Talents, Exhibition Review  
2016 Where Are We? That Depends. Exhibition Publication, Verlag der KHM.  
2013 “Moving Through the Colonial Architecture of Culture Tourism,” Elena P. Glasberg and Jasbir K. Puar. <http://www.warscapes.com>

## LECTURES & TALKS

- 2020 Teaching Position: Hochschule Düsseldorf, DE
- 2019 Artist Talk: École Offshore, Shanghai, CHN - invited by Paul Devautour
- 2018 Workshop: “Scripting, Smuggling, Suturing,” LIFT, Toronto, CA
- 2016 Artist Talk: Kunstverein Bonn, DE  
Panel Discussion: Documentations as Artistic Practice, Silent Green, Berlin, DE  
Artist Talk: Experimentalfilmforum, Academy of Media Arts Cologne, DE -  
invited by Matthias Müller