

L'Art Vidéo brésilien contemporain connaît en ce moment une grande fragilité, dans laquelle sa définition est dissoute dans l'absence de définition dans les arts contemporains en général. Le titre de cette série, présentée ici, *Brazil Knows What Videoart is*, a été inspiré de ces doutes et veut ironiser le contraste qu'il existe entre une idée du passé et le présent de cet art au Brésil. Puisque nos connaissances actuelles en la matière sont basées sur son passé récent, dense, spécifique et fondamental, pouvons nous savoir ce qu'il en est de sa définition réelle actuelle ?

Est-ce qu'une nouvelle génération d'artistes, qui ne serait pas si sensible aux faits historiques en eux-même, tout comme les théoriciens, peut-elle encore continuer à produire des travaux que nous appelons art vidéo ? Ou encore, simplement le caractère de haute convergence des nouveaux médias a-t-il rendu le tout ambigu ? Le film sur des supports divers, la vidéo, la fiction, l'expérimental, le web, les arts plastiques, l'interactivité auraient-ils dissout ou banalisé une possible définition pour l'art vidéo ? Pouvons-nous encore savoir de quoi est-elle conçue ? Pouvons-nous encore la différencier des autres arts ou doit-on simplement l'incorporer dans ce que l'on appelle « arts visuels » ou « nouveaux médias » et ainsi clore le débat ? Et si la l'art vidéo brésilien existait encore, où pourrions-nous le trouver ?

Même si le film se dissout dans le numérique et les minces frontières entre art vidéo / fiction / expérimental / cinéma / art des médias, il existe une caractéristique dans les œuvres présentées dans cette sélection, qui peut attirer l'attention sur une catégorie de choses non viables au cinéma, même dans le cinéma d'art ou indépendant, et encore moins dans les travaux d'art des médias: que la vidéo de création soit présentée dans une salle obscure, dans une galerie ou dans un théâtre, il se détache une pulsion pour la déconstruction, pour les choses incomplètes, non linéaires, non narratives ; à l'inverse du cinéma, cet art, l'art vidéo (même s'il possèdera un autre nom dans l'avenir), continue à se jeter dans le vide d'une structure, dans le malaise de l'étrangeté, en s'approchant plus des arts plastiques que de la littérature, plus de la poésie que de la prose. Mais cela a toujours été ainsi !...

Plus de 30 ans se sont écoulés depuis la première expérience esthétique au Brésil (Ana Livia Cordeiro, *M3X3* - 1973 et Leticia Parente, *Marca registrada* - 1974). Les artistes se sont spécialisés et ils n'ont pas seulement incorporé la vidéo à leur art mais ils en ont fait le fondement de leurs langages. L'art vidéo a laissé des traces importantes dans l'histoire de l'art brésilien. Dans les années 80 et 90, la vidéo a atteint son apogée par un excès d'expressivité.

Il est clair que le moment transitoire est dû, en partie, à l'emploi excessif du langage vidéo, à l'instabilité du média même, à l'accès technologique disséminé. Le langage en lui-même n'est peut-être plus au centre du débat. Il ne s'agit plus de s'intéresser au moyen, au média et à leurs supposées vérités. Une ère est finie et il semble que la volonté que le langage soit au centre d'une expérience esthétique, n'existe plus. Serait-ce ainsi la mort de l'art vidéo ?

Dans ma sélection présentée ici, il ya cette recherche d'un paysage intime,

d'une vérité, d'un quotidien ; c'est en fait un retour des artistes à la subjectivité. On y trouve l'intention d'être minimum, parfois naïf, informel et imprévisible. Mon intérêt dans cette sélection, est de montrer la manière que cette nouvelle génération d'artistes aborde les idées et les images (ils circulent dans plusieurs domaines des arts visuels).

Trois oeuvres de l'artiste Carlosmagno Rodrigues seront montrées (*Sebastião, l'homme qui buvait du kérosène, Devant l'abîme de tes yeux* et *Doriangreen*). Carlosmagno, probablement le plus expérimenté de ces artistes, présente un travail dense et convaincant, qui dépasse le post-existentialisme, le postcommunisme et l'anticapitalisme, qui soulève des questions sur la vie et la mort et surtout sur l'inadéquation de l'homme moderne vu d'une façon métaphorique, à travers l'image d'un garçon (l'incroyable Bruno, le fils de Magno). Avec ses phrases philosophiques, trop mûres pour la plupart d'entre nous, il présente un mélange de remord et de refoulement de ce que la vie nous refuse. Le récit de Carlosmagno, dans son style habituel, illustré d'images iconographiques vieilles et démodées, nous transporte dans un monde assez mystérieux, inhospitalier de prime abord, mais vibrant. Dans ce style, des phrases emblématiques sont répétées et vues comme le fruit d'une culture contemporaine de l'image, déjà nostalgique et donc, sans espoir. Sa critique réside dans une volonté de rébellion, un sentiment presque « vintage » d'une révolution inachevée, cubaine, latine ou brésilienne. Mais, son autocritique, la meilleure, se concrétise mieux dans *Doriangreen*, quand son personnage lit à voix haute, une lettre dévastatrice pour lui-même.

Trois oeuvres de Roberto Bellini ("Through the glass"/ "Landscape Theory"/ "I Give up"), un des artistes qui fait partie de ce que nous appelons les « narrateurs de l'observation ». Ces récits (parmi plusieurs œuvres de la sélection, comme *Hole* et *Framed*, de Leandro Lima & Gisela Motta) parlent d'un « ordre du regard », qui plane sur son but pacifiste, aux aguets d'une chance ou une occasion (tout comme Dellani Lima dans la vidéo "When I Died In The Bay Of Guanabara"). A l'opposé du langage vibrant de l'art vidéo des années 80/90, on revient aujourd'hui à l'essence même de ce qu'est une vraie image, propre et sans artifices. Mais ce n'est pas une simple image; il y a encore une édition bien soignée, qui privilégie le point de départ de cette image, et qui demande un exercice d'observation (le clair-obscur et le temps pour voir *Invisible Garden*, les lieux uniques de *Hole*, etc). Dans le projet de Leandro Lima & Gisela Motta (eux aussi des artistes aux multiples facettes) il y a cette fantaisie ubiquiste et architectonique que la vidéo a toujours permis de diffuser: cette façon de jouer avec le paysage, en le démolissant, pour construire un autre sens : " Je vois ce qui n'est pas là, exactement, sauf dans la formation de mon idée-image, en unissant Helsinki et São Paulo, dans la même cadre. "

Le dernier travail de Sara Ramo, née en Espagne mais naturalisée brésilienne, reprend les objectifs de la vidéo performance à l'état brut. Elle ajoute au contemporain, une lucidité ludique et fascinante, en dansant avec un compagnon, un bonhomme en carton (*Amor Fati*), ou en défaisant continuellement des valises (*Traslado*). Dans cette vidéo, Sara Ramo enlève d'une valise, des objets d'une maison, en exposant d'une façon simple, la métaphore d'un transport, d'un déménagement et d'une souffrance. Dans *Cover Dreams*, elle devient un soldat qui plante des fleurs. Ramo (depuis ses premiers travaux en vidéo, comme *Ceia* et *Hotel Paradise* questionne dans ses performances, le regard et l'attente de l'autre. Cette puissance enracinée dans son corps de femme, rend possible une fantaisie (*Oceano*)

qui va au-delà de la vie quotidienne. Elle parle d'une puissance féminine pour des sujets d'impuissance sociale et corporelle.

Pour conclure ce programme, deux oeuvres de vidéo-danse produits en groupe : *FF* de Karenina de Los Santos, Leticia Nabuco, Marcello Stropa et Tatiana Gentile, avec des corps promenés à même le sol dans les rues de São Paulo, et *Sensações Contrarias* de Amadeu Alban, Jorge Alencar et Matheus Rocha, qui apporte l'ambiance rurale de Bahia d'une manière originale dans la danse contemporaine.

*Brazil Knows What Video art is* donne, sans aucun doute, un échantillon des grandes questions à venir.

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New Generation|Brazil Knows What Videoart is - Presentation  
Curator: Francesca Azzi

Contemporary Brazilian video art is going through a period of great "emotional" instability in which the parameters of its definition have dissolved in the absence of specificity of contemporary art in general. The title of this selection presented here, at [Vidéographes](#), *Brazil Knows What Video Art Is*, was inspired by these uncertainties, and intends to create an irony between the idea of the past and the present of this art in Brazil. Since our current knowledge in the matter (videoart) is based on its recent past that is dense, specific, and fundamental, can we know what would it be a real definition at the present?

Does a new generation of artists, who would not be so attuned to historical fact itself like all theorists, continue to produce works that we can still call video art? Or simply, does the character of high convergence of new media render everything ambiguous? Would film, in various media – video, fiction, experimental, the web, visual arts, and interactivity – have dissolved or trivialized a possible definition for video art? Can we still know what it is made of? Can we still tell the difference between other forms of art or must we simply incorporate it definitively in what we call "visual arts" or "new media" and thus end the debate? And if Brazilian video art still exists, where would we be able to find it?

Even if film is dissolved into digital and into the small and fragile frontiers between video art / fiction / experimental / cinema / media art, one characteristic exists in works presented in this selection that might attract the attention of a category of things unperformable in cinema, even in art-house or independent cinema: whether creative video be shown in a dark room, in a gallery or in a theatre, an urge is unleashed for deconstruction, for uncompleted things, non linear, non narrative. The opposite of cinema, this art, video art (even if it has another name in the future), continues to throw itself into a void structure, into the uneasiness of strangeness, getting more closer to the visual arts than literature and more to poetry than prose. But it has always been that way!

More than 30 years have passed since the first aesthetic experiment in Brazil (Ana Livia Cordeiro, *M3X3* -1973 et Leticia Parente, *Marca registrada* - 1974). Artists have specialized and have not only incorporated video in their art, but they have made it the foundation of their language attempts. Video art has left a fundamental heritage in the history of Brazilian art. In the 80s and 90s, video reached its peak in an excess of expressiveness.

It is clear that this transitory moment that we are experiencing now is due in part to the excessive use of video language, to the properties/qualities of the media itself - unstable and incorporable, and to the accessibility of a spreading technology. The video art language is perhaps no longer on the heart of the debate. It is not about showing an interest in the means, in the media, and in their supposed truths. An era is over and it seems that the

willingness for language to be at the center of an aesthetic experience is dead. Would it also be the death of video art?

In the selection that I present here, there is this search for an intimate landscape, for truth, for daily life; it is in fact a return to subjectivity. The artists intend to be minimal, sometimes naïve, informal and erratic. What is interesting in this selection is showing how this new generation of artists (they move in several visual art fields) approaches ideas and images.

Three works from Carlosmagno Rodrigues were selected to be part of this program: (Sebastião, the man who drank kerosene, At the abyss of your eyes and Doriangreen). Carlosmagno, probably the most experienced of these artists, presents a compelling and dense work, which goes beyond post-existentialism, post-communism, and anti capitalism to raise questions of life/death and especially of the inadequacy of modern man seen in a metaphorical way, through the image of a boy (the incredible Bruno, Magno's son). With his philosophical expressions, too mature for most of us, he presents a mixture of remorse and repression of what life refuses us. Carlosmagno's story, in his recurrent style, illustrated by old and wornout iconographic images, takes us back to a fairly mysterious world, inhospitable at first, but vibrant. In this style, emblematic phrases are repeated and seen as the fruit of a contemporary culture of the image, already nostalgic and therefore, without hope. His criticism lies in a willingness to rebel, an almost in a "vintage" feeling of an unachieved revolution – Cuban, Latin, or Brazilian. But his best self-criticism materializes in Doriangreen, when his character reads out loud a devastating letter for himself.

Three works by Roberto Bellini ("Through the glass"/"Landscape Theory/ I Give up"), one of the artists who is part of what we can call the "narratives of observation". These narratives (found in several works of these selection, such as Hole and Framed, by Leandro Lima & Gisela Motta) speak of an "order of the view", that remains over his peaceful object, waiting for chance and occasion (like Dellani Lima video "When I Died In The Bay Of Guanabara"). Contrary to the vibrant language of video art in the 80/90s, we return today to the very essence of what a true image is, clear-cut and unadorned. But it is not a simple image; there is still a well-kept edition, which favours the starting point of this image, and which needs an exercise in observation (the chiaroscuro and time to see Invisible Garden, the unique/common locations of Hole, etc.) In the project by Leandro Lima & Gisela Motta (also artists with multiple facets), there is an ubiquitous and architectonic fantasy that video has always been able to show, this way of playing with the landscape, breaking it down in order to build another sense: "I see what isn't over there, exactly, except in the development of my idea-image, uniting Helsinki to São Paulo, in the same frame."

The very recent works of Sara Ramo, a spanish-born artist but brazilian naturalized citizen, renews the intentions of video performance, crude and naked. She contemporary adds a playful and compelling lucidity to the present, by dancing with a companion, a cardboard man (Amor Fati), or continually unpacking suitcases (Traslado). In this video, Sara Ramo takes out of a suitcase on the ground personal objects from the house and the move, exposing in a simple way the metaphor of transportation, of a change, and of suffering. In Cover Dreams, she is a soldier who plants flowers. Ramo (since her first videos, like Ceia and Hotel Paradise) questions the view and expectation of the other in her programmed performance actions. This power, rooted in her body of a woman, makes a fantasy (Oceano) possible and goes beyond ordinary daily existence. She speaks of a feminine power for subjects of clear social, corporal, and group powerlessness.

To conclude this program, two works of videodance produced by two different groups. FF by Karenina de Los Santos, Leticia Nabuco, Marcello Stropa, and Tatiana Gentile, a walk of bodies on the ground in the streets of São Paulo, and Opposite Sensations by Amadeu Alban, Jorge Alencar, and Matheus Rocha, which brings the rural atmosphere of Bahia in an original way to contemporary dance.

Brazil Knows What Video Art Is, without doubt, is a small sample for the big questions to come.

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## New Generation| Brazil Knows What Videoart is Videos and artists

1. CARLOSMAGNO RODRIGUES: SEBASTIÃO, THE MAN WHO USED TO DRINK KEROSENE 11 min
2. CARLOSMAGNO RODRIGUES: BEFORE THE ABYSS OF YOUR EYES 6 min
3. CARLOSMAGNO RODRIGUES: DORIAN GREEN 16'45 min
4. DELLANI LIMA: WHEN I DIED IN THE BAY OF GUANABARA 4'19 min
5. GISELA MOTA & LEANDRO LIMA: FRAMED 4 min
6. GISELA MOTA & LEANDRO LIMA: HOLE 4 min
7. ROBERTO BELLINI: THROUGH THE GLASS 6'50 min
8. ROBERTO BELLINI: LANDSCAPE THEORY 4'16"min
9. ROBERTO BELLINI: I GIVE UP 3'53" min
10. SARA RAMO: AMOR FATI 6 min
11. SARA RAMO: TRANSLADO 8 min
12. SARA RAMO: COVER DREAM 2' 43 min
11. RICARDO CARIOBA E FABIO TORRES\_UDDQEM: i321 3 min
12. VARIOUS: OPPOSITE SENSATIONS 5'10 min
13. VARIOUS: FF 10 min

### DVD Screening order

- DORIAN GREEN 16'45 min
- TRANSLADO 8 min
- HOLE 4 min
- FF 10 min
- I GIVE UP 3'53" min
- AMOR FATI 6 min
- LANDSCAPE THEORY 4'16"min
- FRAMED 4 min
- WHEN I DIED IN THE BAY OF GUANABARA 4'19" min
- BEFORE THE ABYSS OF YOUR EYES 6 min
- OPPOSITE SENSATIONS 5'10 min
- THROUGH THE GLASS 6'50 min
- SEBASTIÃO, THE MAN WHO USED TO DRINK KEROSENE 11min
- i321 3 min
- COVER DREAM 2' 43 min

Total: about 96 min

### Synopsis

#### CARLOSMAGNO RODRIGUES

... Sebastião, The Man Who Used To Drink Kerosene  
(Sebastião, o homem que bebia querosene)  
digital video| 11 min| 2007

Once more I'm gonna bite my nails I'm not gonna look at the sunset  
nor listen to music when my nails are finished I'll pull the hair out of  
my arms, the thick hair out of my eyebrow. I chew everything up the  
same.

... Before The Abyss Of Your Eyes  
(Diante do abismo dos seus olhos)  
digital video| 6 min| 2006

Is there something beyond the abyss of your eyes? An exploration of human relations and memories, suspended between passion and politics.

... DORIAN GREEN

Digital video | 16 min 45 | 2008

Film about dramatic experiments which collide with the everyday naturalism. Homemade scenes, dramatic exercises and the reading of personal texts compose a cinematographic reality where, once again, the character-author Carlos Magno Rodrigues exposes himself in autobiographic situations.

GISELA MOTA & LEANDRO LIMA

... Framed (enquadrado)

digital video | original loop | 4 min | 2007

For the video "Framed", pedestrians were recorded reacting to ordinary people in the "against the wall" position, a scene so common in police arrests in some cities and so different to Helsinki urban space.

... Hole (buraco)

digital video | original loop | 4 min | 2007

In the piece "Hole" contrasting images from small commercial, no brand stores were captured in Sao Paulo and have been applied to the facades of Helsinki, so as to question our perception through the different urban environments produced by these two cultures.

ROBERTO BELLINI

... Through The Glass

digital video | 6 min 50" | 2007

A small collection of chance encounters that reveal a poetic reflection on time, contemplation and the distance imposed by the camera.

... Landscape Theory

digital video | 4 min 16" | 2005

A dialogue and a landscape, a brief discourse on the possibility of contemplation, the politics of gazing, and authority.

... I Give Up

digital animation | 3 min 53" | 2004

Autobiographical animation that registers through narrative fragments a moment of transition, punctuated by dreams and memories.

SARA RAMO

... Amor fati

digital video | 6 min | 2007

A woman and a paper doll, which has the size of a real man, are sat down on two chairs looking for a white landscape. A few seconds later, they dance on the sound of a waltz.

... Translado

Hd digital video | 8 min | 2008

About moving and dislocation. Inside a small space the accumulation of objects that are taken away from a suitcase.

... Cover Dream

digital video | 2'43 min | 2008

A unique shot inspired by "The Great Dictator" of Charles Chaplin.

RICARDO CARIOBA E FABIO TORRES\_UDDQEM

... i321

digital animation | 3 min 05" | 2005

The expressive qualities as parameters configured by audio and video turn themselves in relation, creating time and spaces of effectuation, created by Ricardo Carioba and Fabio Torres.

DELLANI LIMA

... When I Died In The Bay Of Guanabara

|Digital video|4min 19| 2008

First image registrations after the author's conceptual death.

... OPPOSITE SENSATIONS (Sensações Contrárias) by Amadeu

Alban, Jorge Alencar, Matheus Rocha.

digital video| 5 min 10" | 2007

In a provincial-decaying atmosphere, choreographic and visual events happen by apparently accidents, failures and discontinuities – in one limit between daily realism and surrealism.

... FF (Fast Forward) by Karenina de Los Santos, Letícia Nabuco, Marcello Stroppa e Tatiana Gentile.

digital video| 5 min 10" | 2007

Difference and contrast of rhythms in synch. Simple and constant movement going down a long path in different urban environments. Two people follow a continuous and uninterrupted flow, creating a strange dialog with time and space.

#### About Francesca Azzi

Head of the cultural production company Zeta Filmes ([www.zetafilmes.com.br](http://www.zetafilmes.com.br)) which is based in Belo Horizonte, state of Minas Gerais, Brazil. She develops projects in the areas of cinema, video and new media. She is the coordinator of INDIE – World Film Festival an international and independent festival for new filmmakers which has been taking place annually, since 2001, in Belo Horizonte and in the past 3 years in São Paulo ([www.indiefestival.com.br](http://www.indiefestival.com.br)). She is also coordinator of Fluxus – International Film Festival on the Internet ([www.fluxusonline.com](http://www.fluxusonline.com)) that will have a new edition/exhibition in 2010.

Azzi is a journalist. She obtained her Master's degree in Communication and Semiotics from PUC-SP with the work "Videoart and Experimentalism". She is also independent curator of the audiovisual area. She creates the selection Brazil Knows What Video Art is for a french Institut for Digital Art called Le Cube in 2008, and was selected for Videoformes 2009. This program has become a project that she is working at the moment, with Brazilian new videoart. She currently lives in São Paulo.

#### about some of the artists

Carlosmagno Rodrigues, born in 1972 in Brazil, holds a degree in Animated Films and Fine Arts. His videos have been shown at several exhibitions and festivals in Brazil and abroad. Rodrigues is artistic consultant for the Implementation Program of Indian Schools

in the State of Minas Gerais and electronic art teacher at FUNARBE - Brazilian Art foundation. His videos has been part of more than 100 art events around the world.

Leandro Lima & Gisela Motta are visual artist from Brazil, they have exhibited nationally and internationally. In 2007 they have participated in 1º Bienal Fin del Mundo, Ushuaia, Argentina, did a oneday show at KOH-I-NOOR, Copenhagen, Denmark, they took part in the exhibition Comunismo das Formas at Galeria Vermelho, Sao Paulo, Brazil and also participated in a 3month residency at HIAP, Helsinki, Finland.

#### Roberto Bellini

Graduated in Drawing from the School of Fine Arts, at the Federal University of Minas Gerais in Brazil. He has participated in several collective exhibitions and international video festivals in the last few years including screenings in Brazil, Chile, South Africa, Germany, France, United States and Russia among others. The artist was awarded second prize at the II Inter-American Video Art Biennial, realized by the Interamerican Development Bank. Roberto recently finished his MFA at the University of Texas at Austin, in the Transmedia department.

Sara Ramo was born in Madrid in 1975. Lives and works in Belo Horizonte, Brazil. She is graduated in Fine Arts by the UFMG-Universidade Federal de Minas Gerais. In 2007 she has participated in the 6<sup>th</sup> Mercosur Biennial in Porto Alegre, Brazil, and was part of the group show "(Extra) ordinary" at the York Quay Gallery in Toronto, Canada.