

Delay Today

When time is the medium, the work is making you see it. The evanescence of the present. A present prized from the grip of the past and the future, from determinism and prediction; from the logic that forensically excavates the past in search of a source-code for today; from the logic that obscenely claims in the future you will be rich, which excuses today's disgraces. 'The present cannot make a legacy of itself or lay claim to any durability', writes Joan Copjec in her essay 'Battle Fatigue'. This inability is the motor of *DELAY TODAY*, a cycle of videos and live events taking place in Brussels. Such a motor is a rev, a short circuit, a coil in existence, not a finality. This seems to me to be the logic of the work grouped here, all of which I experience as outcomes of the kind of fatigue (resistance) capitalism wants to eliminate.

Fatigue is not mere waste, spent energy, but an interval within existence. A fault in the future's narrative of 'far off gain'. A delay, if you will. Being both verb and noun, *delay* is a conjunction of action and objectivity. All the practices here oscillate in this way between two perspectives, two forms of enunciation, between the artist's action and objective facts. This movement means it cannot be only one or the other, and that your presence is found here too. Some of the facts are the Romanian revolution, the *périphérique* road of Paris on a given day, an invitation to give a workshop on *Antigone* in Brussels, the demolition of a skyscraper in New York City, the duration of an artistic residency in Nuremberg, markets at new year after months of strikes in Cuzco.

In *DELAY TODAY* there is displacement. Moving from one state to another, migration of different kinds, commitment to art and so to the present as that which 'demands repetition'. Freedom is not here from the start, it cannot be instrumental to ends. It comes from actions, and the intelligence to see what necessarily constrains them not as problems to be overcome but as the lag that bears repeating.

Eleanor Ivory Weber, Brussels, October 2023

All quotes from Joan Copjec, 'Battle Fatigue: Kiarostami and Capitalism', in *Lacan Contra Foucault: Subjectivity, Sex and Politics*, ed. Nadia Bou Ali and Rohit Goel (London and New York: Bloomsbury 2019), 145, 154, 155.

Showing: videos

NOAH BARKER & DORA BUDOR, *Chase Manhattan*, 10'38" (2021-22)

Montaged still photography and stills from video footage taken from inside a car. It follows the demolition of New York City's tallest skyscraper designed by a woman, Natalie de Blois' Union Carbide Building, or JP Morgan Chase Tower. Road, cars, scaffolding, signage, machinery; the colours of the dense streets in early Winter. We are often looking through the rear-view mirror, like a driver. Then the car-camera tails a truck carrying building materials out of Manhattan to nearby New Jersey, making way for the construction of a taller tower at 270 Park Avenue. This video takes its contents from what investors don't want to see, and what artists do. Eyes close to the ground, not in the sky, the car and camera vehicle Barker & Budor's staccato looking. The melancholy movement resounds in the two-part musical accompaniment by downtown New York musicians Stubborn and KVANTUM. (Video courtesy Fluentum Collection, Berlin, and the artists.)

TONY COKES, *Shrink! 1.1-4*, video, colour, sound, 20'51" (2001)

Art can make the viewer work and thereby keep meaning up for grabs between those who look at it. The relation between text, image and music here is one of juxtaposition. Or better, parataxis. None of the elements make direct reference to the others; three separate structures of thought meet on the one 2D plane without assimilation. Songs from The Notwist's 1998 album *Shrink* serve as audio ('Chemicals', 'Shrink', 'No Encores', 'Your Signs'). And for the visual, footage of pre-9/11 New York skylines and waterways, all shot from ferries, meets textual commentary on the art world, technology, class, race and daily life, programmed like ticker tape. Cokes writes, quoting Walter Benjamin: 'so long as under commodity production, culture was produced as manipulation rather than enlightenment, fostering passive consumption rather than active collaboration, the democratic potential of mass culture remained unrealized.'

(Video courtesy the artist, Greene Naftali, New York, Hannah Hoffman, Los Angeles, Felix Gaudlitz, Vienna, and Electronic Arts Intermix, New York.)

STEFANO FAORO, *Nürnberg*, 40'00" (2022)

Filmed on the occasion of a four-month residency in the Bavarian city that Spring, the contents are of this period and its occupants. The camera is a pen, through it he sees parks, Flixbuses, Deutsche Bahn, inside and outside cars, boats transporting goods, exhibition openings, bars, planes, accommodation, friends and colleagues, tidy gardens, the Frankfurt Holocaust memorial beneath the European Central Bank, the Germanisches Nationalmuseum, the artist's own works. At times Faoro's editing mirrors Leni

Riefenstahl's *Triumph of the Will* (1935). A blur comes with his movement, colours demarking public space merge like on his canvases, while the camera stabilises into a banal image. The sound is ambient – grinding, laughing, piped music, smalltalk, sirens. Under the empire of images, the totalitarian surplus, we do not have a window to look out from. Refusing the homogenisation and quantification of being entails first seeing your own frame. (Video courtesy the artist.)

HARUN FAROCKI & ANDREI UJICĂ, *Videogramme einer Revolution*, 106'00" (1992)

This is the chronology according to video footage of the Romanian revolution, which saw the downfall of dictator Nicolae Ceaușescu and his wife Elena in December 1989, one of the first such events to be covered in (live) images. Farocki & Ujică compiled over 125 hours of amateur footage, news footage, and excerpts from the Bucharest TV studio overtaken by protestors. It may be argued that this event was closer to a coup than a revolution, but what is certain is that during the six days comprised in the video (21-26.12.1989), the recording and broadcasting technology that up until then had been controlled by the paranoid leader of the Communist party was in the hands of the people. 'If at the outbreak of the uprising only one camera dared to record,' said Farocki, 'hundreds were in operation on the following day.'

(Video courtesy Harun Farocki GbR, Berlin, and the artists.)

LALESHKA SALAS SALAZAR, *Le vendeur debout*, 00'05", *Installation source*, 00'10", *Décoration*, 00'04", *Bananes travel with Toyota*, 00'26", *Carrefour Control*, 00'24" (all 2023)

These videos are all less than thirty seconds long, filmed in the days after new year in and around markets in Cuzco, Peru. There had been a few days' pause in the month-long general strike and protests demanding new elections and the resignation of President Dina Boluarte, whose government attempted a coup d'état on 7 December 2022. Boluarte's repressive response to demonstrations resulted in dozens of deaths. People living outside the capital, Lima, are forgotten by their government and their access to goods is increasingly limited. Impromptu markets arise as a result. On this return visit to her hometown, Salas Salazar observes old and new gestures with the eyes of a local and of a stranger through her phone and small camera. Previously displayed on monitors on loop, here the artist's videos are screened from start to finish; their original duration shows what needs to be seen.

(Videos courtesy the artist.)

CAMILLA WILLS, *Possession, a ring-road, 47'00"* (2017)

Filmed from the passenger seat of a car driving full circle around the *périphérique* of Paris. One continuous loop, screened here from start to finish. The 'ring-road' is the notorious periphery of the city. Wills looks out the closed window of the car, away from the centre. The suburbs drag past. The artist's hands and the camera in them are sometimes reflected in the frame, dependent on the light outside the vehicle. You're not meant to drive all the way around a ring-road. The GPS navigator (what Wills calls 'the shepherd') keeps insisting, confused: *sortez à droite, sortez à gauche!* We hear the anodyne tones of Andrea Fraser's lament to art inside and art outside the field of art, and then a description of the voice recorder being stuck for months in Japan after the 2011 earthquake. *Possession*, a centrifugal movement, draws you back to where you started.

(Video courtesy the artist.)

Showing: events

GHISLAINE LEUNG

Saturday 18 November 2023, 18:30–20:30

Her practice comes out of a long-standing interest in structuralist and materialist film and the distribution of artists' moving image. Working through written scores – in themselves a continuation of her writing practice – Leung's artwork looks like sculpture or installation art when exhibited in galleries or museums. However the work, as she insists, *is* the score. This means, according to the score, the way it manifests physically and spatially is up for grabs. I am interested in the nod to musical notation, and how timing, negotiation with institutions, and contingency are key elements in Leung's practice. Can we think about the scores, conceptual as they seem, as a kind of performance, or as time-based media? Leung's book *Bosses* (Divided 2023) came out in September. In this two-hour public window, we read from that and discuss these questions.

EVOL & GLADYS

Saturday 2 December 2023, 18:30–20:30

A new performance with text, voice and music. Gladys is the musician behind Brussels' enigmatic dark synth sampler and vocalist Che Vuoi, and Evol is a writer, performance artist and classical soprano. The elements of this piece include a Renaissance madrigal duet 'Vergine Bella', developed with their singing teacher Lucy Grauman; parts of playwright Howard Barker's *Scenes from an Execution* (1990), which was inspired by painter Artemisia Gentileschi and her attempt to make true art for the state of Venice in the 16th century; and the rearrangement of a long poem called 'smoking is good', which plays with the structure of language – is good, is bad. In a diffuse atmosphere, various textual and musical registers are employed to show up some problems of morality, and to experiment with the repetition of lyrical gestures – song, poem, play.

ALENKA ZUPANČIČ

Saturday 16 December 2023, 18:30–20:30

This lecture focuses on Zupančič's interpretation of Antigone in her book *Let Them Rot* (Divided 2023), which came out of a workshop she gave in Brussels in January 2020. The Lacanian philosopher zooms in on Antigone's exclusive violence, which leads her to try to grasp how the singularity of one family's misfortune connects to the general condition of humanity. Zupančič's current work theorises a contemporary politics of desire. What is an act of desire? Why desire? Against the capitalist ideology that all we are capable of is merely enjoying pre-given commodities (objects, relations, institutions) handed out to us via exploitation, Zupančič's work reminds us of the irreconcilable difference between enjoyment and desire, and the subjective imperative to refuse their homologisation. Of Antigone's destructive desire, she writes: 'In a sense, it is precisely because she puts an end to all future that Antigone belongs to the future.'

Artists

Alenka Zupančič is a Slovenian philosopher and social theorist. She is the author of *What Is Sex?* (MIT Press 2017) and *Let Them Rot* (Divided 2023).

Camilla Wills is an artist living in London. She runs Divided Publishing with Eleanor Ivory Weber.

Dora Budor and Noah Barker are artists based in New York. They have shown collaborative video works at Kunsthhaus Bregenz, Austria; Fluentum, Berlin; Simian, Copenhagen; and The Wig, Berlin.

Eleanor Ivory Weber is an Australian artist and writer living in Brussels. With Camilla Wills, she runs Divided. Her last show was at Alma Sarif, Brussels (2023), and she organised *DELAY TODAY*.

Evol & Gladys are artists living in Brussels. They previously made the performances *Word without Return* (2019) and *Night Songs* (2021) together.

Ghislaine Leung is a British conceptual artist. She is a nominee for the 2023 Turner Prize. Her latest book is *Bosses* (Divided 2023).

Harun Farocki (1944–2014) was a filmmaker of more than 100 productions for television or cinema. He exhibited internationally and held professorships at the University of California, Berkeley and the Academy of Fine Arts, Vienna. Andrei Ujică (1951–) is a Romanian screenwriter and director living in Germany. He is former professor of film at the Karlsruhe University of Arts and Design.

Laleshka Salas Salazar is a Peruvian artist based in Brussels. She is currently studying towards a Masters degree in Performance & Installation Art at ERG.

Stefano Faoro is an artist living in Italy. His last shows took place at Caravan, Oslo (2023) and Kunstverein Nürnberg, Nürnberg (2022).

Tony Cokes lives and works in Providence, RI, where he serves as Professor in the Department of Modern Culture and Media at Brown University. Cokes received the 2022-23 Rome Prize and has work currently on view at Dia Bridgehampton, Fondazione Prada, and Prada Rong Zhai.

Background note

I wrote an essay titled 'The structure of looking' for Stefano Faoro's exhibition catalogue *The young fascist militant* (Kunstverein Nürnberg 2022). There I mention Faoro's video *Nürnberg* in relation to specific videos by Tony Cokes, Harun Farocki & Andrei Ujică and Camilla Wills. I wrote that these videos' 'structure is a product and a critique of the place they came from and its contingency'. For *DELAY TODAY* those four video works are on view, joined by those of Noah Barker & Dora Budor and Laleshka Salas Salazar. The approximately four-hour program screens Wednesday to Sunday in the second-floor mini-cinema space of Etablissement d'en face (see page 8 for details).

I am interested in the relation between necessity and contingency, emphasising the contingent side as the place of subjectivity, difference and indeterminacy. Structure and chance, routine and accident, fatality and creation. For several years I've been working with constraint-based writing, as well as the rhythms and forms of news media. These are structured by repetition and at the same time house the potential for unexpected changes.

Colophon

Texts: Eleanor Ivory Weber

Design: Studio 900

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NICC

ETABLISSEMENT D'EN FACE

Program

VIDEOS AT ETABLISSEMENT D'EN FACE
Place J(e)an Jacobsplein 1, 1000 Brussels

Sat 18 Nov–Sun 17 Dec
Every day during opening hours (Wed–Sun, 14:00–18:00)

14:10
Laleshka Salas Salazar, *Le vendeur debout*, 00'05" (2023)
Camilla Wills, *Possession, a ring-road*, 47'00" (2017)
Laleshka Salas Salazar, *Installation source*, 00'10" (2023)

15:00
Tony Cokes, *Shrink! 1.1-4*, 20'51" (2001)
Laleshka Salas Salazar, *Décoration*, 00'04" (2023)
Stefano Faoro, *Nürnberg*, 40'00" (2022)

16:00
Laleshka Salas Salazar, *Bananes travel with Toyota*, 00'26" (2023)
Noah Barker & Dora Budor, *Chase Manhattan*, 10'38" (2021–22)
Laleshka Salas Salazar, *Carrefour Control*, 00'24" (2023)
Harun Farocki & Andrei Ujică, *Videogramme einer Revolution*,
106'00" (1992)

NICC VITRINE
Rue Lambert Crickxstraat 1, 1070 Brussels

Fri 3 Nov–Sat 30 Dec 2023 24/7

EVENTS AT NICC
Rue Lambert Crickxstraat 1, 1070 Brussels

Sat 18 Nov, 18:30–20:30
Ghislaine Leung (conversation)

Sat 2 Dec, 18:30–20:30
Evol & Gladys (performance)

Sat 16 Dec, 18:30–20:30
Alenka Zupančič (lecture)