

VASA 2017 E-CATALOG



FRONT PAGE PROJECT
VASA EXHIBITION
JOURNAL on IMAGES and CULTURE
VIDEO / FILM SERIES

VASA : center for media studies

ABOUT VASA



This publication, provided free to an international audience, was made possible by VASA staff and supporters.

The e-catalog is designed as an interactive internet-based publication. The content of this publication is linked to the exhibitions, essays, and video/film series on the VASA site (<http://vasa-project.com>). All images and texts are under © of the author / artist / VASA.

Users need to be connected to the Internet for interaction with the on-line programs on VASA. Users may freely move between this publication and VASA website.

This publication may be used as a stand-alone digital publication.

VASA is an online center for media studies. The VASA mission is to provide an internet platform for disseminating the work of theorists and image makers on a global scale. The VASA community shares an interest in media studies, photography, film/video and sound.

To meet its mission, VASA supports online curated exhibitions; film/video screenings; the Journal on Images and Culture (VJIC); The VASA Front Page Project and other programs.

VASA was founded in July of 2009 and is directed by its founder Roberto Muffoletto.

VASA curators, editors, design and production team and contributors are all volunteers. VASA hosts no ads, is not supported by grants or sells anything.

VASA is a non-profit making organization. VASA Membership is free.

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 Andrea Motta (Greece)
 Sinyagur (Ukraine)
 Paula Scamparini (Brazil)
 Larry Chatman (USA)
 Kyunghee Lee (South Korea)
 Lyolya Goldstein (Ukraine)
 Masha Khrushchak (Ukraine)

Video/Film Series

Miha Colner (Slovenia)
 Carla Della Beffa (Italy)

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Sándor Szilágyi (Hungary)
 Dan Duda (USA)
 Ione Manzali (Brazil)
 Daniela Noitz (Austria)

TABLE OF CONTENT

This publication demonstrates the activities of VASA throughout the year 2017. We have grouped the material into four chapters as it appears on the VASA website.

The *Front Page Project* and the *VASA Exhibitions* program present the work of established and emerging artists in photography, video, digital media and sound arts.

The *Journal on Images and Culture* publishes occasional papers that develop a theme or position. Papers draw from theoretical and research manuscripts, visual dialogs, video and sound works that offer significant perspectives.

The *Video/Film Series* is designed to highlight an artist(s) or to explore a theme.

Naturally, this catalog doesn't embrace all the variety of material presented on the website. The *Artist and Author Index* provides a list of all artists with links to their individual projects on the VASA 2017 site.

Front Page Projects1 - 13

VASA Exhibitions14 - 23

Journal on Images and Culture24 - 28

Video/Film Series29 - 33

Artist and Author Index34

The illustrations and text are linked to the artists' online exhibitions. The catalog also provides excerpts from the essays and screen grabs of video pages linked to the corresponding online essay and video/film.

VASA FRONT PAGE PROJECTS



The VASA FRONT PAGE PROJECT
presents the work of photographers, video,
and sound artists

VASA : center for media studies

Rui Pedro Chagas*Portugal***To Freedom***Front Page Project #25*

Georgian people are passionate by heart. They like to toast while sitting at the table. During meals or drinking evenings, dozens of toasts are made. Each toast is an elaborated thought, exposing feelings and wishful dreams. It usually lasts several minutes.

It is a moment when people enjoy sharing the same time and space in each other's company. It is a way to bring up a conversation on a subject. Georgians often toast to the ones we love and to the ones which are no longer among us. "To freedom" and "To peace" are also the most common subjects for toasts.

Rui focused on the Freedom of Georgians way of living, their peoples, animals, their thankfulness for the great Nature, and general being in the world - Gaumarjos!

Natalya Reznik*Germany***Looking For My Father***Front Page Project #26*

“I was always interested in meeting my father. The last time I saw him, I was three years old. I decided to reflect this idea using photography. I do not remember what he looked like, and I do not have any image of him in my memory, but rather I try to “find” him by means of photography, to create memories which I never had — memories about family with my father.

My mother was always dreaming of the ideal man. When we were watching movies of 60s and 70s with French and Italian actors (Belmondo, Delon, Mastroianni, Marais), she was always excited and often said to me: “I always liked that kind of man.”

She met my father in Sochi. It was a “resort affair” quickly led to marriage. She did not know much about him, only that he was a captain and worked somewhere in Northern Russia. They never lived together. He usually came for a few weeks and then disappeared. At some point my mother found out that he had another wife and child. She could never forgive him and soon they divorced.”

Stephen Perloff

USA

East and West

Front Page Project #27



This group of pictures, *East and West*, features photographs made on a trip to the Far East in 1977 and on a cross-country trip to the American West in 1978. These images represent my reactions to cultural and topographical clashes between each of these cultures and between these places and my own here in the Eastern U.S.

Stephen Perloff is the founder and editor of *The Photo Review*, a critical journal of international scope publishing since 1976, and editor of *The Photograph Collector*, the leading source of information on the photography art market. He has taught photography and the history of photography at numerous Philadelphia-area colleges and universities and has been the recipient of two grants from the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts for arts criticism. He was the recipient of the Sol Mednick Award for 2000 from the Mid-Atlantic region of the Society for Photographic Education, the first annual Vanguard Award from the Philadelphia Center for the Photographic Image in 2007, and the Colin Ford Award for Curatorship from the Royal Photographic Society in 2012.

Stefania Zorzi*Italy***MEMORIE IN PASSI***Front Page Project #28*

Between 2014 and 2015, in a series of self-portraits, the artist creates to life places and memories from her childhood. Throughout the photos, she once again experiences the feelings she felt when she was still living with her family. She climbs up the stairs to the terrace, which was a meeting point of emotional importance, as old photos suggest. So in the absence of concrete own memories she walks on a trail which is an “historical” reconstruction, virtually forming a background of the story.

In the footsteps of her memory, the viewer follows the now adult Stefania through the scenes she has already spent in childhood. As a result, past and present moods intermingle: Fear and at the same time the - still - childlike curiosity to exceed thresholds. Dream, curiosity and presence evoke old and new visions. The time remaining on the stairs, the steps and breaks, anticipate the quiet melody for the last dance: the miracle of the night on the terrace like a catharsis. Being able to leave the past for a new future.

Noemi Veberič Levovnik*Slovenia***The Box***Front Page Project #29*

A discarded box found on the streets of Paris has led Noemi Veberic Levovnik, a Slovenian artist, to explore the objects and images found within its contents. The images were discarded snapshots documenting, she believed, the life of its past owner. Noemi has reconstructed the snapshots found in the box, creating a new story, a new life from the records discarded inside.

Noemi Veberič Levovnik (1985) is active in the field of performance art, music, visual art and moving image. She graduated from Film and Fine Arts at the University of Paris 8 and from Contemporary Art at the Ecole supérieure d'art de Quimper. Her artistic practice is at the constant intersection of different artistic disciplines, techniques and media. She explores the notions of identity, gender, feminine, dream. She is very interested in psychology and psychoanalysis, which have a constant influence on her work.

Igor Manko*Ukraine***The Sea, The Skies, and The Black Earth***Front Page Project #30*

“Here in eastern Ukraine, we are living through a desperate and depressing time. The media picture those maimed and killed at the front almost every day, the news of escalation of the hostilities fill social networks. Helicopters roar over your head carrying the wounded to the hospitals. Making fancy images with elaborate compositional arrangements feels wrong, like saying a lie. Narrowing down the range of visual components to basic elements - the water, the air, the earth - mirrors the contraction of one’s everyday being to the basic values like life and death.”

Igor Manko’s work is exhibited here because of its relevance to current political conditions in Ukraine. The austerity of these images function on a metaphorical and personal level.

Igor is a head curator for VASA. His major research and exhibition for VASA is the four part “Kharkiv School of Photography: Soviet Censorship to New Aesthetics”. Igor Manko lives in Kharkiv, Ukraine.

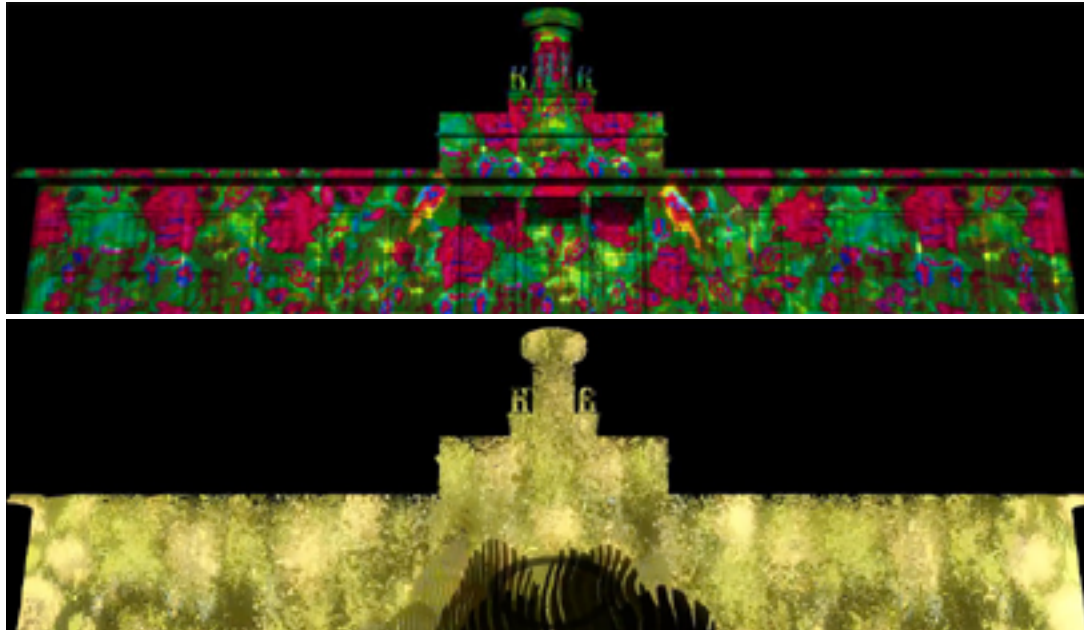
Paul Marotta

USA

Holy Week in Enna, Sicily: Ancient Traditions*Front Page Project #31*

At first glance any American would recoil at the image of what appears to be masses of people processing in the night, adorned with pointed cone-shaped hoods and white cloths covering their faces with cut-out eyeholes. Any reminiscences of the Klan and the horror they inflicted on black Americans is fraught with terror and evil-meaning intent. Scholars believe that in the years immediately following the Civil War as many as 10,000 blacks were lynched and in the intervening years untold others were terrorized and murdered. It is also thought that the Paris trained costume designer for D.W. Griffith's *The Birth of a Nation*, Clare West, may have been influenced by the ancient traditions of Europe during Holy Week, specifically the Spanish tradition dating from the 15th century of donning robes and hoods during the Easter week processions.

In Enna, this tradition continues today as the many religious confraternities turn out for a day long solemn procession throughout the city.

Yaroslav Kostenko, Iryna Ilyinska*Ukraine***“Singing” (a video projection)***Front Page Project #32*

Wassyl Slipak was an opera singer from Ukraine, a soloist at Paris National Opera, who volunteered to defend his homeland when the war in eastern Ukraine started in 2014. He was killed by a sniper on June 29, 2016.

Video artist Yaroslav Kostenko and painter Iryna Ilyinska dedicated their project to Wassyl Slipak. Iryna Ilyinska's *Singing* diptych is a painting depiction of a traditional Ukrainian carpet with nightingales and flowers. Nightingales are the best singing talents found among birds, but birds are also associated with human souls descending down to the earth from heaven. The depiction of a rose is a symbol of the Sun, love and life. The artist uses the colors of traditional ornament to underpin the symbolic values of his work. The video projection is accompanied by music composed by a Viennese composer Karlheinz Essl (Mozart-Lamento), a recording of nightingale's singing, sounds of machine gun shots and fragments of an aria sung by Wassyl Slipak.

Kyunghee Lee*South Korea***Life from Time-Space***Front Page Project #33*

“This portfolio is about my very personal interest and contemplation on ‘Life from Time-Space’.

My interest is in time and space. The interest is not only the progress of science but also the fundamental of human beings. I have questions like ‘Who am I?’, ‘Where do I come from?’. Us, human-beings have been considered the center of universe since the Modern era. But let’s think differently and change perspectives by looking at ourselves from the universe. We are not actually the center of the universe. We are just in the flow of substances. If we are able to see ourselves from the perspective of outer space, we would be more humble and have more respect for other lives. We would be more cordial to each other and have more dignity for ourselves by recognizing that it took a long-long time of the harmonious universe order for us to be present. This recognition is very important and could become the words of comfort to cope with daily traumas we face.”

Steve Cagan

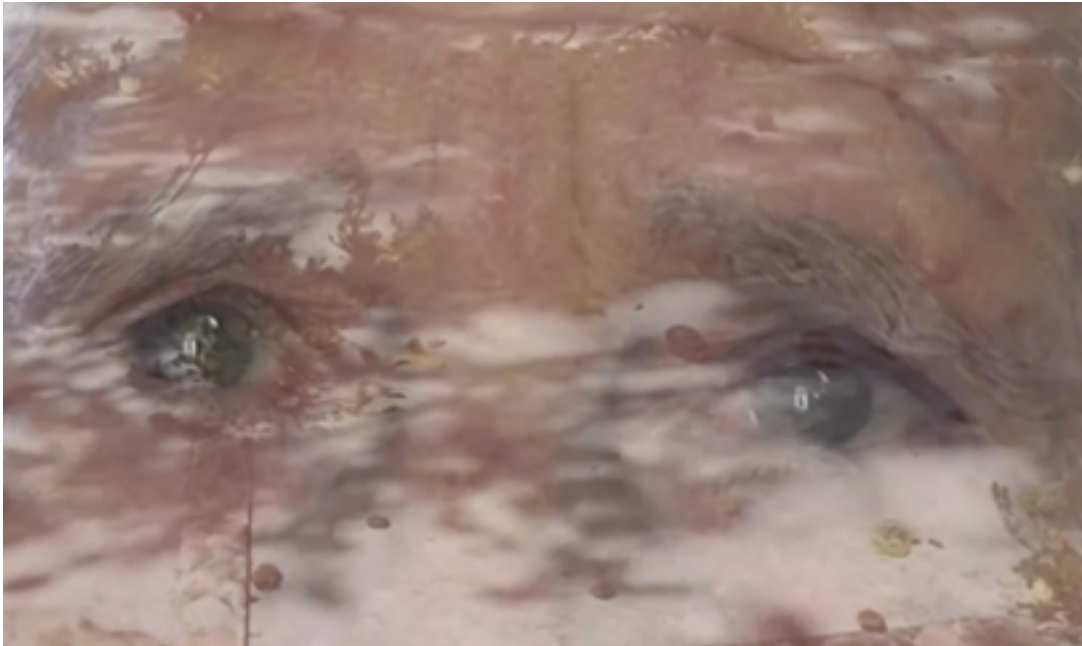
USA

Industrial Landscapes*Front Page Project #34*

Once, our view of the economic health of Cleveland was centered on industry in areas like the Flats, rather than the “Euclid corridor.” We believed social wealth depended on the muscle and brains, the coordinated labor, the ingenuity and dedication of men and women who built our economy, who understood they were workers, and so built strong unions through which they won security, decent wages and dignified working conditions.

When I arrived here in 1970, things had already begun to change; Cleveland and Ohio had entered the decline toward the disastrous economic conditions that we have suffered recently. We have not yet recovered from the flight of industry to non-union areas of the southern United States and overseas in the 80s and 90s.

Steve Cagan lives in Cleveland, Ohio. He was born in New York City in 1943.

Nicoleta Avgousti and Katia Savvides*Cyprus***The sustainability of the circle
I am Alone, Nobody is Here (video)***Front Page Project #35*

In an abandoned village of the countryside of Cyprus, a daily figure, the only habitant, with her identity unaffected, carries the image and the character of a past era. Simultaneously she is an observer and judge of today's lifestyle through the lives of her children.

Trying to fool time, through a game of then and now, Mrs. Maria of Lazania village situates moments/excerpts from her life, her soul and the time that is gone forever.

Nicoleta Avgousti studied Fine Arts and Visual Arts Education at Valdosta State University, Georgia, USA, and earned her BFA in 1997.

Katia Savvides completed her BFA in Fine Arts at Bowling Green University, Ohio, USA, in 1993, where she studied painting, mixed techniques - contemporary and experimental applications. Savvides and Avgousti have been working collectively since 2014.

SINGUL.AR Collective*Ukraine***Augmented Reality Videos***Front Page Project #36*

What is reality? Is it what we feel, when we interact with the “outer” world or is it the outer world itself? The trees, the ground, the sea, the mountains, the sky - everything is there, even when we don’t look at it.

But are the things from the immaterial world also real even if we can’t see or touch them? Of course they are! For example our memories or a magic world, or that of a child who has built dreams out of sticks and stones.

Also real are the hallucinations, that people with mental disorders or those under drug influence have. Nobody can convince them, that the dragons, huge spiders and snakes that are hunting them, don’t exist. For these people the hallucinations are absolutely real - having texture, smell and the finest detailisation.

VASA EXHIBITIONS



VASA ONLINE EXHIBITION PROGRAM
hosts the work of established and emerging artists
in sound, photography, and the digital media arts

VASA : center for media studies

Gennadiy Chernega*Ukraine***Stray Dog Story***Curator: Sinyagur*

“Dog leash as a sign of confidence and a thin thread of communication with the author. Keeping it, stroking the box, shots, watching. However, we talk and keep silent, probably not always productive. Today, Stray Dog went with me. So I’m not a bad person. This is probably one of the few projects where the author can be asked in detail about each shot taken, about his internal state and external cues. It is this intimate submission, the story told to each viewer personally that makes it unique and accords with the content. These are small pictures from life, they have no heroism, but a lot of quiet hysteria and hidden drama. It seems that Gena is a bit shy of the simplicity and ordinariness of the pictures. While they are important. We always remember from our childhood some trivia: a pitted mug, a funny signboard in the opposite house, how many steps are from the entrance to our door. And never - the exact coordinates and epic battles. Goodness and Evil grow from the little things of everyday life, that’s why these notes in the margins are so important. It is an ongoing traveling project. No galleries - at least in their traditional comprehension. To see the photos and to hear the story you need to arrange a meeting with the author.”

Andrzej Baturo*Poland***50 Years of Photography***Curator: Roberto Muffoletto*

The VASA retrospective exhibition of the photographic work of Andrzej Baturo covers fifty years of his life in photography. On display here are 59 images from his recently published book “Andrzej Baturo: 50 years of photography”. The book provides the opportunity to consider a body of work defining the vision and interest of an image-maker framing their text and position.

Many have defined his work as reportage or social commentary. I would include in this list of genera a personal vision, framing his perception concerning life in Poland until the late 1980s. As a photojournalist he did not value photographing the usual orchestrated and scripted media events. Instead he turned his camera towards the urban environment and country villages, the everyday life of the everyday people. His images are metaphors for life under socialist times. In the 1980s Baturo stopped making images of “social life” because of the increase in censorship and the tightening of personal expression and reporting in Poland. In the 1990s he turned to photographing the mountains, not the life of the people, but the beauty of the landscape as only a photograph could exhibit.

Group exhibition*Ukraine***Dnipropetrovsk School of Photography***Curators: Lyolya Goldstein, Masha Khrushchak*

© Yuri Brodsky

In 1970 - 1980, the city under an unpronounceable name of Dnipropetrovsk in the then Soviet Ukraine was a closed locality. The city's classified munitions industry put a ban on entry for any curious foreign visitors. Even musicians from the Warsaw Pact states weren't allowed to perform there at that time, and local inhabitants had to travel to neighboring cities for a bit of non-Soviet entertainment.

It was probably this special status to which the city owed its monotonous architectural mediocrity and the general downbeat mood. Its local inhabitants alone were not worth the Potemkin village front expenditure, the effort normally saved for the eyes of Westerners in the Soviet Union.

Such an atmosphere must have had a say in prevailing artistic mindsets. The images by five photographers showcased in this exhibition confirm the theory: the isolated ambience, the discernible existential angst of a city dweller evident even in picturesque rural settings and at the Crimean seashore, or disguised behind dexterous monocle simulations.

Ani Zur*Ukraine***Fertility***Curator: Roberto Muffoletto*

In her *Fertility* series Ani Zurr, a Ukrainian artist, turns to mythology and the daily craft of ancient women in Slavic culture in reconsidering the role of a woman in modern society.

Brought up in a matriarchal family, Zurr has been photographing women relatives and daughters for 4 years; she also appears as a hero in the one of photos in an attempt to live out the ancestors' experience, to feel the sacral dispensation of a primeval woman, to retrace her secret connection with the Earth. The exhibition is an attempt to find self identity. The work in the 'Fertility' series reflects on the 'female mission' and an intuitive part of a female self, gradually lost with the development of civilization. Images not only demonstrate bare female essence, opening it layer by layer; they reveal the uncertain perceptions about female purpose in the modern world. Women appear as faceless figures with naked breasts recollecting some primitive arts that portrayed women as small figures without faces. Ani Zur refers to ancient artistic traditions in an attempt to recall the initial order of things and to underline the symbolic meanings of plots.

Paula Scamparini*Brazil****Palavas and Munchen****Curator: Roberto Muffoletto*

The VASA exhibition by the Brazilian artist Paula Scamparini places two bodies of work, *Palavas* (2012) and *Munchen* (2015), framed within voice of the artist, the author of the images. Giving authors a voice to contextualize inquires not only places the exhibition in a continuum but speaks to the broader constellation of creative efforts. This framing of the work provides a different perspective, signifying another referent. Through the inclusion of a video conversation with Paula the artist and author is voicing her intentions and interest. In the process she reveals her creative, emotional and cognitive self.

What the video conversation reveals is a consistent and committed inquiry into expressive formats from photography, video, sculpture and performance. What cements her inquiries, while crossing borders between traditional media, is a baseline for communication: narratives, text and language.

Daniel Muchiut*Argentina***Photographs and videos***Curator: Roberto Muffoletto*

VASA Exhibitions is presenting the work of Daniel Muchiut a photographer living and working in Argentina. Included in this exhibition are six visual essays emerging out of his work inquiring into the lives of indigenous people and their environment. The work here may be viewed as anthropological within a sociological paradigm. The images included in these visual essays are not stage setups as we would find in portraiture or people selected and posed to photograph because of their camera likeness, they are images taken at the moment with full permission.

Included in this exhibition are two videos. “LEQUEYO” merges and is married to the visual essay of the same name. “Behind The Photographs” or “DETRÁS DE LA FOTO” is a discussion in Spanish with the photographer.

Irena Giedraitienė*Lithuania***A Retrospective***Curator: Roberto Muffoletto*

“It is my conviction that Irena Giedraitienė just cannot not take photographs. All evidence seems to show that the need for photography is simply in her nature. Her creative ideas flow unstoppably like water, touching a variety of topics, styles, and choices of photographic expressions, and never running out. The photographs and the information surrounding them change themselves and effect change. While other photographers of Giedraitienės generation have mostly been dedicating their time to sorting their archives, publishing monographs, and holding retrospective shows, she is still photographing at eighty, although everything she may have needed to prove has already been proven. Most of her series have no termination date - what if another chance presents itself to capture the perfect moment? Sometimes this reckless position can be difficult to understand, this disregard of everything, even life circumstances that are not at all conducive to creativity. I am not sure whether this is a survival gene installed by a difficult start in life, or principles taught later by the family, or maybe just her own essence. (Eglė Deltuvaitė “A Woman With A Photo Camera”, Kultūros meniu, Vilnius, 2016)

Michael Michlmayr*Austria***Time Stories***Curator: Roberto Muffoletto*

Approaching a body of work offers various considerations for inquiry.

These would include contemporary analysis of field and how the work is positioned; an historical review placing the work within the flow of time; seeing the work as a moment in the continuous evolution of the image-maker; constructing a context within a social historical framework; seeing the work as a closed system outside any historical or contemporary consideration; and finally address the image-maker and the influences and paradigm from which she emerged.

The VASA exhibition “Time Stories” by Michael Michlmayr is inviting in two ways. First, it challenges us to reflect on and consider the nature of time and space as experienced through camera made images in concert with the construction or building of images outside the camera (photoshop). The title of this exhibition “Time Stories” defines the guiding frame for analysis and discussion. Second, Michlmayr draws us into reflecting on an historical context of photography, one that constructed false images of reality (I am comfortable with saying that all images of reality are false.), forcing us to question again the veracity of the image and the signifier as reference to truth.

Group exhibition

USA

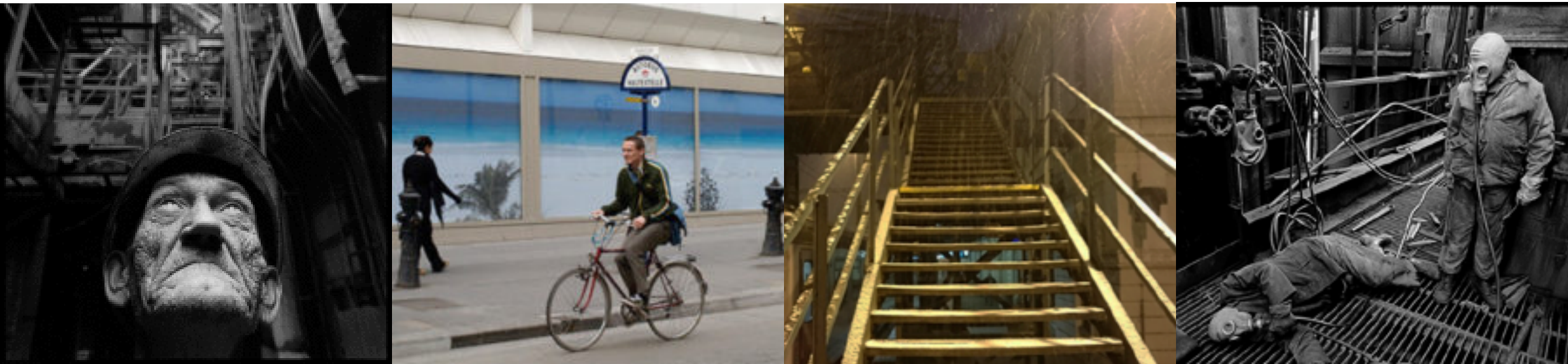
Wilson 4*Curator: Roberto Muffoletto*

© Gray Whitley

This exhibition is in sorts a celebration of the dynamics and fluidity of photography. The four photographers on display in the *Wilson 4* exhibition (Gray Whitley, Eric Pickersgrill, Robert Cassanova, Juan Giraldo) represent the diversity of approaches and values found in four paradigms of image making: pictorialism, documentary, formalism and conceptualization.

What unifies the four photographers is their location and engagement with the “Eyes on Main Street” photography festival in Wilson North Carolina – Thus the title of the VASA exhibition – and a shared inquiry into the image(s) as a vehicle for the representation of place and ideas. Each draws upon various paradigms providing structure, historical context and consistency to their work.

JOURNAL ON IMAGES AND CULTURE



The JOURNAL ON IMAGES AND CULTURE publishes
theoretical and research papers
that develop a theme or position

VASA : center for media studies

Sándor Szilágyi

Hungary

On Photography

A thematic series

Imre Benkő

Ózd is a steel town of fifty thousand inhabitants near the Slovakian border in Northeastern Hungary. Once a living monument to the “Heroes of Work”, it now resembles a tombstone of our Communist past. The steelworks, which in their heyday employed thirteen thousand men, have closed, leaving one-third of Ózd’s work force unemployed.

Economists and politicians argue that the closure was an inevitable result of the transition from Communism to democracy, from a planned economy to a free market. This may be true. Heavy industry in Hungary, under Communism, was supported artificially by the government, for both political and ideological reasons: the state was determined to prop up the defence sector during the cold war and to uphold the dogma of full employment. Most of the profits from agriculture and trade were pumped into industry, making its outdated technologies appear profitable. In short, the socio-economic situation of the past was largely based on a big lie—and not just in Ózd.

But the transition to democracy, and the change from a single-party to a multi-party system also heralded the era of the multi-lie. At first, Ózd’s workers were told that they would not lose their jobs and then, that only parts of the steelworks would be closed. Shortly after that, they were told that privatisation would bring new job opportunities and training in modern technology.



© Imre BENKŐ: Repairmen.Furnace-blast Plant. Ózd, 1989

But for Ózd’s men and women, as well as for millions of Hungarians and other central-eastern Europeans, democracy proved costlier than they might have imagined. The vast majority lost everything they used to live and work for: financial security, a decent standard of living, a safe old age, a better life for their children. Imre Benkő’s photographs of Ózd chronicle these losses.

When Steel Town was published in 1996 it caused a sensation in Hungary’s photographic community. This was, after all, the first published book by one of the country’s most prestigious photographers, who had World Press and Pulitzer prizes behind him. Benkő, who was fifty-three, had taken the pictures over a period of almost ten years. This was part of the sensation, for in Hungary there are only a handful of

photographers who work that hard on a single theme. The rest simply can not afford it. At best, newspapers and magazines pay the equivalent of the price of five rolls of film for an image. Moreover, magazines are not interested in publishing photographic reports, preferring to use photographs as illustrations. Without the help of the W. Eugene Smith Foundation, Benkő would not have been able to complete this work.

Steel Town (1996) was also well regarded for its originality and use of visual symbolism. The pictures reveal an unmistakable sympathy, even empathy, with people that transcends solidarity. Benkő was no stranger to hard labor, having grown up in a small miners’ community in the Bakony hills. As a result, he was able to take the photographs from an „insider” perspective. He is quiet and self-effacing; and his integrity may have helped the relationship with his subjects, allowing him to tell their story as it happens. He relates their tales with a tinge of irony and humor, while never indulging in melodrama, sentimental kitsch, or socio-critical clichés. This humour is deeply rooted in the traditions of central-eastern European literature and film – just think of Bohumil Hrabal and Milos Forman.

Furthermore, the amalgam of sympathy, empathy, and irony is apparent in the way Benkő depicts the backdrop to the unfolding drama. The gargantuan steelworks are pictured in dynamic lines and forms...

Dan Duda*United States*

May 2017

Just a Moment

There's a link between science and art. When science penetrates too far into reality where a human mind can't comprehend what's going on, art tries to march forward into the unknowable. One of the topics beyond the reach of common sense is time. To many of our most powerful and well-known thinkers and scientists, time doesn't pass at all, there is only "now." From Buddha to Einstein, the concept of time is so clear to them but totally baffling to us. How can there be only now? It's so obvious that time has passed since you started reading this article.

Interestingly, the fields of artistic painting and photography are wont to deal with this topic. Powerfully capturing a decisive moment in a single frame is the talent that separates artist from the novice practitioner.

According to Albert Einstein "*...people like us who believe in physics know that the distinction between the past, the present and the future is only a stubbornly persistent illusion.*" For him, the classical understanding of time began to fall apart with his insight on relativity. In that breakthrough theory, time is just another dimension like up/down; backward/forward; and, left/right. And it's not constant—the speed of time's passage that affects us depends on the impact of motion and gravity. And, just what did he mean by "time's passage" if there is only "now"? Uncle Albert and the many scientists in his camp on



© Michael Michlmayr

this topic describe something called "the block universe." One way to come to grips with this idea is to ask, 'does time pass...or do we pass through an existing field that we call time?' In the latter scenario everything that ever happened, everything that is happening now, and everything that ever will happen is all laid out in one interconnected landscape of "now." The dinosaurs are there, as well as the asteroid that ended them. The best and the worst moments of our lives still exist in this block universe. And that alien invasion (or whatever will happen in the future) is there too. It's like an old vinyl record—the stylus intersects the groove causing awareness of the vibrations stimulated at that specific point—but the whole record and all its grooves still exist at one time in spite of the fact that our attention is riveted to just one spot. (*For those too young to remember vinyl*

The Quantum and the Visual Arts*A thematic series*

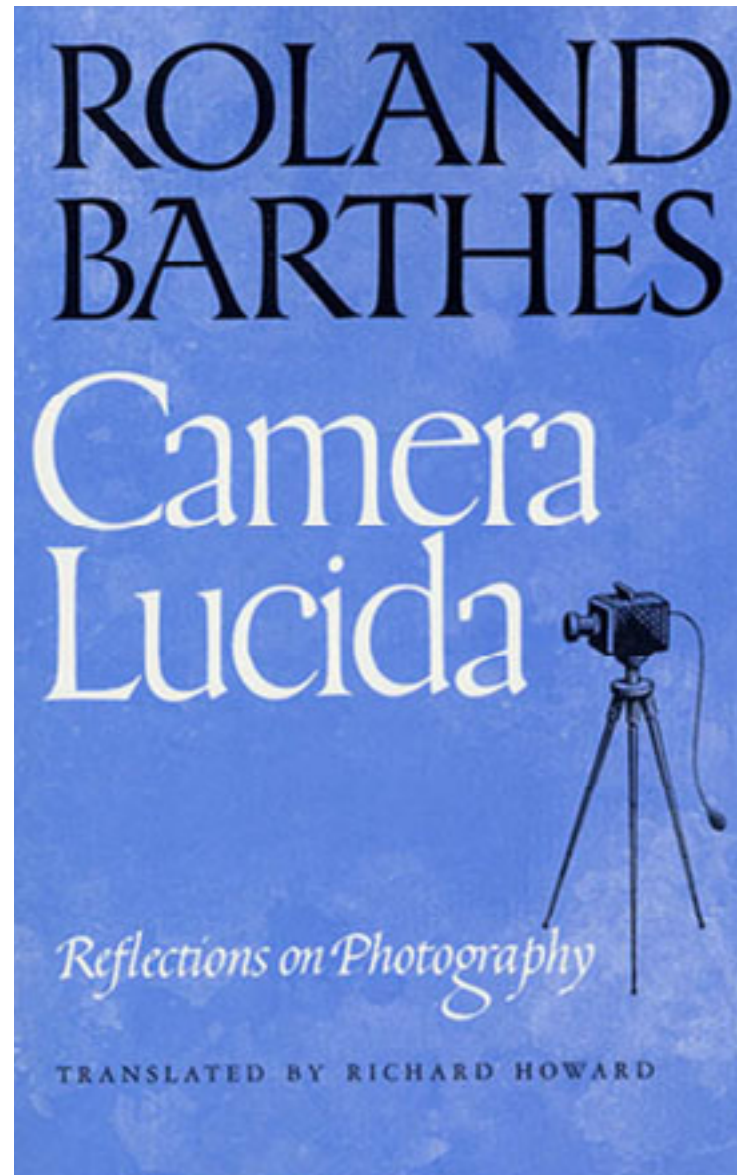
records, think of the laser of a CD player interacting with the pits on a disk. And, if you're too young for that, you'll have to develop your own metaphor).

A British physicist, Julian Barbour, largely agrees with Einstein's view of time. However, he has articulated another way to look at why we perceive (or misperceive) time as we do. His ideas are based on the assumption that there is no framework to the universe. He describes motion and the perceived passage of time as being "background independent." According to Barbour "*Time is a measure of difference between two configurations.*" Therefore, it's not so much that time passes, but rather that things change. A reasonable metaphor is a movie. The film proceeds one frame at a time—each succeeding frame changed slightly. Yet the whole film exists...

Ione Manzali*Brazil*

A book considered his most personal and his most philosophical, *La chambre claire* was released by Roland Barthes in 1980, and turned out to be tremendously influential in Photography studies. Its unsystematic structure and purposely casual and intimate tone does not compromise the knowledgeable contents and the rigorous approach. Here, Barthes matured his longtime interest in Photography concentrated between 1961 and 1973, and later gathered in a collection of essays published in the USA in 1971 as *Image, Music, Text*. *La chambre claire* was his last book, he died soon after delivering the manuscripts.

In the original title, Barthes plays a french *jeux de mots*, with a XIX century optical device, named in italian *camera lucida*, *chambre claire* in French, *lightroom* in English, calling for an inquiry on the beginnings of photography. According to mainstream Photography history, such development goes from hand drawing fleeting white reflected lines on black paper of the lightroom device, to dark lines that imprint themselves on white paper, in a dark-room. Let's remember that Barthes did not lived to see the digital form of Photography and therefore all of his analysis deal with the analogical form. Now, if one talks about genesis, the birth of something, that one is speaking Phenomenology. Why? because Phenomenology was initiated by Husserl in order to describe how anything, any and all phenomena, come to be what they are and to pro-

Phenomenology of Photography – Roland Barthes*A thematic series*

vide the explanation on the way these phenomena happen as original manifestations in one's mind.

Right in the opening pages, our writer tell us how stricken he was by noticing himself performing a particular kind of look, a look that gazed at a specific kind of evidence, a photographic evidence, "*I am looking at the eyes that looked at the emperor*" (p.3). Along the book, the phenomenological intentional gaze, where meaning and image are simultaneous, is pointed by Barthes as the key to understand the nature of Photography. Barthes focus on Photography's unique privilege of bringing back an essential connection to factuality, i.e, its ability of substantive presentification, of "bringing back the dead" by presenting traces of an absence, and with it an awareness of time, fragmentation and mortality. That particularity makes, even in legal terms, photography as evidence of an event. Well, evidence [*Evidenz*], is a dear term in Husserl's Phenomenology, indicating the concretion of self-presentation [*Selbstdarstellung*] of an actual entity. Husserl, the creator of the Phenomenological movement, aimed in his writings to access the pre-theoretical field of consciousness by combining and overcoming both the empiricist and the transcendental schools of philosophy. Taking the traditional representation of phenomena as a secondary standing, Husserlian Phenomenology cares not what something represents or symbolizes but its essential meaning and value as guarantee for things actual presence, i.e., their truth.

Daniela Noitz

Austria

Daniela Noitz, born in 1972 in Austria, studied German, Theology and Economics in Vienna. After a long run with many detours, she works as a ghost-writer, texter and writer.

Seeing was first. Both in phylogeny and ontogenesis. Man perceives his world, from the beginning, and is equally non-verbal. The verbal expression comes comparatively late. When a baby comes to the world it looks. Probably in the restricted space, but just so far that it can recognize the face of who takes it up and accepts it. Seeing is turning. Then the view widens into the world into which it is thrown. This limitation in the beginning is a protection from the primordial imbalance of the living that surrounds the world. The starting point of being in the world is the inclusion in the community. From there, the going out takes place and becomes familiar in the view. This amazement over the surplus can be understood later, when one climbs a high mountain and the world spreads itself in front of you one time. Amazement, which manages without words, because there is none.

The overcoming of the moment of cognition, in which one becomes aware that this is what I recognize and which already astonishes me, is only a small part of what is recognizable. The immediacy of experience, of impression, is a purely personal event, which is neither partial nor communicable in that individuality. In holding the moment, he loses his immediacy. A mediator intervenes between the moment of experience and expression, whether in the form of a pictorial

representation, in whatever form or in a narrative. In any case, the focus is directed to something and the non-focused is spared. The banned image is a cut-out. On the one hand, the depiction is consciously impoverished, but precisely because of this impoverishment a concentration on the one aspect to which the mediator aims is successful. He does not want to force us into a totality, but into the essence of what we have seen, which he wishes to communicate.



© Roberto Muffoletto

Whereby it is not said that the recipient accepts that aspect. The image itself is fixed, static. It is, in its kind, a *conditio sine qua non*, which the recipient can neither admit nor oppose, because he does not directly experience the particular aspect. He remains in his freedom of perception and even sets his focus in a contradictory way. This freedom and openness of the reception makes possible the communication and change the topic into a linguistic one by the person depicted. As end-valid as it appears in its elabora-

The image, the text and the author

A thematic series

tion, it is so indeterminate in perception. In the linguistic dispute, in the approaching it is revived, re-seen and changed. The linguistic expression can make it relative, expand, constrict or simply be.

For Michael Warner, both “the political critique of personal life and the identitarian critique of political life—are often described, confusingly enough, as identity politics.” This dual definition of identity politics, while sometimes confusing, lends itself to broadening the discourse of visual culture and its relation to identity. As you shall see in this issue of the VASA Journal of Images and Culture (VJIC), all of the projects included explore the intersections between the personal and political, often collapsing the two and blurring the line between such categorical distinctions.

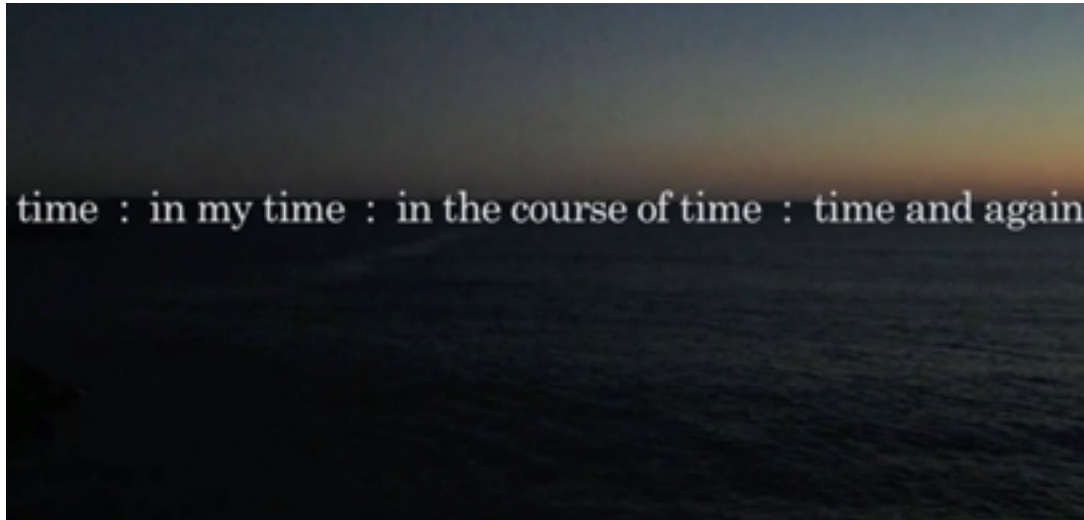
The picture is here. It is something given. The freedom of the recipient begins at the point at which he decides whether or not he or she is entering into the given. The decision for this involvement is, in the rarest of cases, a conscious one, but one aspect that appeals and forces the concentration. This does not necessarily have to be the motive. It can be a color shading, a certain way of brightness or the absence of brightness, a vague memory, a supposed recognition, an undefined intuition, and much more, but whatever it is, it takes me into seeing, into seeing, which someone else is pretending to follow, to follow or to oppose. The seeing was first, and yet the seen, the artificial, mediated vision can be enriched and expanded by language. The individual I see...

VASA VIDEO / FILM SERIES



The VASA VIDEO / FILM SERIES is designed to highlight an artist or to explore a theme over a period of time. The series are archived and may be accessed through the VASA platform

VASA : center for media studies

Carla Della Beffa*Italy***Video series***Curator: Roberto Muffoletto*Still from *Timeline* © Carla Della BeffaStill from *The 4-Minute Proust* © Carla Della Beffa

Carla Della Beffa is a video, photo and relational artist and curator. Formerly art director and creative director in international advertising agencies, she has had experiences (and exhibitions) as a painter and a net-artist. Carla lives in Milan but is actively involved in international residencies, exhibitions and festivals.

*** Installment 1 – February 2017**

“In 2011, I spent a month living in Newark and commuting every day to Manhattan (USA). I saw the victims of recession (the bus stop was the same), worked, and visited Occupy Wall Street. I didn’t really agree with them, but they planted a seed. As soon as I came back to Italy, a new government imposed severe austerity measures on us. That’s how and when I started to study economy and money issues that changed the focus of my art.”

Svelare l’economia - Unveiling Economy (2016, video HD, stereo, 1’20’)

Business as Usual (2014, video HD, stereo, 2’30’)

Dress Code (2016, video HD, stereo, 2’50’)

Timeline (2016, video HD, stereo, 3’)

*** Installment 2 – March 2017**

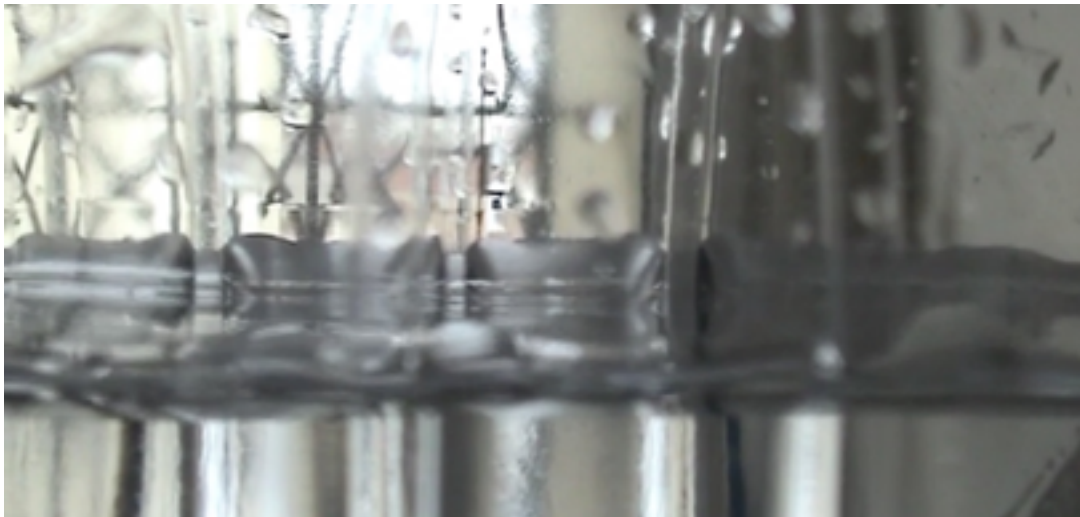
“I love reading, and many of the books I read suggest to me new research. I never know what ideas may come out of it. My videos about the themes of life and love are often inspired by literature and by what happens around me. As Picasso said, You always paint yourself.”

The 4-Minute Proust (2014, video, PAL, 4’)

Qohélet (2004, video PAL, stereo, 5’)

Petit Chaperon Rouge (2010, video HD, stereo, 3’)

Masters & Mentors (2015, video HD, 3’)

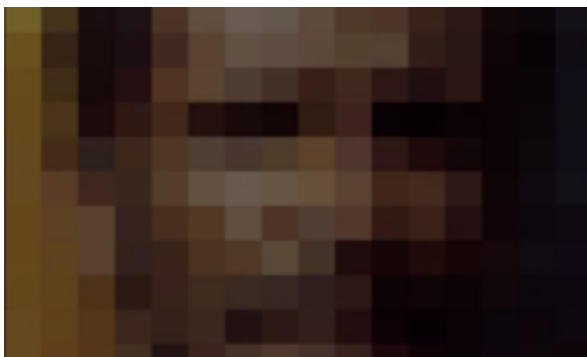
Carla Della Beffa*Italy***Video series***Curator: Roberto Muffoletto*Still from *La cérémonie des adieux* © Carla Della BeffaStill from *H2O* © Carla Della Beffa

“The conceptual difference between video and film lies not as much in the support, since today many films are somehow digital anyway, as in the language. If I had to define it, I would say that video is usually based on a single idea, visual or other, not on telling a story with a start and an end. It might tell a story, actually, but it will sound and look different from feature films narration: for some authors, the mix of techniques tells the two levels of fact and feeling; for others, a simple image can be exploited for minutes and enter into a never-ending loop; some joke, or hint at emotions, with flashes of very few seconds.”

*** Installment 3 – April 2017****La cérémonie des adieux** (2006, video PAL, stereo, 5'00")**Lolita** (2007, video PAL, stereo, 43")**Rituali** (2007, video PAL, stereo, 2'20")**Expatriate** (2005, video PAL, stereo, 2'50")*** Installment 4 – May 2017**

“You know how you react to events and situation: you're happy, unhappy, upset, angry... I too react, and then try to transform the emotion into something less personal, more inclusive, sometimes humorous, or subtext-revealing. Not universal, but with a larger scope than me, me, me.”

Decibel (2003, video, 3'10")**Une Saison en Enfer** (2004, video, 1'20")**H2O** (2014, video, 45")**Aprile è il più crudele dei mesi** (2001, video, 60")

16 video artists*Italy***Almost Friends***Curator: Carla Della Beffa*Still from *Le Retour à la Raison* © Alessandro BruciniStill from *Romantici* © Coniglio ViolaStill from *The Last Supper* © Debora Hirsch

Being invited by VASA project to curate a selection of Italian videos and films, I chose artists I know and appreciate: some of my colleagues and almost friends. Most of the selected videos are by visual artists that work with moving images as well as with other media. One of them produces great videos but defines himself a painter. A few are film- and documentary-makers. Some prefer to express themselves with performances. Others still use drawings and animation.

Techniques and subjects are different, and vary from one artist to another: homages to other artists and intimate, everyday details; works about economy, visions of cities; poetry and technology; performances and interviews. With my review, I aim to give an overall idea of what happens in Italy in the field of moving images: not an impossibly complete catalog, but a multi-faceted sampling (in alphabetical order) of good, varied, significant works by people I like.

*** Installment 1 – September 2017**

Elena Arzuffi *Crunchy Love*
(2008, 3' 10", video PAL)

Giovanni Bai *Effetto Serra*
(2016, video, 1' 19")

Giovanni Bai *Zapruder*
(2013, 1' 49")

Alessandro Brucini *Le Retour à la Raison*
(2001, video, 3' 06")

Coniglio Viola *Romantici*
(2007 HDV video 3' 50")

Still from *Carpeting the Ceiling* © Stefania MiglioratiStill from *Eating Money* © Cesare PietroiustiStill from *ETIX* © Debora Hirsch

16 video artists

Italy

Almost Friends

Curator: Carla Della Beffa



Still from *TO BE CONTINUED...* © Chiara Pergola



Still from *The Way that can be ...* © Chiara Pergola



Still from *Corpo docente* © Federico Pagliarini

* *Installment 2 – October 2017*

Carlo Dell'Acqua *Doppio cerchio*
(2003, Pal video, colour, sound, 7'00" loop)

Debora Hirsch *The Last Supper*
(Video, 1'20")

Debora Hirsch *ETIX*

Stefania Migliorati *Carpeting the Ceiling*
(video animation, 1'50" (4:3), 2012)

movimentomilc *Ciò dubbi*

Giancarlo Norese *Orn (porn with no P)*

* *Installment 3 – November 2017*

Federico Pagliarini *A series of videos*

Chiara Pergola
The Way that can be spoken is not the Eternal Way
(2013, video, PAL, 0'54")

Chiara Pergola *TO BE CONTINUED...*
(2010, video, PAL, 1'33")

Cesare Pietroiusti *Eating Money – An Auction*
(2005-2007)

* *Installment 4 – December 2017*

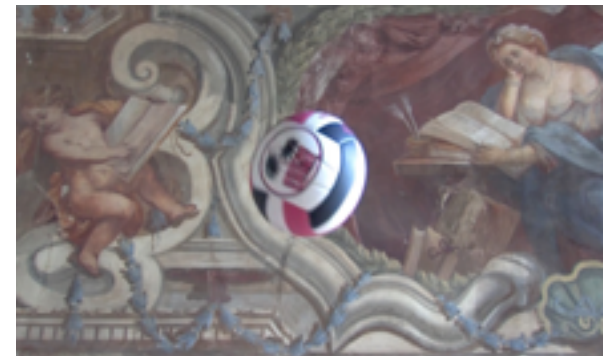
Devis Venturelli *Sporting club*
(2015, video HD, 3'30")

Devis Venturelli *Eterotopia*
(2012, video HD, 3')

Liliana Carugati, Lorenzo Baldi *Autocritica*
(2016, video HD)



Still from *Eterotopia* © Devis Venturelli



Still from *Sporting club* © Devis Venturelli



Still from *Autocritica* © Liliana Carugati & Lorenzo Baldi

ARTIST AND AUTHOR INDEX

Artists', authors' and invited curators' names are linked to the exhibitions, essays, and video/film series on the VASA site.

Page numbers are linked to appropriate catalog pages.

Carlo Dell' Acqua	33	Debora Hirsch	33	Semen Prosiak	17
Elena Arzuffi	32	Iryna Ilyinska	9	Natalya Reznik	3
Nicoleta Avgousti	12	Anantkar Kaur	13	Katia Savvides	12
Giovanni Bai	32	Masha Khrushchak	17	Paula Scamparini	19
Lorenzo Baldi	33	Yaroslav Kostenko	9	SINGULAR Collective	13
Andrzej Baturo	16	Kyunghee Lee	10	Sinyagur	15
Yuri Brodsky	17	Noemi Veberič Levovnik	6	Sándor Szilágyi	25
Alessandro Brucini	32	Igor Manko	7	Michele Tarzia	33
Carla Della Beffa	30, 32	Ione Manzali	27	Andrey Utenkov	13
Steve Cagan	11	Paul Marotta	8	Vincenzo Vecchio	33
Liliana Carugati	33	Michael Michlmayr	22	Devis Venturelli	33
Robert Cassanova	23	Stefania Migliorati	33	Coniglio Viola	32
Rui Pedro Chagas	2	Mark Milov	17	Gray Whitley	23
Gennadiy Chernega	15	movimentomilc	33	Stefania Zorzi	5
Vladimir Chernykh	13	Daniel Muchiut	20	Ani Zur	18
Eglè Deltuvaitė	21	Daniela Noitz	28		
Dmitry Docunov	13	Giancarlo Norese	33		
Dan Duda	26	Federico Pagliarini	33		
Karlheinz Essl	9	Chiara Pergola	33		
Oleksandr Feldman	17	Stephen Perloff	4		
Irena Giedraitienė	21	Eric Pickersgrill	23		
Juan Giraldo	23	Cesare Pietrojusti	33		
Lyolya Goldstein	17	Stanislav Polonsky	17		



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