

## KUNSTHALLE EXNERGASSE

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Film Screening: Thursday February 11, 2010, 6 pm  
Carte Blanche for Jakob Racek  
(Curator, Center for Contemporary Art - Plovdiv, Bulgaria)

## TELLING STORIES

Adam Vackar  
Bruce Conner  
Christoph Draeger & Reynold Reynolds  
Kon Trubkovich  
Melik Ohanian

Curator: Cathy Larqué

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## KUNSTHALLE EXNERGASSE

February 5 – March 6, 2010  
Tue - Fr 1 - 6 pm, Sa 11 am - 2 pm  
[www.kunsthalleexnergasse.wuk.at](http://www.kunsthalleexnergasse.wuk.at)

Thematischer Programminweis

**brut**

**Telling Time # 3**

**04.02.-20.02.2010**

Telling Time ist eine sich fortsetzende Recherche über innovative Erzählstrategien im zeitgenössischen Theater. Die dritte Ausgabe versammelt erneut internationale ExpertInnen des Erzählens im brut: Nature Theater of Oklahoma, Nicola Unger, Ivana Müller, Matsune & Subal und Kate McIntosh.

Aktuelle Informationen unter [www.brut-wien.at](http://www.brut-wien.at)

Curator:

**Cathy Larqué** (1974, Pau, France) is an art historian and a freelance curator. After working alongside the chief curator at the Palais de Tokyo (Paris), she became coordinator of the ArchiLab (Orléans) Biennale of Architecture in 2003 and 2004. She became project manager at the Dominique Fiat gallery (Paris), then at the Swiss Berlin-based graphics agency, onlab, and the Robert Stadler design studio. In 2007 she became chief curator at the Museum of Modern Art in Saint-Etienne.

In 2005, Cathy Larqué joined forces with an architect to set up *larqué+lecoeur*, a point of reference for art & architecture. *larqué+lecoeur* provides a platform for collaborating on production and curatorial projects in contemporary art and architecture. It aims to open up opportunities internationally with various organisations using its dynamic network, and creating new possibilities throughout Europe. Recently, Cathy Larqué coordinated the project and the catalogue of "From the Voice to the Hand", a collection of 15 co-existing exhibitions by the artist Melik Ohanian which took place in Paris between 2008 and 2009. In 2009 she co-founded WITH, a collective that proposes the executive coordination and production of contemporary art, at the same time as writing a thesis on the artist Takashi Murakami. Cathy Larqué writes for numerous publications in Paris and Berlin. She lives and works in Paris and Berlin where she collaborates with several art institutions such as Kunst-Werke Berlin Institute for Contemporary Art.  
*[www.larque-lecoeur.com](http://www.larque-lecoeur.com)*

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Thursday February 11, 2010, 6 pm

Carte Blanche for Jakob Racek

(Curator, Center for Contemporary Art - Plovdiv, Bulgaria)

Ohanian's work has been shown in many solo exhibitions including: Galerie Chantal Crousel and Palais de Tokyo in Paris, South London Gallery in London, De Appel in Amsterdam, Yvon Lambert in New York, Museum in Progress in Vienna, Centre pour l'Image Contemporaine in Geneva, and recently on the occasion of 15 co-existent exhibitions in Paris. He has also taken part in a large number of group exhibitions around the world, in particular the Sao Paulo biennial (representing France), the Berlin and Sydney biennials in 2004, the Moscow and Lyon biennials in 2005 and the Gwangju and Seville biennials in 2006. Most recently his work was on display at the 52nd edition of the Venice Biennale in 2007. [www.omwk.com](http://www.omwk.com)

in the universities, in parliament, and in the news media. The situation becomes unsustainable. The United States finances the truckers' strike and foments social chaos. Allende tries to reach an agreement with the powers of the Christian Democracy, but fails. The contradictions within the left-wing increase the crisis. The military begins to conspire in Valparaiso. A wide sector of the middle class supports the boycott and civil war. On September 11, Pinochet bombs the governmental palace.

The film created by Melik Ohanian is shot at the exact locations where the events of 1973 occurred, recording the contemporary realities of Santiago. The commentary of the original second-part film of 1973 is used as a narrative/historical reference juxtaposed onto the film from 2007. The past is superimposed to the present, at the same time.

**Melik Ohanian** (1969, Lyon, France) lives and works in Paris and New York. In Ohanian's installations the concept of time is understood in terms of its relationship to the real and how we experience its duration. The viewer is invited to physically experience the here and now, events produced in the instant "T". In fact, the permanent interplay between these intra and extra fictional worlds creates an intangible, but very real space which everyone can experience. Taking the idea of «the event» and performance, playing on a flow of visuals and recordings that condition and saturate our representative systems, Ohanian's work emphasises invisibility and disappearance, endeavours to reveal the real motivations and processes and transforms the approach to historical reality.

Concept: Cathy Larqué

"I think that any actor from Hollywood could be elected provided that he has a story to tell; a story in which he could tell to people how his country is and in which way he sees it."\*

"Good stories" first appeared in politics in the 1980's under Ronald Reagan's presidency — after the Watergate Scandal — with a view to controlling information and its use by the media. Official speeches became packed with anecdotes and stories which, little by little, began to be substituted for real facts or statistics, paving the way to our current paroxysm of dramatisation and mise en scène. First developed in marketing and advertising, "storytelling" evolved into a genuine political way with the Clinton and Bush administrations which was endowed by advisors, Hollywood scriptwriters, spin doctors and advertisers. The Monica Lewinski case, Clinton's marital life, 9/11, the Iraq War, Hurricane Katrina... basically any event is good enough to be turned into narratives depicting heroes, victims and bad guys, characters in tales of love and hate, tragic dramas, twists and turns, happy endings.

Through the use of interpretation, stories take the place of historical facts and become the exclusive communication mode shared by spin doctors and journalists, who are themselves subdued to the pressure of breaking news and media glitter. "Storytelling is a way to seduce and convince, to grab the attention of an audience. It is also a way of sharing and spreading information or actual experiences, outlining knowledge and know-how, formalizing texts and providing a subjective aspect to points of view or reports. It is a discursive frame-work and, to quote Michel Foucault, a "discipline". This discipline is today like the paradigm of a cultural revolution of capitalism, a gripping tale to feed and format the greater part of human activity."\*\*

In a context whereby the borderline between information and comment has become rather blurred, art films re-establish reality by creating a counter story. These works, sensitive to the unrelenting flux of image and information, use the form and technique of the narrative machine but incite us to challenge and revise the "facts" produced by it. Thus they create a release, and the feasibility of a narrative thinking and use made by mankind for mankind.

\* James Carville quoted from Francesca Polletta, *It was like a fever. Storytelling in Protest and Politics*, The University of Chicago Press, 2006

\*\* Christian Salmon, "Une machine à fabriquer des histoires", in *Le Monde diplomatique*, Novembre 2006

## MELIK OHANIAN

September 11, 1973 Santiago Chile, 2007 / 2007  
DVD, Pro HD video on DVD with 4.1 surround sound and plasma screen with English subtitles, 90'  
Courtesy of Galerie Chantal Crousel, Paris



MELIK OHANIAN, September 11, 1973 Santiago Chile, 2007 / 2007

September 11, 1973, Santiago, Chile. Augusto Pinochet leads a coup d'état against the elected Republican government. On this day, the long democratic tradition that had existed since 1917 is brutally brought to a halt with the assassination of Salvador Allende.

An emblematic, extensive political documentary titled "The Battle Of Chile" was made by Patricio Guzmán during that time. A three-part film was shot during the months that preceded the 1973 coup d'état in Santiago when the left and right face off in the streets, in the factories, in the courts,

**Kon Trubkovich** (1979, Moscow, Russia) makes videos and uses them as a means of departure, selecting from his own imagery as the basis for his painting, works on paper, photography, and sculpture. And while the video works act as a source to be mined, they also stand alone as their own finite statements. Trubkovich explores the idea of achieving freedom within the restraints of incarceration, the desire to escape, and the nature of that achieved freedom. «Trubkovich experiments with videos in a manner that rethinks and reconfigures the eye of the machine. He takes as his starting point the thousands of hours of video he has shot, from random footage captured during an extended road trip across the United States to specific sequences of film that realise his innermost fears and dreams. His intricate paintings and drawings in oil, watercolour and graphite possess an uncanny pixilated aesthetic that makes reference to the subconscious anomaly embedded within the freeze framed-video still. Akin to a form of déjà vu, Trubkovich questions the status of video as a form of memory and entrapment, asking us to consider what is real and what is simply imagined». (Another Magazine)

Kon Trubkovich, raised in Moscow until the age of 11, lives and works in New York. He was included in the exhibitions “Six Feet Under” at the Kunstmuseum, Bern and “Uncertain States of America - American Video Art in the 3rd Millennium” curated by Daniel Birnbaum, Gunnar B. Kvaran, Hans Ulrich Obrist, at the 2nd Moscow Biennale of Contemporary Art, 2007. The artist had his debut solo show at P.S.1 in “No Country for Old Men” curated by Neville Wakefield in 2006. His next one will be held at Museum 52 in London from September 2010.

## ADAM VACKAR

Improvement / 2009

Installation: DVD, color, sound, 10'; movie theater seats  
 Courtesy of gandy gallery, Bratislava



ADAM VACKAR, Improvement / 2009

Adam Vackar established contact with some homeless people, and then, with the help of a makeup artist, costume designer, and hair stylist — people normally employed in the film and television industry — under the spotlight he changed their appearance into “normal”, “ideal” folks. In this way Vackar employs the language of art film to address consumer society’s superficiality and quasi-fascist aesthetic obsession.

The video in the way it is filmed is switching between a “making-of” style and reality show-like style movie. All filming background — working lamps, stylist’s, hair make’s and make-up artist’s tables and utensils, cables

and other things used for film making which are usually hidden behind — are shown as part of the film. The space of decaying former factory is nowadays used for reality show shooting was left as raw as it is in reality. This reality show with homeless people offers a comparison for Communist society with the post-Communist Czech society that is still lacking real substance, though it is formally associated with a capitalist democratic system. In his art Vackar uses city streets, society, and his own body as canvases on which to illustrate the passing of time and the brutal nature of reality. His work is rooted in the reality from which he often starts in the endeavour to explore its possibilities. (Olga Malá)

**Adam Vackar's** (1979, Prague, Czech Republic) extensive investigations, which take form of video, photography or installations do not consist of a descriptive and closed entity, but rather a space with infinite connecting lines which eternally shift its limits and inhibitions and in which the author prefers to search for the potential of employing a particular situation, rather than modelling it. The artist remains the owner of a given direction, the observer of a given trajectory. Through this artistic scheme - subject or fact - the transferred becomes interactive since “by now we should know that it is not people who communicate, but effects (of statements, images)” (Serge Daney).

Adam Vackar lives and works in Paris and Prague. He has graduated from Ecole Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-arts in Paris and has absolved artist-in-residence program in Palais de Tokyo in Paris. His work was presented in diverse international exhibitions such as in Centre Pom-

The video work, “No Exit” depicts a moment of a riot aftermath as naked prisoners are marched about in endless circles, their footsteps the only other sound accompanying the ambient noise. Used as a means to subdue the inmates, the procession is viewed from two vantage points, forcing the viewer into dual roles. Though the viewer begins at a distance from the prisoners, he/she is forced to oscillate between walking alongside of them in their march to nowhere and pulling back to observe. Trubkovich inverts the color he typically uses to connote captives or fugitives, this time the guards wearing the orange.

The video “Ant Farm” gives the viewer a similar sense of overseeing an interminable inmate activity. As the prisoners are put to a task, no discernable merit or fulfillment accompanies the labor itself, with “Ant Farm” serving as a modern day Myth of Sisyphus where one is condemned to repeat forever, the same meaningless efforts. The futile exercise questions any intentions of the work as a means to motivate and redeem. Kon Trubkovich incorporates found images and footage into his own crafted vocabulary, as he references a range of sources from the Attica Prison Riots and the Stanford Prison Experiment to the Russian island of Sakhalin and current Internet fodder. Trubkovich explores themes of confinement, rebellion, autonomy and purported freedom, in a self-referential parallel to the concerns of an artist beholden to his own processes.



tion Fellowship and in 2004 he was invited to The American Academy in Berlin with a studio at Kunstlerhaus Bethanien that enabled him to start working in Berlin. He lives in New York City and in Berlin. [www.reynold-reynolds.com](http://www.reynold-reynolds.com)

## KON TRUBKOVICH

No Exit / 2008  
DVD, color, sound, 6'18"

Ant Farm / 2007  
DVD, color, sound, 9'48"  
Courtesy of the artist and Marianne Boesky Gallery



KON TRUBKOVICH, Ant Farm / 2007

pidou, Palais de Tokyo, MALBA Buenos-Aires, Bucharest Triennial, Prague Triennial, City Gallery Prague and others. [www.adamvackar.com](http://www.adamvackar.com)

## BRUCE CONNER

REPORT / 1963-1967  
16mm, b&w, sound, 13'9"  
Courtesy of the Conner Family Trust

Haunted by JFK's assassination, Conner obsessively filmed television coverage of the killing, funeral and miscellaneous contemporary programming, repurposing the footage into both a sorrowful portrait of a lost hero and a blistering critique of postwar consumerism.

The film REPORT often seems degraded: iconic images of the motorcade start and re-start, jump cut and broken. The mismatch between what we see and hear — or between the procession of images themselves — is jarring. We are interrupted by film-leader, blanks. Everything centers on the film's blank spots. The filmic image — jump-cut newsreel of the Kennedy motorcade nearing Dealey Plaza — disintegrates at the most crucial moment in the film's audio narrative, the moment of murder. They begin at the moment a voice on the audio track, having noted that «something has happened in the motorcade route» begins to describe the witnesses' panic in a tone equally panicked, breathless.

At this point, and for three minutes and twenty-three seconds, the film's diegesis is located entirely within its narration. A further replacement: the whitened screen becomes a strobing flicker of black and white frames, while the voice describes «a severe gunshot wound».

This strobing of black and white makes the invisible blank visible, underscores its blankness, in its alternation of clear and black frames, representing both the absence of color and the absence of light.

As such, it is terrifying. It refuses, in its refusal to show, to allow violence to rise to the status of icon; this same act refuses to make us into witnesses, allowing the narrating newscaster to witness on our behalf. It points to erasure, and absence — not only the absence that is death, but also the inability of mourning to reconcile itself to the traumatic event.

As a historical document, *REPORT* covers the Kennedy assassination and the chaos and confusion of its immediate aftermath. The film was begun within days of the event, and updated and revised as history unfolded, as other reports (including the Warren Commission's) were begun and completed, over the next several years. According to Bruce Jenkins, eight versions were completed; only one is definitive. Or: one film was remade continually, as its author attempted to settle on a historical account satisfactory to the moment it describes. In many ways, Conner's film reports on reportage itself, on the gaps, absences, and erasures in the historical record. It investigates the contrast between history as it is lived — in the chaos of its unfolding, in its rupture — and history as it is rationalized and codified within and by social institutions. (Nathan Austin)

School of Visual Arts, Luzerne, Switzerland. His work has been featured in solo exhibitions at The Kitchen, New York; Paço das Artes, São Paulo; and Massachusetts Museum of Contemporary Art and group exhibitions at P.S.1, New York; the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; and KunstWerke, Berlin among others. He has participated in international festivals and biennials in Guangzhou, Havana, Valencia, Turin, and Liverpool. Draeger's work is in the collections of the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, New York; Kunsthau Zurich, Switzerland; and Centre Pompidou, Paris, France. [www.christophdraeger.com](http://www.christophdraeger.com)

**Reynold Reynolds** is an American born in Alaska. Since 1996 he has been working primarily with 16mm and Super 8mm film as an art medium. He has created installations, documentaries, found footage works, made narrative and experimental films, and developed a common film grammar based on transformation, consumption and decay. Reynolds' depictions frequent disturbed psychological and physical themes, increasingly provoking the viewer's participation and dismay. He has participated in numerous art exhibitions, including the 4th Berlin Biennale for Contemporary Art, "Into Me/ Out Me" at P.S.1 Contemporary Art Center and Kunst-Werke Berlin Institute for Contemporary Art, "Focus Istanbul" at Martin Gropius Bau and "Destroy, She Said" at Julia Stoschek Collection. His works have been shown in many international film festivals and have won numerous awards including from the Black Maria Film Festival, the South by Southwest Film Festival and the Sundance Film Festival. In 2003 Reynold Reynolds was awarded the John Simone Guggenheim Memorial Founda-

The situation gets progressively worse as terrorists destroy the Chrysler building, vaporize the White House, and bomb Paris and New York. Between sequences of destruction, the anchorman interviews various people. A Harvard professor explains, that the terrorists are simply evil and should be smokes out of their holes no matter what. Then a pet and child psychologist, offers tips on how to counsel pets and children after disasters. The final retaliation efforts trigger an uncontrollable chain reaction. By the end, all of the world is destroyed and the television transmission becomes fuzzy and stops. Meant as a satire in the post Sept 11 world, "The Last News" is an ironic and sometimes sarcastic commentary on the absurd manner in which the mass media reacts to disaster. It is a poignant piece about the transmission of information through television becoming dangerous sensationalism.

**Christoph Draeger** (1965, Zurich, Switzerland) is an international artist whose conceptual projects take form in installation, drawing, sculpture, video, and photo-based media to explore issues pertaining to disaster and media saturated culture. In his works, he uses authentic materials or fabricates them himself. Frequently, his works resemble reconstructions of events based on on-site police data and develop a strong power of suggestion. Draeger shows violence as a source of fascination and a kind of entertainment, becoming in fact a part of mainstream culture. Draeger fulfills our expectation on Hollywood film and breaks its common narrative structures at the same time. Christoph Draeger lives and works in New York. He studied at Institute for Contemporary Art, Long Island City and



BRUCE CONNER, REPORT / 1963-1967

**Bruce Conner** (1933-2008, USA) worked in a variety of mediums from an early age. Conner first attracted widespread attention with his moody, nylon-shrouded assemblages, complex amalgams of found objects often combined with collaged or painted surfaces. Conner also began making short movies in the late 1950s. Conner's first and possibly most famous film was entitled *A MOVIE* (1958). His subsequent films are most often fast-paced collages of found footage or of footage shot by Conner; however, he made numerous films, including most notably *CROSSROADS*, his 30 plus minute meditation on the atom bomb, that are almost achingly deliberate in their pace. Conner, however, produced work in a variety of forms from the 1960s forward. He was an active force

in the San Francisco counterculture of the mid-1960s as a collaborator in light shows for the legendary Family Dog at the Avalon Ballroom. He also made intricate black-and-white mandala-like drawings (many of which he lithographed into prints) and collages made from 19th-century engravings.

He also completed a number of short films in the mid-1960s, in addition to *REPORT* and *VIVIAN*.

During the 1970s Conner focused on drawing and photography, including many photos of the late 1970s West Coast punk rock scene. In the 1980s and 1990s Conner continued to work on collages, including ones using religious imagery, and inkblot drawings that have been shown in numerous exhibitions, including the 1997 Whitney Biennial. Throughout Conner's entire body of work, the recurrence of religious imagery and symbology continues to underscore the essentially visionary nature of his work. In 1999, to accompany a traveling exhibition, a major monograph of his work was published by the Walker Art Center, titled "2000 BC: The Bruce Conner Story, Part II". The exhibition, which featured specially built in-gallery screening rooms for Conner's films as well as selected assemblages, felt-tip pen and inkblot drawings, engraving collages, photograms, and conceptual pieces, was seen at the Walker, the Modern Art Museum in Fort Worth, the de Young in San Francisco, and the Museum of Contemporary Art in Los Angeles. Conner was among the first to use pop music for film sound tracks. His films have inspired generations of filmmakers, and are now considered to be the precursors of the music video genre.

## CHRISTOPH DRAEGER & REYNOLD REYNOLDS

*The Last News* / 2002

Starring Guy Richard Smits, Animation by Gary Breslin/  
Panoptic

DVD, color, sound, 13'

Courtesy of the artists and Galerie Anne de Villepoix, Paris



CHRISTOPH DRAEGER & REYNOLD REYNOLDS, *The Last News* / 2002

"The Last News" dismantles the spectacular event of September 11th by turning the over-media-covered fact into its most extreme and ironic extension. The film is a fictitious newscast of the end of the world using footage from Hollywood films. An anchorman for MSNBC's «24 hour disaster and Survival Network», reports on a sequence of events beginning with the bombing of Big Ben.