

Part Four of Many Parts Scenes from a Marriage

Neïl Beloufa, Ulises Carrión, Giovanni Giaretta, Ră di Martino, Raphael Montañez Ortiz, Manuel Saiz

Project: 07.12.2024 — 02.02.2025

Location: West in the former American Embassy, Lange Voorhout 102, The Hague

‘Scenes from a Marriage: a Love Story Between Film and Video’ explores the decades-long relationship between video and film, like two lovers who can neither live with nor without each other. Film, the grandmaster of moving images that has captivated audiences since the late 19th century, and video, the rebellious counterpart that emerged in the 1960s as an independent and socially critical medium, circle around each other, challenging and strengthening one another. At West, six works by video artists are presented, each engaging with their great love and rival.

The selection begins in the 1980s with Ulises Carrión’s ‘The Death of the Art Dealer’, which offers a fresh perspective on film through the lens of video. The artist replays ‘The Reckless Moment’ (1949) on a TV monitor via a VCR, turning the flat screen into a spatial experience by moving in sync with the camera movements in the film. Manuel Saiz’s ‘Specialized Technicians Required: Being Luis Porcar’ takes the viewer behind the scenes of film production in under two minutes, humorously questioning the role of the technician as the engine of cinematic illusion. Neïl Beloufa’s ‘Sans-titre’ delves deeper into the constructs of new realities, examining how film turns fiction into reality—and vice versa. Giovanni Giaretta’s ‘La casa (ostinato crescendo)’ adopts a meta-perspective, deconstructing and exploiting the codes of horror films to critically reflect on Hollywood’s dominant principles.

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Artists + title works:

Neïl Beloufa, Sans-titre, 2010

Ulises Carrión, The Death of the Art Dealer, 1982

Giovanni Giaretta, La casa (ostinato crescendo), 2018

Raphael Montañez Ortiz, The Kiss, 1986

Ră di Martino, Petite histoire des plateaux abandonnés, 2012

Manuel Saiz, Specialized Technicians Required: Being Luis Porcar, 2005

Biographies:

Neïl Beloufa was born in Paris in 1985. His video works focus on the fine line between fiction and reality. He sets up situations in which he explores a wide range of themes, from extraterrestrials to nationalism, terrorism and the future, using both non-professional and professional actors and documentary-style interviews. His work questions the role of the artist, but also the purpose of images, figures and myths in a mediatised world. Framed situations, mirror effects and role-playing are elements of his videos in particular and his work in general. His artistic approach and practices seem to arise from an overriding need to offer a contemplated image of a world while deconstructing its codes, symbols and financial systems.

Ulises Carrión (Mexico, 1941 — Netherlands, 1989) was a key figure in Mexican conceptual art, working as an artist, editor, curator and theorist of the international avant-garde after the 1960s. He is widely known for his pivotal role in defining and conceptualising the artistic genre of the artist's book through his manifesto *The New Art of Making Books* (1975). Carrión's work also includes a large number of performances, film, video and sound works. Carrión has carried out several editing, publishing and curatorial projects, a number of notable public projects and various significant works and initiatives within the international community of mail artists during his most creative period. Equally important to his artistic career has been his involvement in several artist-run spaces.

Giovanni Giaretta was born in Padua in 1983. He currently lives and works in Amsterdam, where he was an artist in residence at de Ateliers in 2013. His artistic practice narrates the ordinary in unexpected ways, describing a world that reveals its most unusual aspects. He reflects on the invention of commonplaces within specific narratives and groups of individuals, he explores minor literature and stories of invisibility, he investigates the creation of invented languages. As 'collages', his works are the result of a research process that aims to relate images, texts and sounds.

Rä di Martino (Rome, 1975) studied at Chelsea College of Art and the Slade School of Art in London, lived in New York from 2005 to 2010, and now lives and works in Rome. Her work is primarily concerned with the perception of reality and fiction, drawing attention to the absurdity of representing either. The artist's background in theatre and her passion for film are reflected in her video, photographic and installation works. Sets, actors and props are used in various ways to explore themes as diverse as human relationships, cinematic traditions, the theatre of war and the fabrication of history.

Raphael Montañez Ortiz was born in New York in 1934. He began his studies in architecture and then moved into the visual arts. Much of his work is politically and socially engaged, exploring ritual, transcendence and performance. His deconstructivist videos often appropriate and manipulate found footage images from Hollywood films. He selects excerpts from commercial films on laser disc, which he deconstructs using a computer program installed on one of the first Apple models. Using a joystick, he experiments with cutting up the seconds of action of his choice and moving them back and forth at different speeds, while also modifying the sound. He manipulates these sequences as many times as necessary until the result is ready to be recorded on videotape. As the artist distorts the temporal structure of a scene, he also deconstructs the cultural canons of cinema.

Manuel Saiz is an artist, filmmaker and writer. His work ranges from video installations to books and films. His practice is concerned with technology, language and their inherent cultural structures. The relationship between the signifier and the signified is a recurring theme in his work. Over the past 15 years, Saiz has focused mainly on art films and video installations. His films have received special mentions and awards at the Hamburg Short Film Festival, Winterthur Kurtzfilm Festival and Transmediale 06, and have been shown at Impakt Festival, EMAF, London Film Festival and many others. His installations have been shown at the Intercommunication Center (Tokyo), Transmediale (Berlin), Whitechapel Gallery (London), ICA (London) and other international venues.

This exhibition is curated by Sanneke Huisman and made possible by LI-MA, Amsterdam.

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For questions you can contact us: info@westdenhaag.nl or 070.3925359

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