

Made in Video

Awards and Special Mentions

ARThropology

First Prize - *Film as Fossil* by Klaas van Gorkum

Klaas van Gorkum's 12 minutes *Film as Fossil* combines a mimic reportage style colour film from a 1960s family roundtrip in Malawi together with a telephone interview/conversation with a female film director conducted in Dutch. In the video the footage suggests an affluent situation: Colonial style housing with blond-haired kids and women sitting on the ground preparing food with children crawling about. An empty dirt road with a single, executive-style car in a fake breakdown scene. The sound is interestingly made to fit the length of the visual material producing a striking effect: the distance and alienation is miraculously overcome by the topic discussed in the conversation. What does it mean to be in power to ask questions of unknown people, and to document their answers? What does it mean to use the world as a backdrop for one's private matters? *Film as Fossil* is suggestive and full of possible, and not particularly flattering interpretations, that also involves the video artist himself. The video stops at the same time as the female voice starts to question the intentions of her male questioner, and a plane lifts off from the African country. The whole video questions the narrative prerogative, and it ends at the precise point when it would have had to change its own program for deliverance. **Staffan Schmidt**

Film as Fossil creates a visual and auditive play with distance and doubling of gazes. The distance between sound and image, present and future, private and public, black and white, questions and answers. To bridge the distance we are invited to read new meaning into the material. A Fossil - something experienced in the past is hidden and deposited in the film. The memory of the video artist becomes the memory of Holland's colonial past and in the end functions as an image of our own colonial gaze. **Kassandra Wellendorf**

Special Mention – *An Explanation: (and then burn the ashes)* by Annemarie Jacir

Annemarie Jacir's 6 minutes *An Explanation: (and then burn the ashes)* is a beautiful, calm but straightforward video about the agitation and hatred towards Muslims, and about how anything, such as sophisticated discourse, that appears to be non-patriotic in the United States since 9/11. Over the classicist architecture voices from an answering machine that are steaming with hate are heard. As a result the viewer is led to understand that freedom of speech involves struggle, when it is persistently met as a concealed

support of terrorism. In this climate even an institution such as the University seems to be beyond the reach of an enraged part of public opinion which is seeking out the enemies of the nation. **Staffan Schmidt**

The film creates a clash between images of architecture that symbolizes order and harmony of an idealized world - and the sounds of uncontrollable aggressive messages, that undermines the foundation of such a society. This creates an uncanny feeling of looking at surfaces that seem stable and eternal, but nevertheless are about to crack at any second by aggressive rot from inside. You can also read the architecture as images of a closed world, that excludes foreigners. A system of symmetry and order based on exclusion of the Other. The film has an eminent way of combining sound and image in a highly political way. **Kassandra Wellendorf**

Special Mention – *Interview* by Franz Wanner

Franz Wanner's video *Interview* turns the tables in a humorous and humane way. Instead of following the traditional trade of a video interview, with its often-questionable quality of image and sound, Wanner leaves his camera to people on the streets of München, having them interview him. In this move the technique is no more an issue. What comes through is the situation-specific understanding of everyone on the street; What's on their minds comes forth in their somewhat bewildered questions, history, convictions and desires. It is sad and funny at the same time, but most of all, overwhelmingly realistic. **Staffan Schmidt**

Interview exposes the selfish agenda of people. It poses the sad question: are we at all interested in getting to know our fellow human beings? The people invited to interview the director pose questions only as a gateway to talk about themselves or to communicate a message that no one else is willing to listen to. Is it really so difficult to stop talking about yourself? The failure of the project becomes the real topic of the film. In a very simple way, the director manages to visualize his own invisibility by putting himself in front of the camera. **Kassandra Wellendorf**

ARTivism

First Prize – *Protest underwear* by Thierry Geoffroy / Colonel

Thierry Geoffroy Colonel is to our understanding, notably through his pointed humour, a necessary figure on the Danish cultural scene. His 20 minutes video *Protest underwear* is clearly something of a dirty trick: young hung-over visitors at the Roskilde music festival are asked in the morning gloom to produce a political slogan prima vista. On top of that he offers the participants the opportunity to write their slogan on a white old standard men's underwear or women's undershirt. Thierry Geoffroy appears himself in the material as an English speaking reporter with a heavy French accent with bow tie, adapting his role in

full Tati paraphernalia. Talking to the camera, Geoffroy, the onlooker and the people he meets, gives a sublime account of the young crowds willingness to express themselves in political rhetoric. He does this without passing judgement on the standardized and corny phrases, instead he shows what an interest the political still attracts, even in the most laid back of contexts. **Staffan Schmidt**

Protest Underwear gives us an x-ray view of young peoples' opinions about the world. It reveals the current state of the youngsters and at the same time urges them to look hard inside for a political opinion. All statements are treated alike, the youngsters get their minutes of fame, and what they use it for is up to them. The statistics at the end of the film sum up the status quo. Are we here to have a good time, to look attractive or to change the world? **Kassandra Wellendorf**

Special Mention – *I am the slogan* by Rosa Marie Frang

Rosa Marie's *I am the slogan*, is a 3.54 minutes account of a performance where the artist recites slightly and cleverly altered commercial slogans in a Copenhagen department store. The video records meticulously the well-mannered opposition she confronts from the management and the more robust position taken by the security guards. Several cameras and microphones give a lively picture of the problematics of an updated Situationist attitude in the mode and environment of contemporary surveillance. **Staffan Schmidt**

The film exposes the power positions in the guarded rules of interaction between sellers and buyers. The artist's seemingly harmless action has a much more violent impact on the power and protection of the shopping system than we expect. By ridiculing and altering the form of the slogans the artist provokes the self-importance of advertisement and thereby threatens the unwritten contract between seller and buyer. A contract that doesn't allow you to question the truth or the logic of the slogans. **Kassandra Wellendorf**

Special Mention – *Koaför'ü Osman* by Katrin Hornek & Cäcilia Brown

A young female backpacker enters a Turkish barbershop asking to be shaved under her arms. By doing so she violates the rules of acceptable behaviour in public space. With the use of a hidden camera the artists manage to visualise Goffmanns notion of "back-stage" and "front-stage" behaviour. We see the behaviour of the barber - in the backpackers presence - when he nonchalantly receive her as if it was a quite normal service she is asking, and we see his body language change totally when she is no longer present in the shop. The hidden camera exposes his amused and slightly shocked reaction as he repeatedly mimes her body language. The film points toward the hidden rules of behaviour, that prevent us from creating awkward and embarrassing situations in social meetings. At the same time it challenges a male-dominated space that normally excludes women. By violating the unwritten rules, the two artists turn the male/female power positions upside down. **Kassandra Wellendorf**

VIDEO VOODOO

First Prize – *Dranbleiben Dietmar Fleischer* by Dietmar Fleischer

Dietmar Fleischer's 5:13 minutes *Dranbleiben Dietmar Fleischer* is first of all a phenomenological account of relations between objects and surfaces, but it goes further. The main character of the video is a worn and torn car, not its driver. The driver is possibly involved in the strange action that the car engages in, but it seems like there has been a shift in command. The car is expressive, but without gestures and drama, in a very low key. The car creeps up on a sidewalk and starts to push against a wall, it mangles its rear mirror against the side of a tunnel, and rubs itself, as if it was truly alive, against a deserted and smashed car in a God-forsaken garage. We stay tuned with Dietmar Fleischer, as the title suggests, but what we see is not the actions by an auteur, but an animated world in tatters, not completely devoid of romanticism, but bent on silent absurdities. **Staffan Schmidt**

The repetitions and insistent close-ups of interaction between surfaces give a filmic life to objects, that are normally invisible to us. The images of gentle and aggressive contact between objects make inanimate material come alive, creating a vision of an alchemy of dead city life. **Kassandra Wellendorf**

Special Mention – *You and Me* by Elisabeth Smorlarz

Elisabeth Smorlarz' 3 minutes video *You and Me* is indeed a fascinating feat of technique, with a history linked to the properties and capabilities of digital photography. The almost invisible, gradual changes between two faces, a man and a woman, makes the onlooker unsure of gender attributes and facial expression. In the end it seems that only the attitude expressed in the eyes makes a difference between the two characters. Everything else in their faces can be accepted as both female and male. **Staffan Schmidt**

The viewing of *You and Me* is frustrating. At first sight nothing is really happening. What we witness are alterations over time, that are hardly visible for the human eye. This freezes the viewer in a astonishing search for signs of time passing. In our viewing we melt together with the fusing of two individuals. It becomes more and more frightening, as it seems to open up to all kind of questions: e.g. Are you not able to distinguish yourself anymore if you get too close to another person? **Kassandra Wellendorf**

Special Mention – *Emotional Landscape* by Jacob Tækker

Jacob Tækker's 10:53 minutes long *Emotional Landscape* is a tale of narratives, personal duplications and lines drawn through a symbolic artifice that eventually turns out to be a music video. The handling of the technique is unquestionably good, and the somewhat withdrawn character, and its duplicates, makes the video into a tableau vivant of the digital age. **Staffan Schmidt**

Emotional landscape operates in form and content with the notion of splitting. The technique used is compositing of keyed layers, that creates an artificial and dreamlike landscape in which the artist places a whole bunch of paired figures – layers of our psyche. The film is an emblem of the psyche as a mess of divergences, that is almost impossible to order or unite. It operates in the gap between city and nature, conscious and unconscious. A man looks inside himself and tries to clean up the mess of his psyche. The various pairs confront each other and end up singing together as an attempt to unite the split personality. It almost succeeds until one of the pairs crosses the street – the border between subconsciousness and the consciousness and is run over by a car driven by yet another pair – a more aggressive and distracted side of the psyche. The unison is destroyed and the story starts all over again in a never-ending circuit. The narrative pays homage to Maya Deren, Louis Bunuel and David Lynch. **Kassandra Wellendorf**

ARTdocumentation

First Prize – *Saving the world* by Maija Blåfield

For all its 55 minutes, Maija Blåfield's video *Saving the world* has never a dull moment. Not that it is a video full of action, it is rather the opposite. Sound and imagery are tightly woven into a warm and personal portrait of an individual caught up in schizoid fantasies involving him in CIA-lead assassination plots, and moments of calm and moderate self-conception. It is a documentary about the innumerable ways that an individual is capable of turning his back to the world, and at the same time the utter impossibility of such an enterprise. The portrait oscillates between the Nietzschean concept of the Christian believer full of resentment, and an isolated individual, completely unprotected and as unfit for the world as an infant. Blåfield shows us a man totally at the mercy of an environment which is sometimes uneasy and irritated, other times understanding. **Staffan Schmidt**

Maija Blåfield portrays a schizophrenic character in *Saving the World* without ever ridiculing or judging him. She pays respect to him not by keeping a distance, but by staying close to him avoiding any distance. With her close camera work she creates a bodily presence that is not often seen in documentary films. The gaze of the camera enables the viewer to be part of his world, his body, his mind. Every little detail opens up a new world to us. Vitamin pills, jacket pockets and tons of luggage become extended moments that make us understand his way of functioning. The director put herself at stake in the film, as she lets him question her role in the film. In his opinion his schizophrenic desire to save the world mirrors her own smaller wish to feel superior and be able to make a difference by believing in her own power. The film gives us a rare view of the world of a schizophrenic without any uneasiness or repulsiveness. **Kassandra Wellendorf**

Special Mention – *Tales of a Borderline* by Tamar Whyte

Tamar Whyte's *Tales of a Borderline* is a very disturbing video, which perhaps could be likened to a diary. The immense power of this video resides in its self-experienced character. Short and sharp sequences of young women talking about their hardships and their deliberate or involuntary self affliction are interfoliated by texts, formulated like letters, written with a marker on cardboard. The form of the work reflects in itself the risk involved in this project. Whyte voices not only her own situation, but also her sisters in similar situations. The video does not ask for your help; That would be a task for professionals, but it asks for an understanding of the real vulnerability and liability of women not heard. Staffan Schmidt

In *Tales of a Borderline* the artist gives her frustration and powerlessness a visual expression through the contact between pen and paper. The statements of the artist are aggressively scratched on paper and become synonymous with her cutting her skin with a knife. Somehow you get the feeling, that this could not have been communicated in any other way. The insisting and stumbling writing forces the viewer to a slowmotion reception of the messages. The form of communication becomes an end in itself. Tamar Whyte includes webcams in her film when she lets a deaf-mute fellow sister explain the dilemma of a borderline. "You think that what we do is awful, but we just try to survive". This message becomes the moral of the film. Kassandra Wellendorf

Special Mentions – by Khaled Ramadan, Chamber of Public Secrets

During the selection procedure the breadth and relevancy of citizen journalism and video activism was once again confirmed. Increasing technical skills and access to digital media, and an awareness of the importance of thorough research, are combined with the motivation to bring concrete attempts to an ever wider audience. Here, video is employed both as documentation and visual evidence.

The works nominated as winners were able to present complex subject matter concisely and effectively; critically dissecting the most pressing social, cultural and political issues in their surroundings. Many works in this festival begin from standard reportage form. Franz Wanner's *Interview* inverts the standard interview situation, and also the newer stereotype of the videographer with camera permanently in hand, as he asks people on a busy pedestrian street to interview him and not the other way around.

Waking up the Nation by Agostino "Amerigo" Imondi shows the true energy of Australia's hard core activists on a trip across Australia onboard the Freedom Bus towards an immigration detention centre in the middle of the Australian desert. The video reflects the suffering of refugees inside the centre and the tiny minority of Australians protesting the inhuman conditions.

The artist Casper Below uses another video activist approach in *Sensitive Buildings*. By using undercover filming tactics he proves that certain authorities literally prevent him from taking photos of certain buildings. Since he has no journalistic power he is denied permission to photograph specific, presumably 'sensitive', buildings. In this way, Below attempts to twist the logic of surveillance in the urban setting of London.

Whereas the previous works function mostly on a linguistic plane, dialogue in Nina Lassila's *Piskaa! or Beat It!* is shifted onto the visual plane as a woman violently beats a carpet in a basement room. Her body language becomes ambiguous, and in this way the dominant stereotype of a loud physical woman as somehow out of control is questioned.

Magnetic Identities by Matei Glass shows workers by the hundreds crossing the borders between Palestine and Israel. It works with a strong visual language and moving footage to discuss control and submission without spoken or written dialog. Jayce Salloum's (as if) *Beauty Never Ends* also speaks of social and personal trauma in a visual language. Excavating time and collective memory, Salloum negotiates the relation between the Sabra and Shatilla massacre in Beirut, 1980, and the question of the refugees' right to return.

Tamar Whyte employs a visual language in her work, yet the landscape is an individual and mental rather than historical and social one. *Tales of a Borderline*, which deals with Borderline Personality Disorder, is a roughly cut video charged with personal emotions. Through this language the work explores how a person might come to deliberately harm him or herself.

Although the majority of works in the festival deal with socio-political issues, they are not necessarily the product of journalists or documentarists as such. This includes those chosen as winners. Rather, they are the works of video artists from around the world deeply concerned for their society. Sometimes videographers act as 'note takers', using video as a tool to document what is hidden or what is distorted despite exposure. In other cases, they become active witnesses testifying to seek positive change.

WINNERS VOICE

Interview with the winners of Made in Video by Iben Bentzen (IBE),
Chamber of Public Secrets.

ARThropology: Klaas van Gorkum (KvG) *"Film as Fossil"*

IBE: What is your motivation for making a video with a critical approach to anthropology?

KvG: As a video artist, I tend to spend a lot of time in my studio editing material. This involves playing back scenes over and over again, and reshuffling them to create meaning. Once, while working on a particular interview, I had the eerie experience of meeting my subject on the street outside. Having watched his face and behaviour on a monitor for days on end, I greeted him as an old friend. But to him I was nothing more than a person he had once met and spoke with for a few minutes. My enthusiasm scared him, and he hurried away...

The shock of this encounter between reality and the image that I had created, made me realise how malleable the construction of truth is, and how any portrayal is first and foremost a fiction about the act of portraying itself. I became very interested in working with found footage, using it for a kind of rereading of history, acting like an extremely self-referential anthropologist.

IBE: What concerns did you have choosing to make use of what might be defined as a semi-documentary style or partly journalistic approach?

KvG: In my work I do not make any distinction between documentary and fiction. I believe that the moment people are asked to behave normally in front of a camera, we are irrevocably lead into a world of fantasy in which each person plays his or her part as best they can.

In using certain techniques that tend to be associated with objectivity or reality, I try to reflect on a world that exists beyond the video, a world that people can recognise and identify with, while calling its realness into question. In other words, I want people to feel that when the video ends, the fiction continues.

IBE: What anthropological or socio-cultural concern are you seeking to address with your video?

KvG: There is a very interesting movie by Jackie Chan, in which he plays the role of a commando who loses his memory after falling out of a helicopter. Lost in a jungle, he is soon picked up by a tribe of Indians who take him into their community. Confusing his existential outcry with his identity, they dub him: "Who am I?"

What struck me about this part of the movie was the number of philosophical issues it raised around the concept of identity through a simple, if not absurd, transmutation of meaning. In my video I am on the same quest as Jackie Chan, suspecting though that the question has become the answer itself.

ARTivism: Thierry Geoffroy / Colonel (C) *"Protest Underwear"*

IBE: Artivism refers to the combination of art and activism. You make use of a performative and partly activist strategy in your art projects. What is your motivation for combining art and activism?

C: The word "artivism" is fine because it is not the word "activism". I really don't like the words "activism" or "activist artist" clearly written. An artist that say he is an activist is not any more an activist at the exact moment he says it. By naming themselves "activist artist" they enter a category where they can be spotted, they become harmless. Being an activist artist it is an attitude, nearly a fashion. People in resistance are secret and don't go out being curated as activists, they don't write activist on their CV. In Denmark for example 5 years ago all artists were calling themselves activists, it was probably sexy but when the liberal government came the same artists specialise themselves in "art and business" change of power - change of fashion, what we call to turn the jacket. Proclaiming being an activist artist is like being a teenager wearing a Che Guevara t-shirt.

IBE: Is there a certain socio-political problematic or concern you want to address with your video?

C: In "Protest Underwear" I want to point out the gesture problematic. Everybody is in a cliché of something, in a gesture, but it is difficult to have people having their own elaborated opinion - they have an attitude, they want to look like heroes. The attitude create the problem because it is just an appearance, a form, like the bachelors in the Duchamp big glass. In my video the festival guests think that because they are in mood, dirty and drunk with Che Guevara t-shirts listening to political lyrics - Sony Entertainment lyrics, that they are heroes of some kind of revolution. They are in fact in the consummation logic and not the protesting one. Like activist artist they want to communicate how good and concerned they like to appear but in the result it is an attitude like the Che Guevara t-shirt or the activist visit card. Attitude, appearance destroy the content. It is theatre and it is why I pushed it to the absurd: "protest underwear". The fight, is located on an other field.

IBE: If you should come up with a political statement yourself what would it be?

C: "Stop branding"

ART Documentation: Maija Blåfield (MB) *“Saving the World”*

IBE: What is your motivation for making an artistic documentary about Marcel Bloemendal’s life mission to save the world?

MB: Saving the World is naturally a work which I would have made even if I had not met Marcel Bloemendal. Although the film is constructed around Marcel’s life mission to save the world, my personal interests were concentrated somewhere else. Through our relationship I searched for a balance between fantasy and common reality. I identified myself with Marcel quite a lot and the five year process of film-making became a very personal process, which strongly affected my experience of reality. Working with Marcel was more like a co-operative project than one to document a person’s life. Although the film is constructed completely from documentary material, the question of facts is irrelevant for it. As a portrait, this film is an imaginative one.

IBE: Is there a certain socio-political problematic you want to address with this video?

MB: In the film Marcel, a person whose social status is a schizophrenic, takes the position of a travel guide for today’s world. The film looks at the problematics of normality and abnormality, usual and unusual, and the relation of insanity and reality. Through Marcel’s life mission it also touches many current political issues. However, my approach is from a subjective view point and is concentrated more on the level of personal problems, of interpreting reality and finding ones own place there. Marcel’s character, although being in a way something very different, is represented as an individual, anybody, in this confusing contemporary world.

IBE: In which ways do you think video is a proper medium for getting out a message?

MB: When I think of video - and in this case especially documentary video - as a working tool, its problem is that it makes many obstacles for the creative process. As its characters are real persons the question of responsibility sometimes makes finding artistic solutions difficult. On the other hand this can be seen as a benefit, as an aid to finding new solutions. Even as an artist, I often see the art scene as a bit of an uninteresting venue to present my work. Video is therefore a practical media as it crosses the borders of the arts.

IBE: You have chosen to make use of some basic approaches known from classic documentary. What concerns did you have choosing to make use of what might be defined as a semi-documentary style?

MB: Saving the world was filmed over a five year period, and edited from 100 hours of material. Marcel, as the main character, knew from the beginning that the film was not going to be an objective documentation of his life. For his broad interpretation of reality or facts that was a logical solution. This film also touches on questions in which “no answers exist” and I felt this way of realizing the work was the only possible way to handle these topics.

Video Voodoo: Dietmar Fleischer (DF) *“Dranbleiben Dietmar Fleischer”*

IBE: It seems that your video has a strong symbolic or representative character, that the work means something more than a car rubbing against different surfaces. Is the car a symbol of something specific?

DF: You can interpret the behaviour of somebody who wants to find out something, or to check a situation, like that of a lover or a scientist. You can also see their behaviour as a request for an intense argument, an argument which I also find in my life as an artist. Sometimes it is not easy to find the gap which allows you to stay by your artistic interests - you have to concentrate your energy. This video tries to show how close the struggle can be. Every time I see the title it helps me to go on.

IBE: You use the word resistance in your description of the work. What does this resistance mean or refer to?

DF: Sometimes you have a setback or you are feeling like Don Quixote. You have to put up with injuries and aggressions. It is a question of borderlines. You have to decide how far you want to go. Its always the dose which makes the poison.

IBE: Is there a certain socio-political problematic you want to address with your video?

DF: When I think about mobile meets immobile I also think about the current war, both our little daily wars and also the big ones. Most of the time the immobile is the target and the mobile is the arm.

IBE: Your video has been chosen as the winner of the Video Voodoo category, whilst it was originally submitted to the Arthropology category. How do you think it fits this category?

DF: Isn't all art voodoo?

IBE: What was your motivation for submitting it to the Arthropology category?

DF: The behavior of the car is so close to human behavior. It seems like the behaviour of a young teenager, i.e. attempting to kiss somebody for the first time or making some noise on a fence with a stick