

Body Politics

26.05.15 > 06.06.15

àngels barcelona espai2

(c. Dels Àngels, 16, Barcelona)

Harun Farocki
Jeanno Gaussi
Ion Grigorescu

Daniela Ortiz
Oliver Ressler
Firas Shehadeh



Body Politics is a group show organized by àngels barcelona for LOOP Festival 2015. Departing from the idea of the body as a political tool, the term refers to both groups and individuals, but in both cases, it proposes a reading of the body/ the individual/ the group as a transforming agent and a generator of new policies and practices related to: the resistance and reform of the systems of political representation (Oliver Ressler); the manipulation of the media (Harun Farocki); the revision of memory and its symbols (Daniela Ortiz); civil disobedience (Firas Shehadeh), the practices of representation as a form of activism (Ion Grigorescu) and the relationships established between memory and imagination in everyday life (Jeanno Gaussi).

Artists & Works:



Harun Farocki: *Their Newspapers*, 1968

16 mm film transferred to digital file, B/W, sound, 17'

The full title of this film is: *Some problems of antiauthoritarian and anti-imperialist urban warfare in the case of West Berlin or Their Newspapers*. This is one of Farocki's first works, in which the artist himself appears as an actor, and is considered part of the German *agitprop* student movement against the powerful Springer media group, which controlled major newspapers like Bild Zeitung and Berliner Zeitung. As a fictional documentary, the bombs dropped in the Vietnam War are compared here with the manipulation of the media. In order to show that these newspapers were taking control of public opinion, they took the streets and demonstrated at their headquarters. These events

generated considerable stir in the German collective consciousness.

Harun Farocki (1944, Novy Jicin-Berlin, 2014). The work of the artist and filmmaker had a decisive influence on the history of the political film since the late 1960s. Besides over the 100 productions he made for cinema and television, Farocki – as long-time author and editor of the magazine *Filmkritik*, curator, and visiting professor in Berkeley, Harvard and Vienna – conveyed his reflections on the relation between society, politics and the moving image. Its relevance in the field of the visual arts is reflected in the numerous retrospectives that have been dedicated to his work at an international level or in solo shows in institutions such as the MUMOK (Vienna), the Jeu de Paume (Paris), Ludwig Museum (Cologne) or the Kunsthau Bregenz. Numerous of his films and installations have been selected as part of relevant international events such as the 1997 and 2007 editions of dOCUMENTA in Kassel, the 29th Sao Paulo Biennial or the current edition of the Venice Biennale, where he has obtained the Special Mention Award, in which an Atlas of his entire filmography is being presented as well as the project *Labour in a single shot*, made in collaboration with Antje Ehmman.



Jeanno Gaussi: *Three Fragments from Jerusalem*, 2010

Video, color, silent. 6' 20"

Three Fragments from Jerusalem is Jeanno Gaussi's reflection of Jerusalem in relation to the project *Home Sweet Home-Jerusalem*, a multi-city art project that the artist initiated in 2009 in Shatana, Jordan with Youmna Chlala from Beirut. The project examines the contemporary definition of emptiness and belonging, and expands these notions into places that mark new forms of emptiness in contemporary culture. The final part of this project *Post Home Space*, which includes a reflective text and video work by each artist,

constitutes the physical distancing from *home*, where memory becomes selective a fragmented image of home emerges. As the artist explains, "the post home space then becomes a container of real and imagined experience." Gaussi's Post Home reflection centers around three objects that surrounded her during her days alone at the house she stayed at in Jerusalem.

Jeanno Gaussi (Kabul, Afghanistan, 1973) lives and works in Berlin. Gaussi's work explores cultural identity, aspects of remembrance, memory and identity. Her projects are developed in close relationship with the place where they are created, examining the characteristics and unique aspects of each context. Gaussi began as video artist and filmmaker and her shorts were shown at several international festivals, winning the 1st prize at the 54th International Short Film Festival of Oberhausen, Germany. She was also nominated for the best German short of the year and selected for the Berlinale Talent Campus 2007. Most of her installations have been produced whilst she has been an artist-in-residency in Pakistan, Jordan, Turkey and Palestine. She is also a member of the Afghan Contemporary Art Research team launched by the Van Abbe Museum in Eindhoven, which documents the current state of contemporary art in Afghanistan. She has exhibited in the Southern Panoramas of the 18th International Contemporary Art Festival in São Paulo, in the No-Mad-ness in No-Man's Land show in Taiwan and koal Galerie in Berlin. She was selected for the dOCUMENTA (13) in Kassel and Kabul. She has recently participated in the last edition of the Havana Biennial.



Ion Grigorescu: *Drawing?*, 2014

Video, subtext, color, sound. 8'33"

In *Drawing?* Ion Grigorescu uses his own body as subject by filming himself nude, while performing the act of creating a drawing. He is performing because he creates no drawing, as his "writing tool" is merely a wooden stick that leaves no mark. He does not speak, but his movements are accompanied by a poetic subtext in which he expresses his relationship to the drawing process. Comparing drawing to hunting, this is, for Grigorescu, a political relationship: it demands that the illustrator or artist appropriate his surroundings. In line with his body of work, in which a poverty of materials is often present, his nakedness represents redemption

from those surroundings through the absence of the social symbols clothing inevitably carries. The result is the impression that this act occurs outside of time and space.

Ion Grigorescu (Bucharest, 1945), is currently one of the most important Romanian artists and one of the first conceptual artists in Romania. Since 1967 his body of work has been centered around subjects such as sexuality, body and politics. With his work he advocates for a radical consolidation of artistic activities in daily life. His videos and photographs reflect on body ritual actions, that is, on actions that are inserted into his personal and private life, beyond his artistic practice. He has participated in solo and group exhibitions in Italy, USA, Romania, Austria, France, Germany, the UK or Spain. He was selected for dOCUMENTA in Kassel in 2007 and the Romanian Pavilion at the Venice Biennale in 2011. In 2010 the Museum of Modern Art in Warsaw dedicated a retrospective to his work entitled: *In the body of the victims*. His work is part of major public and private collections, among which we find MOMA, New York and Tate Modern, London.



Daniela Ortiz: *Réplica*, 2014

Video, colour, sound. 4' 29"

In *Réplica*, the artist kneels before the Spaniards gathered at Plaza Catalunya to celebrate the Fiesta Nacional de España (the National Day of Spain) on the 12th of October 2014. She reproduces the position of an indigenous person kneeled before Bernardo Boyl (priest who accompanied Christopher Columbus on his 2nd trip to America), as depicted in the monument dedicated to Christopher Columbus in Barcelona with the objective of making the Spaniards reflect on their history of colonization and the symbolism found in the monuments that surround us.

Daniela Ortiz (Cuzco, Peru, 1985) lives and works in Barcelona. Her work seeks to create spaces of tension in order to explore concepts such as race, class, nationality and gender that show the functioning of the social structures based on inclusion and exclusion. In recent years her research projects and works have developed in response to the status of immigration and its management made by the states and receiving societies it. She has participated in group shows in Spain, USA, Peru, Sweden, Romania and the Czech Republic. She has had solo exhibitions in Espai 13 at the Joan Miró Foundation, La Capella, Arts Santa Monica, Fundació Suñol, àngels barcelona gallery and, more recently, she has recently been selected to participate in this year's LaOtra-the Art Biennial in Bogotá, Colombia. Her work is part of important collections such as the MACBA collection, Barcelona; Kadist Art Foundation, CNAP (Centre national des arts plastiques) Paris, or the CIFO (Cisneros Fontanals) collection, among others.



Oliver Ressler: *Take the square*, 2012

3-channel video installation, 88'

(25' 53" Atenas - 34' Madrid - 28' 51" New York)

The 3-channel video installation *Take The Square* is based on discussions conducted with activists from 15M in Madrid, the Syntagma Square movement in Athens and Occupy Wall Street in New York. Re-enacting the format of the working groups of the protest movements, four to six activists discuss with each other as a group in front of a camera. The discussions cover issues of organization, horizontal decision-making processes, the importance and function of occupying public spaces and

how social change can occur. *Take The Square* is trying to contribute to spreading the organizational knowledge of the movements and translate the processes between these places in transition.

Oliver Ressler (Knittelfeld, Austria, 1970) lives and works in Vienna and produces installations, projects in public space, and films on issues such as economics, democracy, global warming, forms of resistance and social alternatives. Oliver Ressler has had solo exhibitions in Berkeley Art Museum, USA; Platform Garanti Contemporary Art Center, Istanbul; Museum of Contemporary Art, Belgrade; Centro Cultural Conde Duque, Madrid; Alexandria Contemporary Arts Forum, Egypt; The Cube Project Space, Taipei; Wyspa Institute of Art, Gdansk and Lentos Kunstmuseum, Linz. Ressler has participated in more than 250 group exhibitions, including Reina Sofia Museum and La Casa Encendida, Madrid; EACC, Castellón; Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, San Francisco; Castello di Rivoli, Turin; Maldives Pavilion at the 55th Venice Biennale; Van Abbe Museum, Eindhoven; or the 4th Athens Biennial in 2013. A retrospective of his films took place at Centre d'Ar Contemporain Genève, 2013.



Firas Shehadeh: *Unidentified*, 2014

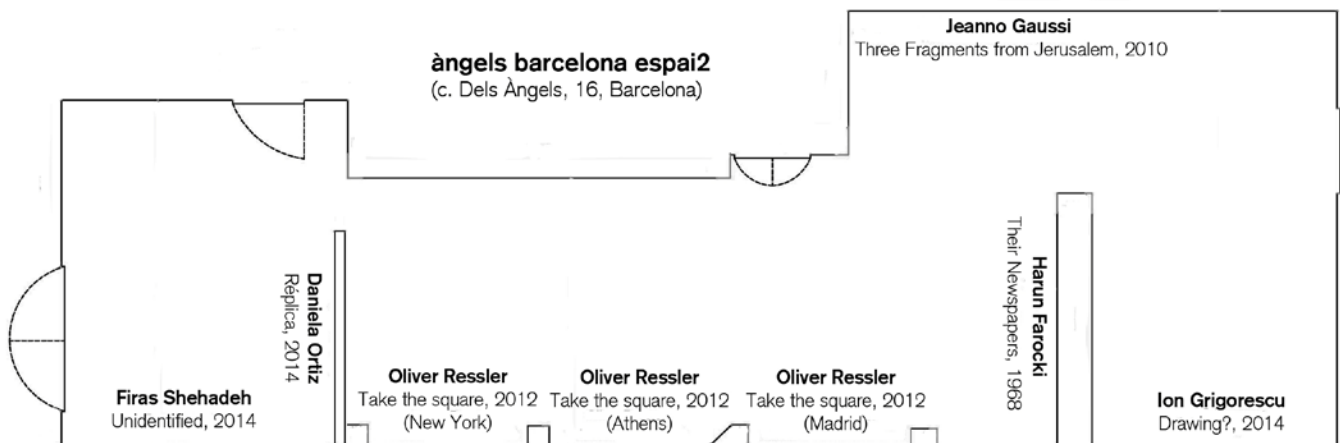
Single channel video, sound, color installation, and a series of 3 fingerprints photocopies

In *Unidentified* Shehadeh reflects on the uses of biometrics (measurement systems related to human characteristics and traits used to identify individuals) applied to groups that are under surveillance. Fingerprint identification is one of the most widely biometric data systems used for law enforcement and to establish control over immigration. Biometric technologies are the biopolitical dimension of bodies. Eurodac is a supranational cyber network, a EU database and the first common identification system automated fingerprint within the European Union. In

the video, Firas, as a Palestinian refugee himself, seeks to answer the question: "How can I create a virtual image of my illegible body, not computable, inaccessible and biometrically unprocessable?; and the answer comes from what refugees are already doing at borders in order to have freedom of movement, defacing, scorching, cutting and burning their fingers or their fingerprints."

Firas Shehadeh (Amman, Jordan, 1988). Lives and works between Barcelona and Amman. By the use of images, sounds and public interventions in his projects he explores his relationship with the space and the influence of authority in altering the collective consciousness and identity. His interest in the socio-economic influences in falsifying historical narratives and the alienation of the individual in a nebulous society, comes from his experience as a resident in a Palestinian refugee camp in Amman and his current refugee status in Spain. He finished a degree in architecture in 2008, then he worked as an artistic director, producer and graphic designer in various projects. His work has been exhibited in Morocco, Palestine, Spain, Germany and Jordan. In 2014 he was selected for the 64th Berlinale - 9th Forum Expanded and in 2015 for the Espai Cub - La Capella, as part of BCN Producció program (Barcelona City Council).

Gallery Map:



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LOOP

The Place for Video Art Lovers

26.05.15 > 31.07.15 - **Michael Snow: Video Fields**

26.05.15 > 31.07.15 - àngels barcelona-minicinema: **Lúa Coderch: Night cabin**

04.06.15 > 06.06.15 - **LOOP Fair, Barcelona: Richard T. Walker**