



THE  
YVONNE RAINER  
PROJECT  
LIVES  
OF PERFORMERS

Yvonne Rainer  
Pauline Boudry/  
Renate Lorenz  
Julien Crépieux  
Yael Davids  
Carole Douillard  
Maria Loboda  
Mai-Thu Perret  
Émilie Pitoiset  
Noé Soulier

 LA FERME  
DU BUISSON  
CENTRE D'ART CONTEMPORAIN

SCÈNE NATIONALE  
DE MARNE-LA-VALLÉE

## Partners

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[We, Others and myself, Research, Knowledge, Systems]

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**Front cover :** Yvonne Rainer, *Lives of Performers*, 1972 © Babette Mangolte (All rights reserved)

**Back cover :** Yvonne Rainer, *Lives of Performers*, 1972

# THE YVONNE RAINER PROJECT LIVES OF PERFORMERS

## **Exhibition**

**October 25, 2014 - February 8, 2015**

## **Curators**

Julie Pellegrin, director of the art centre  
Chantal Pontbriand, Pontbriand W.O.R.K.S.  
[We\_Others and myself\_Research\_Knowledge\_Systems]

## **Opening-brunch**

October 25 at 12 noon

## **Performances**

Saturday October 25, 12 – 4 pm

Carole Douillard

*The Waiting Room*

Saturday November 29 at 5:30 pm

Yael Davids

*A Variation on A Reading that Writes*

Saturday November 29 at 6:30 pm

Émilie Pitoiset and Jessica 93

*You will see the cat before you leave*

Sunday February 8

Noé Soulier

*Mouvement sur mouvement*

part of the Dance Weekend "Instantanés"

## **Guided tours**

Every Saturday at 4 pm

## **The exhibition and a snack**

Sundays: November 2, December 7, January 4  
and February 1 at 4 pm

Born in 1934, American artist Yvonne Rainer is famed for her contribution to the history of New Dance and for the trajectory as an experimental filmmaker that was the second phase in a career tied to the avant-garde of her time.

Presented in several segments in Paris this autumn, "The Yvonne Rainer Project" looks into her courageous transition from choreography to cinema and the artistic and political challenges this entailed. In an oeuvre that scrutinises the balance between private life and the public sphere, she addresses issues of human connectivity in a period of radical social change. After exploring revolutionary ideas in choreography, she then proceeded to work them out in film.

Her personal evolution has its origins in the history of the America of the 1960s. Her creative thrust echoed the sociopolitical context of the time and the enormous changes it brought in relation to postwar ideals and values. If we are to grasp the connection between her innovative vision of art and her view of social life, we must consider her work in terms of the situations she was part of. A tree-diagram she drew in 1980 sets her in the art environment of her time.

Her work is to be put in the context of the scene in California as well as that of Soho in New York in the 1960s and 1970s, when she became acquainted with the work of Anna Halprin, La Monte Young, John Cage, Merce Cunningham, Robert Rauschenberg, Robert Morris, Richard Serra, Yoko Ono, Trisha Brown, Steve Paxton, Simone Forti, Hollis Frampton, Andy Warhol and Michael Snow. The influence of the art scene on the West Coast can be perceived in her work as well as that of the New York art scene she eventually became a part of. She was close in spirit to new developments being pursued in dance and music at the time, as well as that of visual artists. "The Yvonne Rainer Project" shows how this fertile context supported and encouraged her in her urge to make the move from choreography to cinema.

Today many artists work with the moving image, and with movement in the image, interested in the role of this development in the gestation of a specifically 21st-century aesthetic. "The Yvonne Rainer" Project includes approaches coming from all over the world. The part of the project on show at the Jeu de Paume, "From Choreography to Cinema", concentrates on the way in which Rainer extended her explorations by shifting from dance to film in order to express her ideas differently and even more fully. The program covers the different aspects of her work as a choreographer and filmmaker. It not only includes her own creations, but also recordings of her works by other filmmakers. These are accompanied by films by artists she was mixing with when her own work with film was beginning to take shape.

"The Lives of Performers" exhibition at the Centre d'art contemporain de la Ferme du Buisson focuses on the present-day reception of Rainer's work by visual artists using installation, video and photography, and by choreographers and performance artists. Some of these artists are reacting more overtly than others to the Rainer heritage, but all of them are addressing the issues she has raised – presence, the Other, notions of community, gender, drama, the role of art, perception and the knowledge acquisition process – and their innovative contemporary relevance. The issue of knowledge processes was crucial for an entire generation of American artists in the 1960s, many of which were enrolled in universities, who started looking into the way knowledge developed and was acquired; this was particularly true of the originators of Minimal and Conceptual art and of experimental music and cinema. Sharing these aesthetic concerns, Rainer called one of her major dance pieces *The Mind is a Muscle* (1966–1968), and in a text with the same title she outlined the way the body enables the acquisition of knowledge and the mind itself becomes a muscle. Into *The Mind is a Muscle* she incorporated *Trio A* (1966), a solo she worked on for months, inventorying the possibilities of bodily movement in a continuous flow and exploring energy, phrasing and repetition. Since then this solo has undergone many variations, including *Trio A with Flags* (1970), which references the Vietnam War, and more recently *Trio A: Geriatric with Talking* (2010), which she herself danced in a tribute to the Judson Dance Theater, of which she was one of the main instigators. In *Trio A* Rainer is facing the audience, but she seeks no visual communication with them. Her gaze retains a "neutrality" that for her is an essential artistic given. Her concern is with presence: what does it mean to be here, in the present moment, and what does it mean to be here in the presence of the Other, of others?

Made in 1972, *Lives of Performers*, which gives the exhibition its title, was her first feature-length film. In it she uses excerpts from *Performance*, the dance piece she was rehearsing at the time. Her real interest is not in representation, but in these moments of rehearsal – moments of latency, of questioning: the difference between what you're doing and what you are, between what you perceive and what is perceived by the other; the interaction between the everyday, work, and dramaturgy. Her eye is constantly on the gaps between reality and representation. At the same time, like her tutelary figure John Cage (which she is not short of criticizing to some extent), she leaves room for reality, the context and the unexpected. Sometimes her work makes specific reference to a political situation – the Vietnam War, for example – or of illness, sex and all the fundamental questions of living in common. Her oeuvre is shot through with quotations taken from the history of dance and cinema, as she ceaselessly ponders what the making of art represents in the here and now.

These are the underlying questions in the "Lives of Performers" exhibition. Émilie Pitoiset works at expressing absence through complex rituals and the ossification of a set of acts. Julien Crépieux makes play with viewer perception and movement's ability to

construct/deconstruct a space. Yael Davids uses simple materials to create dramas in which arrangement, variation and repetition conjure up situations of agency: of the way someone can act upon others and the world according to his or her own experiences. Mai-Thu Perret probes the world of women in a host of structures suggesting a politics of the body and movement, drawing here on Korean shamanic dances. Carole Douillard explores the latency – the male way – inspired by a stay in her native Algeria: waiting rendered abstract and iconic in a questioning of the political situation. Maria Loboda considers heraldic figures in photographs whose black-gloved male subject makes gestures taken from Indian dance (which had left its mark on Rainer on her visit to India in 1970). She offers, too, a lioness with its back turned to the viewer and seemingly "doing penance": one feels a kind of disquiet, as though all is not well with the world. Pauline Boudry and Renate Lorenz use different media for an examination of the marginal and the mainstream that embraces both the historical and the topical, and portray Yvonne Rainer performing an act of transmission. Last but not least, Noé Soulier presents a dance solo that explores the connections between word and gesture by conjuring up the great dance figures who led him to an understanding of body and thought in motion. "The mind is a muscle."

And so the notion of arborescence so dear to Rainer lives on among the generations that have succeeded her, as the contemporary relevance of her work becomes increasingly evident. "The Yvonne Rainer Project" will be closing with a colloquium titled "Rainer Nexus", with contributions from artists and thinkers regarding Rainer herself and the seminal ideas she is still looking into today as, after seven full-length works that have firmly established her as a filmmaker, she is making a return to dance and teaching.

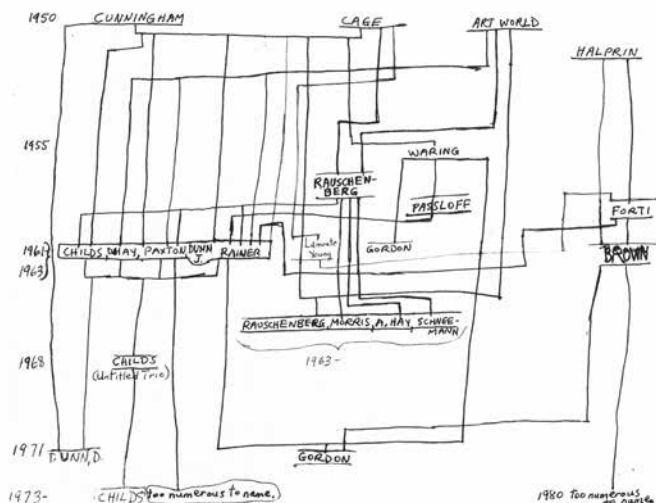


Diagram drawn by Yvonne Rainer in response to an article by Arlene Croce in the New Yorker of June 30, 1980, showing her artistic relationships with her predecessors and contemporaries.

Objects	Dances
eliminate or minimize	eliminate or minimize
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. role of artist's hand</li> <li>2. hierarchical relationships of parts</li> <li>3. texture</li> <li>4. figure reference</li> <li>5. illusionism</li> <li>6. complexity and detail</li> <li>7. monumentality</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. phrasing</li> <li>2. development and climax</li> <li>3. variation: rhythm, shape, dynamics</li> <li>4. character</li> <li>5. performance</li> <li>6. variety: phases and the spatial field</li> <li>7. the virtuosic feat and the fully extended body</li> </ol>
substitute	substitute
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. factory fabrication</li> <li>2. unitary forms, modules</li> <li>3. uninterrupted surface</li> <li>4. nonreferential forms</li> <li>5. literalness</li> <li>6. simplicity</li> <li>7. human scale</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. energy equality and "found" movement</li> <li>2. equality of parts, repetition</li> <li>3. repetition or discrete events</li> <li>4. neutral performance</li> <li>5. task or task-like activity</li> <li>6. singular action, event, or tone</li> <li>7. human scale</li> </ol>

Included in the programme The Mind is a Muscle, this table is a summary of Rainer's ideas about dance at the time when she was moving in Minimalist art circles.

## Chantal Pontbriand

### Pontbriand W.O.R.K.S. [We\_Others and Myself\_Research\_Knowledge\_Systems]

Contemporary art curator and critic, she was a founder of PARACHUTE contemporary art magazine in 1975 and acted as publisher/editor until 2007, publishing 125 issues. Her work is based on the exploration of questions of globalization and artistic heterogeneity. She has curated numerous international contemporary art events: exhibitions, international festivals and international conferences, mainly in photography, video, performance, dance and multimedia installation. After curating several major performance events and festivals, she co-founded the FIND (Festival International de Nouvelle Danse), in Montreal and was president and director from 1982 to 2003. She was appointed Head of Exhibition Research and Development at Tate Modern in London in 2010 and more recently founded PONTBRIAND W.O.R.K.S. [We\_Others and

Myself\_Research\_Knowledge\_Systems]. Since 2012, she is Associate Professor at the Sorbonne-Paris IV, in curatorial studies. Her most recent publications are *The Contemporary*, *The Common: Art in A Globalizing World*, Sternberg Press, 2013; *PARACHUTE: The Anthology, Volume II Performance & Performativity*, JRP. Ringier, 2013, et *PER/FORM, How to do things with[out] words*, Sternberg/CA2M, 2014.

[www.pontbriand-works.com](http://www.pontbriand-works.com)

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**Yvonne Rainer**  
**Interview by Chantal Pontbriand**

[*Parachute*, n°10, 1978]

**C.P.:** There are a lot of people that wonder how you came from dance to film, how you could sort of switch from being a dancer and become a filmmaker, how did that transfer operate, do you still consider yourself a dancer even though you are a filmmaker?

**Y.R.:** I don't really consider myself a dancer, because using my body is no longer my main point of departure for making art. Sometimes I like to think of myself as a choreographer because of the way I was and still am, concerned with putting different kinds of things together in time. And then there is the fact that I'm still concerned with stillness and motion; now it's camera movement and small movements in a very restricted frame as opposed to large movements in an open performing area. The main thing that made me switch was that I began to think about material that seemed to belong in a narrative and psychological tradition such as emotional experience. Since my work had never been concerned with dramatic presentation and development, it was not appropriate that I turn to a theatrical form like the dramatic dialogue. But I was still concerned with gesture and with using people and movement as counterpoint to specific emotional material that would now be conveyed by language. Somehow it was fitting that I was drawn to the artifice of film conventions, such as intertitle, subtitle, voice over, and close-up. These devices seemed to be the more appropriate conveyance for emotional facts than anything I could do as a dancer with my body. I had never made symbolic movement. Gesture was used for its immediate suggestiveness for reference to everyday activity but it wasn't meant to stand for a context larger than that. Also, I was doing more writing, and film offered a way to use writing in other ways than simply as music or as a general accompaniment for dance. In my films, I now use language to convey primary meanings. In most of my dances it was the body that did this. Language was secondary. [...]

**C.P.:** What are the ideas or influences that prepared you to generate the kind of choreography that you invented. You didn't really follow a tradition.

**Y.R.:** Well, in a way I did. I started making work at a time when John Cage's ideas via a Duchampian attitude about accident and organization were prominent. I would say that a lot of my ideas were in a surrealist tradition, and continued to be to some extent, I mean in an open endedness which makes a certain demand on the audience, on the perceiver. Ambivalent relation to specificity and incongruity, you might say. There wasn't such a tradition in dancing, but certainly in the New York

art world avant-garde and music world, there was this climate.

**C.P.:** I'm surprised that you refer to surrealist inspirations, because the way you used movement was very minimal, an antithesis to surrealism.

**Y.R.:** There were always insertions of unexpected, unpredictable everyday gesture. I guess I'm calling that surrealistic in the sense of a bending of the ordinary to make an unexpected new relationship. Then there was minimalism. I was never a purist, but I was affected by minimalism because it seemed so appropriate as objection to a dance history which was overburdened with all kinds of hokey spiritual values, an outdated humanism, or sentimentality.

**C.P.:** You were very much against that cultural weight that dance was carrying on.

**Y.R.:** Yes, dance has always been behind the other arts, it seems to have to be explored, discovered by its practitioners every generation all over again, so it has no history, and that's probably happening now again.

**C.P.:** Would that be because it's more a performing art?

**Y.R.:** Yes, it's transient, and up to recently had no documented history.

**C.P.:** I read someplace that you said: "For me, it's a surprise to see that *Lives of Performers* is still around."

**Y.R.:** Because it's a film, an object. That was also the attraction of filmmaking. I got tired of making these works that disappeared, I mean they disappeared even for me, to say nothing of the audience, or the next generation. Of course there's another aspect to this: it's harder now to make work; my own past stares me in the face. This was a condition that I happily ignored because I was never presented with it before as a dancer. There is a different responsibility that goes with one's own work being on record. One wants to maintain the level of that work, compete with it, even surpass it. That's very much a condition of my working process in film.

**C.P.:** When you were doing dance, you slowly integrated bits of film in the dance, why did you feel the need to do that? And how did your current films develop out of that, or did they?

**Y.R.:** Not really, those early short films were mainly a way of juxtaposing changes of scale. One of the first ones was just a close-up of a hand with the fingers moving rather erotically, rubbing each other, it was projected very large on one side, in front of the proscenium. That was in an early version of *The Mind Is a Muscle*. Then, in the later version, there was a film with a close-up of legs from the knee down projected on a large screen in front of the performing area, and on either side, underneath the screen (the screen was elevated slightly), you could see the real dancers, very tiny in relation to those projected legs. Some of the ideas in those short films are

reflected in sections of the longer films, like the beach section in *Film About a Woman Who...* where there's a play between a very large figure in the foreground and very small figures seen through an aperture in her limbs, underneath an arm, far off down on the beach. Those ideas crop up but they're not central, they don't stand out as a device in quite the same way they did in my dances. They are almost absorbed into the narrative.

**C.P.:** You were talking a lot about close-ups, was that a need to bring the audience closer to certain parts of the body?

**Y.R.:** Yes, and also focus attention in a way that is impossible to do in a live performance situation where the audience can look anywhere. You never know where they're looking; they may miss a tiny gesture especially if you have a number of things going on at the same time. I still like to have different things going on at the same time but now it takes the form of language and image. I used to divide up the performing space and have two or three things going on, now it's a matter of finding ways to intersect language and image, and shift meanings and levels of correspondence to arrive at pluralities - now mental whereas before the shifting was primarily spatial.

**C.P.:** You also then started using text besides the images on the screen. Now you're talking about language, certain correspondences between languages and images; why do you need to verbalize certain things?

**Y.R.:** Language offers the possibility for a kind of analysis and specificity that image, body, and movement usually don't, and it's also another channel of information that can be played off against other things.

**C.P.:** Could it be the power of evocation that language has more than images?

**Y.R.:** Yes, in terms of specific meanings. Images certainly can be evocative, but the evocativeness of a given image can always be directed or influenced by language. [...]

**C.P.:** Do you ever use also sequences of films that have been made by other people? You did, in away, in *Lives of Performers*...

**Y.R.:** I make references to other films, like the tableau vivant based on photos from Pabst's *Lulu* in *Lives of Performers*. I have a bit of footage that may go into my next film that somebody gave me. It's one of these air-bag tests showing the impact of an auto with dummies inside in slow motion. And that does intrigue me, very short insertions of illustrative material that comes from very different sources. [...]

**C.P.:** You had a very defined attitude towards the history of dance, you wanted to bring dance back to something more substantial, or down-to-earth, concrete, what is your relationship to the history of film or to film that is being done?

**Y.R.:** That's difficult to talk about. I feel a kind of debt to my influences in film and that sense of debt may be stronger than the messianic zeal I had as a dancer. But I do have a private war with narrative film and it's a different kind of argument than structural filmmakers have. I feel that film can encompass all kinds of treatment within the same work. I guess that's what interests me most about it, that it's possible to explore film in terms of its process, and structural/formal possibilities, and also deal with fiction and exposition through performers and language. I'm very aware that narrative is a trap, it's something that's very dangerous to deal with. In its ultimate perfected form, it gets into a kind of representation that can only be compared with methods of persuasion and myth that bombard us everyday, and that's something to be avoided. How one chooses to avoid these shoals of narrative film are the crux of the matter for me, and quite fascinating. [...]

**C.P.:** You once said that you had been influenced in your filmmaking by Godard and Warhol. How did they inspire you?

**Y.R.:** Warhol influenced me before Godard. I had a lot of trouble with Godard's films at the very beginning in the '60s. But Warhol with his stationary camera and that prolonged time-sense that allowed a subject's character to emerge, the portraits especially, I found overwhelmingly beautiful. That series of thirteen beautiful men and twelve beautiful women, especially the portrait of Henry Geldzahler, had an effect on me long before I was thinking of using film; it was an image that really stayed in my mind. The case of Godard is more complex. I don't know that I have been influenced by him although people sometimes see connections, I think I have been influenced by some of the same people, including Warhol, who certainly affected Godard at a certain point. In any case he is one of the few people whose films continue to be on a consistent level of problem and question about the use of cinematic modes in relation to complex ideas, to politics. And if one works anywhere near the areas in which he has worked specifically. "fooling around" with narrative critics are going to make comparisons.

**C.P.:** So you have mentioned one European influence and one American influence...

**Y.R.:** I have to point to Michael Snow and Hollis Frampton also. Especially Frampton's earlier work using photography and language. There is one work in particular called *Critical Mass* about an argument between a man and a woman. The way in which it is cut complements in the most amazing fashion the subject of the film.

**C.P.:** And Michael Snow?

**Y.R.:** Snow too, although when I saw *Wavelength*, I was rather bored but only because I was dancing and it did not really concern me. Certainly anyone who uses a repetitive camera movement must acknowledge Snow's influence.

**C.P.:** So you have taken something from structuralist film; do you think that narrativity is used in this type of film?

**Y.R.:** Well, *Wavelength* certainly pioneered a new use of narrative. Also Frampton's *Nostalgia* and *Poetic Justice*.

**C.P.:** What have you taken from the classics in cinema?

**Y.R.:** A sense of "poignant imagery" from Renoir and Vigo, and from Bresson and Dreyer, a sense of pacing, of stillness. [...]

**C.P.:** We talked about the way that your body was developing itself and what you learned from it but there was certainly a parallel development in your way of thinking because what comes out in your films touches this issue very much. Were you thinking from the beginning of how to deal with psychological matters?

**Y.R.:** No not at all. My early work was made from my body and observing in the mirror the shapes it could make. The sources of the material were eclectic, with references to balletic technique, eccentric gestures, athletic movement. I learned to organize this material by working with the chance procedures that Robert Dunn was exposing via John Cage's scores. Things like phrasing and timing were subjected to aleatory procedures, the results of which even though I no longer use them have influenced me to this day. What has remained is "doubling back" in terms of meaning and dynamics, changing, turning a corner, starting over, doing something that puts one instantly into another frame of reference, of questioning. Today, it is fashionable to talk about distancing and Brecht but somewhere along the line there have been many different roads to the same result. Artaud, Brecht, Duchamp. In different art forms people have been influenced by one or the other of these sources but the end effect may be very similar if one ignores subject matter, that is, I find it curious that my work has been appreciated and understood in terms of one set of ideas, while it was initiated and developed in terms of another, the Duchamp, Cage source. More and more, however, it seems unproductive to refer to these remote "fathers". The limb one goes out one is finally one's own. [...]

**C.P.:** You have said: "I go back and forth between documentation and fiction". What do you mean by documentation? We have talked a lot about what you mean by fiction.

**Y.R.:** I think that was said in relation to *Lives of Performers* in my book. In that film, I used a real rehearsal situation. I was still involved as a choreographer in rehearsing for live performances, so I documented one of the rehearsals we were having in preparation for a performance that was coming up soon at the Whitney Museum. I arranged to have a camera crew there while we worked and later incorporated the edited footage. These sections supplied an «authentic-looking background against which the narrative fictions were elaborated, and the "real" dancers interchanged with the fictional characters of the story. I have not

done anything quite like that since. The film I'm working on now contains a similar interplay. My niece who is a baroque flutist, gives me a lesson on the recorder. The fact that it was set up expressly for the camera does not make that much difference in the way one looks at it, or I would hope not.

**C.P.:** In some circumstances, the distance between recording a given situation and role playing is very narrow.

**Y.R.:** How true. In *Lives of Performers*, I began using the device of silent-filming people while they talk so I could get their ordinary every day social gestures and mannerisms and then on the sound-track, using information from the script, we impose explanations on the scenes. This was a way of having naturalistic gesture lend support to fabricated meanings. Simultaneously the "re-invented" speech of the sound track both complemented and subverted the reality of the image. [...]

**C.P.:** You have mentioned that you are worried about how others will perceive or if they will perceive exactly what you want them to perceive. Are you continuously preoccupied with this idea?

**Y.R.:** This consideration always comes after you have made a work and then you get this array of contradictory reactions from the audience. I am very aware that it is always possible to read more into the work than the author, the artist, intended and also to miss a lot of things. So much depends on the viewer's background and frame of reference. When I am making something, I am obviously dealing with things that interest me. That is all I can do. At some point, you simply have to have faith that there are other people in the world with similar interests. It is only when the work is complete that the artist must deal with this audience issue again.

**C.P.:** Is the relationship with the audience very different from when you were dancing, when you were doing choreography?

**Y.R.:** Yes. In spite of what I said before, I am even more concerned now with how things read, how they register. In retrospect it seems that I did what I pleased when I was a choreographer. Perhaps I am wrong, but it does seem that the problem of representation in film is more loaded, or risky, than the more purely formal terms of dancing. Now, especially since I am dealing with a peculiar mix of moral, psychological and social subject matter and a kind of personal/public thought process, I have a different dilemma. The "ante" has been "upped" in term of the effort to "speak" to the audience and I mean the audience at its most sensitive and at its most informed in relation to film. I am not interested in making films for the masses. Not, that I ever made dances in this spirit, but somehow there's much more at stake now. Duchamp's "beauty of indifference" and Freud's notion of art as "play" are not as applicable as they once were. Maybe it's partly a function of the aging process but not entirely. I know a number of people involved in art who are working out of a "new seriousness".



Americans, naturally. We always were “less serious” than the rest of the world. Which didn’t prevent our being taken terribly seriously. But enough of this. I’m getting unserious.

**C.P.:** I was thinking more of the relationship between the one who sees and the one who makes... That was what my question was all about. I wanted to ask you about how you deal with time, how is that organized in your films?

**Y.R.:** That is the most difficult thing to talk about because it is always changing. I cannot make a general statement about my sense of time. People complain that it is too dense, there is just too much to take in especially with all the talking...

**C.P.:** Many things are often happening at the same time or almost: it is more difficult to do in film than on the stage where simultaneous actions are possible...

**Y.R.:** But the equivalent is to have a fluctuating relationship between sound and image. My particular sense of pace, I think, is most apparent when the talking stops and hardly anything happens from a very dense outpouring of information, visual and verbal, all of a sudden there is no speech and you are just looking at someone sitting looking out at the camera. I find certain images in themselves very mysterious, especially in contrast to a lot of verbal input. The silence of an image suddenly drained of verbal under “pinnings” can be extremely evocative. And I am still involved with prolonged duration and with uneven durations.

**C.P.:** You are interested in fiction but you are not interested in using shortcuts, you want to show how things happen in “real” time but at the same time, how in real time, there are so many things that happen.

**Y.R.:** No, I don’t use “real” time, but there are other ways in which I try to counteract my enslavement to narrative. The narrative stops and you have to deal with images on a formal level, with cutting, with camera movements, with things that don’t propel the plot as the language has propelled it. It is a kind of story telling that is constantly breaking down into its formal components. It starts, it stops, it chugs, it huffs and puffs, it does not go anywhere and then starts up again. It’s confusing, but people who know my work get used to that. At any one moment you have to deal with that moment both as an isolated phenomenon and in relation to what has gone before, which is not the case with most narrative films where at each moment you are into the next phase of development of the plot.

**C.P.:** It is really a necessity, in your case, to see the films often. It is as if you had to have the time to live with them before they fulfill their whole role as a work of art, which is very different from other kinds of narrative films where there is one story, you see it once and you know what it is about.

**Y.R.:** But the same might apply to great narrative films. You see them again and you see more in them than the outline of the plot. I saw Bresson’s *Balthazar* again

recently and was overwhelmed.

**C.P.:** Before, you were talking about the moral issues that you are dealing with. How would you identify those?

**Y.R.:** Problems of conscience, this recurring discrepancy between private experience and public action. Some of these things are specified in *Kristina Talking Pictures*. Perhaps the morality of the image itself, but that is hard to talk about. That is something I appreciated in Godard’s last films, this constant questioning of filmmaking itself, how you can or cannot make a film about political or moral questions. I think the best one can do, in a sense, is to include contradictions in the film, to demonstrate the difficulty of making art about complex moral and political issues. I am certainly getting into difficulty in my present film, *Journeys from Berlin*, which is trying not to equate, but to parallel, certain events such as political ideology and the desperate emotional state that produce the terrorist act and/or the desperate act against oneself, namely suicide. It would be so easy to appear to be saying that terrorist tactics against the state can be seen only in terms of psychological difficulties. I don’t want to say that. It would be easy to fall prey to such an interpretation with a misplaced image or sentence. Yet, there is something to be said. As yet I am not sure what that is. This is a film that is going to have to take all kinds of “tacks” to keep clear of facile interpretation and arrive at what it is about.

Traduction : Colette Tougas

# YVONNE RAINER

Yvonne Rainer was born in San Francisco in 1934. She trained as a modern dancer in New York from 1957 and began to choreograph her own work in 1960. She was one of the founders of the Judson Dance Theater in 1962, the genesis of a movement that proved to be a vital force in modern dance in the following decades. Some of her better known early dances and theater pieces are *Terrain* (1963), *The Mind Is a Muscle* (1968), *Continuous Project-Altered Daily* (1971), and *This is the Story of a Woman Who...* (1973)

Between 1972 and 1996 Rainer completed seven feature-length films, beginning with *Lives of Performers* and more recently *Privilege* (1990), winner of the Filmmakers' Trophy at the 1991 Sundance Film Festival, Park City, Utah, and the Geyer Werke Prize at the 1991 International Documentary Film Festival in Munich; and *MURDER and murder* (1996), winner of the Teddy Award at the 1997 Berlin Film Festival and Special Jury Award at the 1999 Miami Lesbian and Gay Film Festival. Her films deal with a number of aesthetic and social issues, such as melodrama, menopause, racism, political violence, sexual identity, and notions of disease.

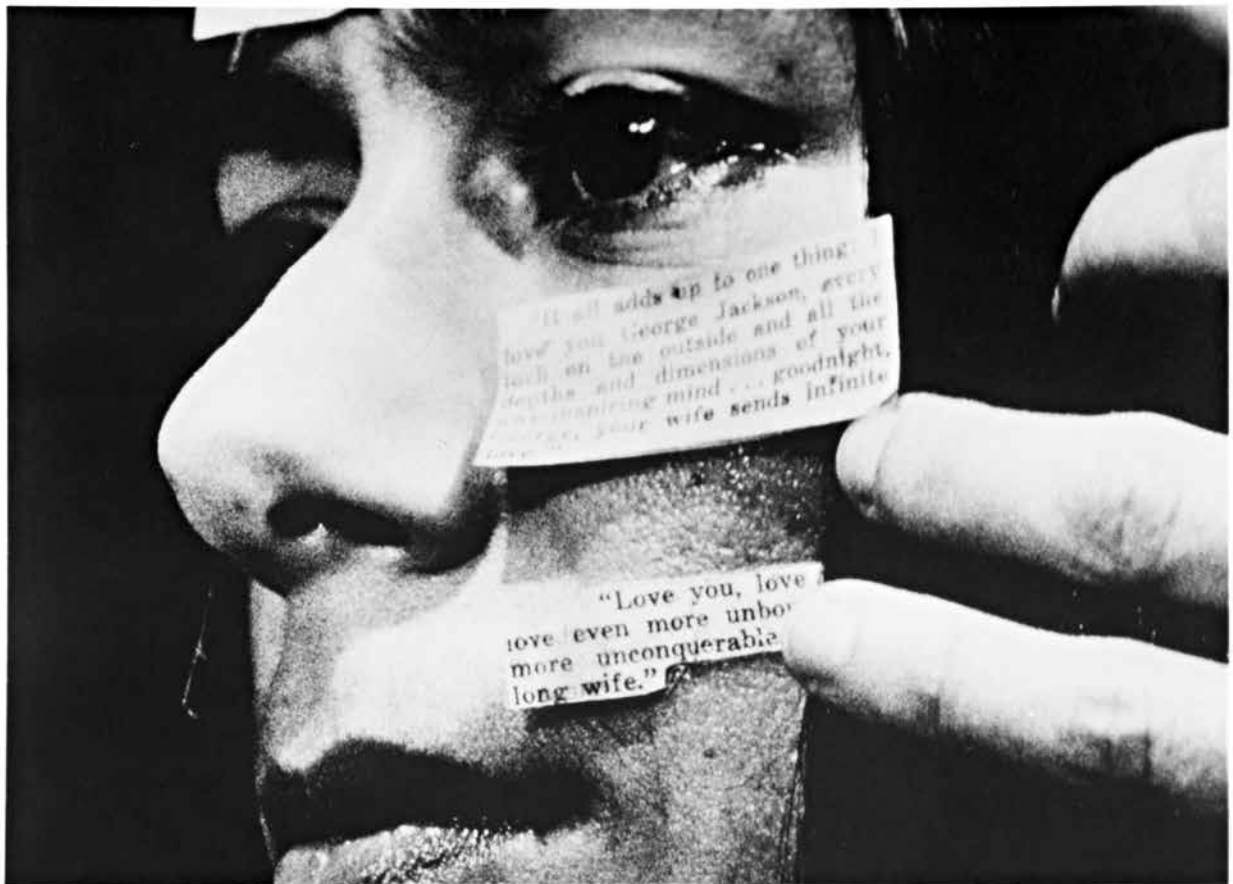
In 2000 Rainer returned to dance with *After Many a Summer Dies the Swan*, commissioned by the Baryshnikov Dance Foundation. Since then she has choreographed five more dances, including *RoS Indexical*, *Spiraling Down*, and *Assisted Living: Do you have any money?* She regularly presents her performances under the auspices of Performa. Rainer's publications include *Work: 1961-73* (1974); *The Films of Y.R.* (1989); *A Woman Who...: Essays, Interviews, Scripts* (1999); *Feelings Are Facts: a Life* (2006); and *Poems* (2011).

In 2002 the Rosenwald-Wolf Gallery in Philadelphia mounted a Rainer exhibition consisting of video installations, film screenings, and dance photos and memorabilia. In 2013 Kunsthau Bregenz and the Ludwig Museum in Cologne mounted similar exhibitions. Rainer is the recipient of a number of awards, including

two Guggenheim Fellowships, a MacArthur Fellowship, several National Endowment awards, and a Yoko Ono Award. Her archive is housed in the Getty Research Institute in Los Angeles.

Yvonne Rainer is one of today's most influential figures for artists concerned with the possibilities of the moving image, human potential and relational aesthetics.

Yvonne Rainer in *Kristina Talking Pictures*, 1976



It all adds up to one thing:  
love you George Jackson, every  
inch on the outside and all the  
depths and dimensions of your  
inspiring mind... goodnight,  
George, your wife sends infinite  
love.

"Love you, love  
love even more unbo  
more unconquerable  
long wife."

# YVONNE RAINER

## THE ARCHIVES

In 2006, the Getty Research Institute acquired Yvonne Rainer's archives in their entirety. These archives were made available to us and the selection reproduced here focuses on her move from dance to cinema, with the inclusion of hitherto unpublished material. The choice is not scholarly: rather it is selective and subjective, offering an impressionistic approach to Rainer's work and artistic evolution.

We begin with her famous *No Manifesto* of 1965 and its reworked version of 2008, which display a combination of intense control and undisguised contradictions. The scores, performance photographs, posters and handwritten notes that follow provide an overall introduction to her choreographic practice, in which we observe her taste for composition and structure, her approach to everyday movements and objects, and the relationship she sought with the spectator.

The presentation continues with a focus on *Grand Union Dream* and *Performance*, the dance pieces that formed the basis for her thinking about film when she returned from India and set about reintroducing narrative, characters and emotion into her work. At that time she "was already thinking in terms of framing and voice-over", and quotes Andy Warhol, Michael Snow, Hollis Frampton, Jean-Luc Godard and Robert Bresson in her explanation of the connection between image and sound, and movement and language, together with her method of overlaying narratives and heterogeneous elements.

The following segment comprises a constellation of production stills from *Lives of Performers* taken by her camerawoman Babette Mangolte, and another made up of film posters and stills from her six other feature-length films. All this material is marked by a feminist political stance. *Film about a Woman Who...* (1974) and *Kristina Talking Pictures* (1976) work with the idea of everyday existence as a political battleground, while

looking into the relationships between memories and history, sexuality and politics, and public space and daily life. *Journeys From Berlin/1971* (1980) and *The Man Who Envied Women* (1985) also take up the feminist idea that "the personal is political". *Privilege* (1990) raises the issue of female aging and the menopause in what is also a denunciation of the enduring fiction of race and sex. Lastly *MURDER and murder* (1996) is a love story about two middle-aged lesbians, with a sense of detachment created by appearances by Rainer's own aged and ailing body. This final "chapter" includes references to her cinema influences, in the form of photos and handwritten notes.

The lists of movements and objects, the notes on her reading and the accounts of dreams scattered among this working material come together as a portrait of Yvonne Rainer as an artist and personage in whom the biography and the work, the public and the private, have always been intimately linked.

Poster for "Two Evenings of Modern Dance by Yvonne Rainer", 1965



## TWO EVENINGS OF MODERN DANCE BY YVONNE RAINER

Wadsworth Atheneum, Hartford, Connecticut — March 6th and 7th

with

Jocelyn Ghisla • Judith Dunn • Sally Gross •  
Rabochin Hoy • Tony Holder • Robert Morris •  
• Sarah Paxton • Yvonne Rainer •  
Richard Russellman • Joseph Senteleir

At the Theatre

Saturday, March 6th — 8:00 P.M. — \$2.00

*Evening's Performance: "Part of Some Society"*

Choreographed by Yvonne Rainer

Compassionated by Wadsworth Atheneum

Plus: "We Shall Not Be Moved" and "United Solo"

Through the sponsorship of Susan Morse Hilles

Sunday, March 7th — 5:00 P.M. — \$2.00

*Evening's Performance: "Terrain," "We Shall Not Be Moved" and "United Solo"*

Reserved Seats: send stamped, addressed envelope  
with check to Wadsworth Atheneum, Hartford, Conn.,  
or call Hartford 527-2191.

Photo: rehearsal "Part of Some Society"

YVONNE RAINER

## FIVE EASY PIECES

In a second room we find five silent films –“choreographic exercises” – made by Yvonne Rainer in the 1960s with filmmakers such as Phill Niblock. Intended to be shown onstage with dancers, and later regrouped as *Five Easy Pieces*, these short films illustrate the oscillation between integration of films into performances and integration of performance into films. In their use of closeups, unusual points of view and abrupt changes of scale, they represent an extension of Rainer's interest in the body and the body in motion. As such they are the beginning of her work with successive croppings of the body and with the frame as a metaphorical space for human relationships – crowding, avoidance, seduction, hostility – to be found in the films to come.

Through the headset the viewer hears the voice of Rainer today, as she reads – and sometimes rediscovers – her own past writings while leafing through books by or about her: among them are her autobiography, *Feelings Are Facts*, and the seminal *Work 1961–73*.

The first short film, *Hand Movie*, was made at her request when a friend was visiting her in hospital. We see only her hand as she explores its gestural possibilities with movements of the wrist and fingers. The film is like a salutation, while at the same time a return to the Minimalist aesthetic of her choreography: that of the “ordinary” gesture. In *Line*, a young woman seen in back view draws a line on the wall, then turns to face the viewer. *Volley Ball* is a closeup of a ball being pushed across the studio and the screen by a dancer's legs. *Trio Film* is a variation on *Trio A* (1966), a core dance piece for Rainer that sums up an approach focusing on the body's potential: a nude couple sitting on a divan interacts with a sphere – an exercise balloon – as it moves about the screen space. *Rhode Island Red* is a high shot of an “assembly” of hens whose movement saturates the screen in an image of the life force that is always to the fore in Rainer's work.

*Five Easy Pieces*

Distribution: Video Data Bank

From top to down:

*Hand Movie*, 1966,  
8mm film transferred to video, 5 min, b&w, silent  
Camera: William Davis

*Volleyball*, 1967,  
16mm film transferred to video, 10 min, b&w, silent  
Camera: Bud Wirschafter

*Rhode Island Red*, 1968,  
16mm film transferred to video, 10 min, b&w, silent  
Camera: Roy Levin

*Trio Film*, 1968,  
16mm film transferred to video, 13 min, b&w, silent  
Camera: Phill Niblock

*Line*, 1969,  
16mm film transferred to video, 10 min, b&w, silent  
Camera: Phill Niblock





# ÉMILIE PITOISET

Born in 1980 in Noisy-Le-Grand. Lives and works in Paris.

Addressing the notion of presence through a “chronicling of lack”, Emilie Pitoiset’s work is based on fictional balancing acts. Her images and sculpted or painted objects often conceal convex narratives summoning the view into a role game whose scenario has not yet been revealed. Everything here is dual and unstable: the exhibition, seemingly immobile, becomes the locus of a scene being played, or already played, in which objects become actors. In a mix of fetishisation and embodiment, these “transfer objects” contain repetitions of past acts and latent scenarios for fictional rituals. Thus writing, mise en scène and choreography find their place in Pitoiset’s work, in the complexity of sculpture evocative of costume or a performance transformed into a ceremony.

The installation *You will see the cat before you leave* is like a stage set waiting to be brought to life by a musical performance. Its objects are lying there as if abruptly abandoned. The setting the spectator wanders through is a palimpsest of vertical planes and framings. Remnants of clothing and shreds of painted canvases hang from racks like leftovers of some act silenced by oblivion. As always, a fiction is at work here: an absent gesture being made palpable, rendered visible with a layer of paint that rumples the object and shrivels its use. The object then becomes substance and body, and a medium for different projections. The fabrics are petrified, fossilised, with meaning suspended between the folds of a curtain in an attempt at domesticating the compositional elements and the exhibition space. What has happened or is still to come? In this setting a wig ‘awaiting embodiment’ is activated for a performance with musician Jessica 93. Here you enter through and for fiction.

For *Live Performance*, Pitoiset has taken a still from the dream sequence of *Lives of Performers* and overlaid it with a geometrical grid, a guide to the structure of the image, the direction of the figure’s gaze and the

perspective. At the same time this set of lines looks hints at an elusive temporality, an anticipation of the bounces of the ball and a suggestion of possible trajectories. Long interested in the concept of equilibrium and its implications – accidents, falls, spillings – Pitoiset concentrates here on the suspended moment, the moment preceding an action. The ball the little girl is holding in her hand – also to be found in the work by Pauline Boudry and Renate Lorenz – serves as a symbol: it is the ball Valda is holding as she dances the part of Salome in *Lives of Performers*, and represents the head of St John the Baptist.

*Live Performance*, 2012  
Framed photography, felt pen, 21 x 27 cm  
Courtesy of the artist and Klemm’s Gallery, Berlin

*You will see the cat before you leave*, 2014  
Installation, wood, fabric, objects  
Courtesy of the artist and Klemm’s Gallery, Berlin  
© Emile Ouroumov



# MAI-THU PERRET

Born in 1976 in Geneva. Lives and works in Geneva.

Mai-Thu Perret's work is dotted with historical and literary references she uses to explore the heritage of utopian ideas in today's capitalist society. Here she begins with *The Crystal Frontier*, a multidisciplinary chronicle of the life of a women's community in the desert in New Mexico. The piece mixes literary experimentation and radical feminism with a modernist aesthetic. In 2007 Perret made the groundbreaking film *An Evening of the Book*, showing a group of women dancers going through a series of synchronised movements. An investigation of the fine line between ritual and everyday behaviour, the film was notably influenced by Yvonne Rainer and her use of ordinary movements to neutralise the pathos of dance. Like Rainer, Perret focused on the ambivalence between object and action, reality and fiction, and on a complex definition of the concepts of the author and subjectivity.

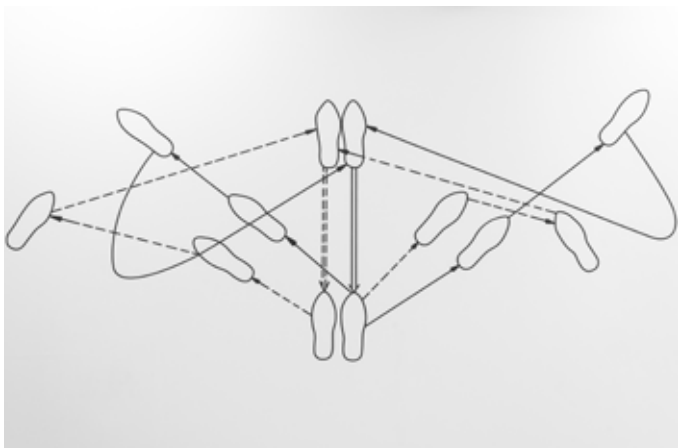
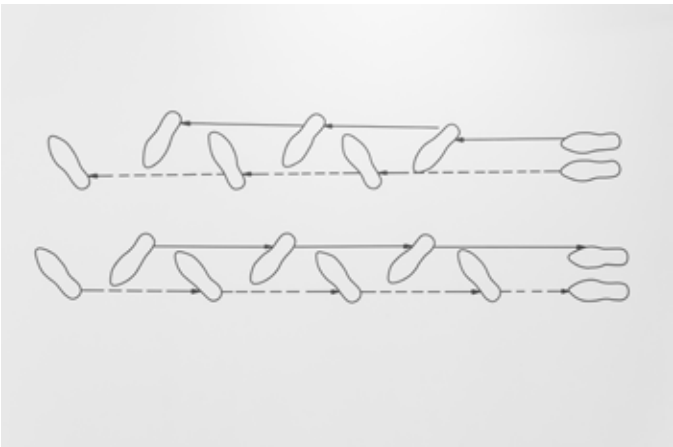
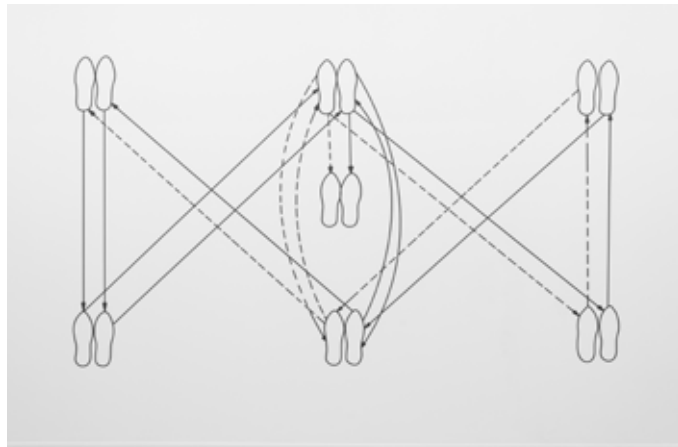
For several years now Perret has been making papier mâché "dancing dummies". The first of them is a handmade prototype, a life-size puppet dressed in the artist's working clothes that anticipates such later figures as *La Fée électricité* and their portrayals of female figures that hark back to propaganda images. Perret uses her figures to address the exhibition as a theatrical space in which these inert bodies provoke disconcerting interaction with the living, moving bodies of the spectators.

*La Fée idéologie* more specifically references a drawing from a book by psychologist Richard Alpert – written after his conversion to Indian mysticism – showing a family holding puppet versions of themselves who are holding puppet versions of themselves, and so on. Struck by this image, Perret imagined the women of her community making then casting aside an alienated image of themselves. The recumbent body with its featureless face is a reminder of the importance of impassivity in Rainer's work – the faces in *Lives of Performers* are described as being frozen like masks – and also of a passage in her reading notes in which emotion is compared to "a large doll which the dancer leaves behind while he goes on dancing."

The three elegantly schematic wall drawings are presented as diagrams of dance steps. As their titles indicate, these steps are taken from Korean shamanic dances performed while in a trance. Once Korea's dominant religion, shamanism is now restricted to the country's lowest social classes, and mostly to women. While in a trance, the female shaman sets up a connection between our world and "the other one", in an intermingling of sadness and joy, suffering and well-being, tears and laughter.

*La Fée idéologie*, 2004  
Mix media  
Courtesy of the artist  
© Emile Ouroumov

From left to right:  
*Polysangkori I*, 2008  
*Sinjangkori III*, 2008  
*Taegamkori IV*, 2008  
Wall drawings  
Courtesy of the artist  
© Emile Ouroumov



# JULIEN CRÉPIEUX

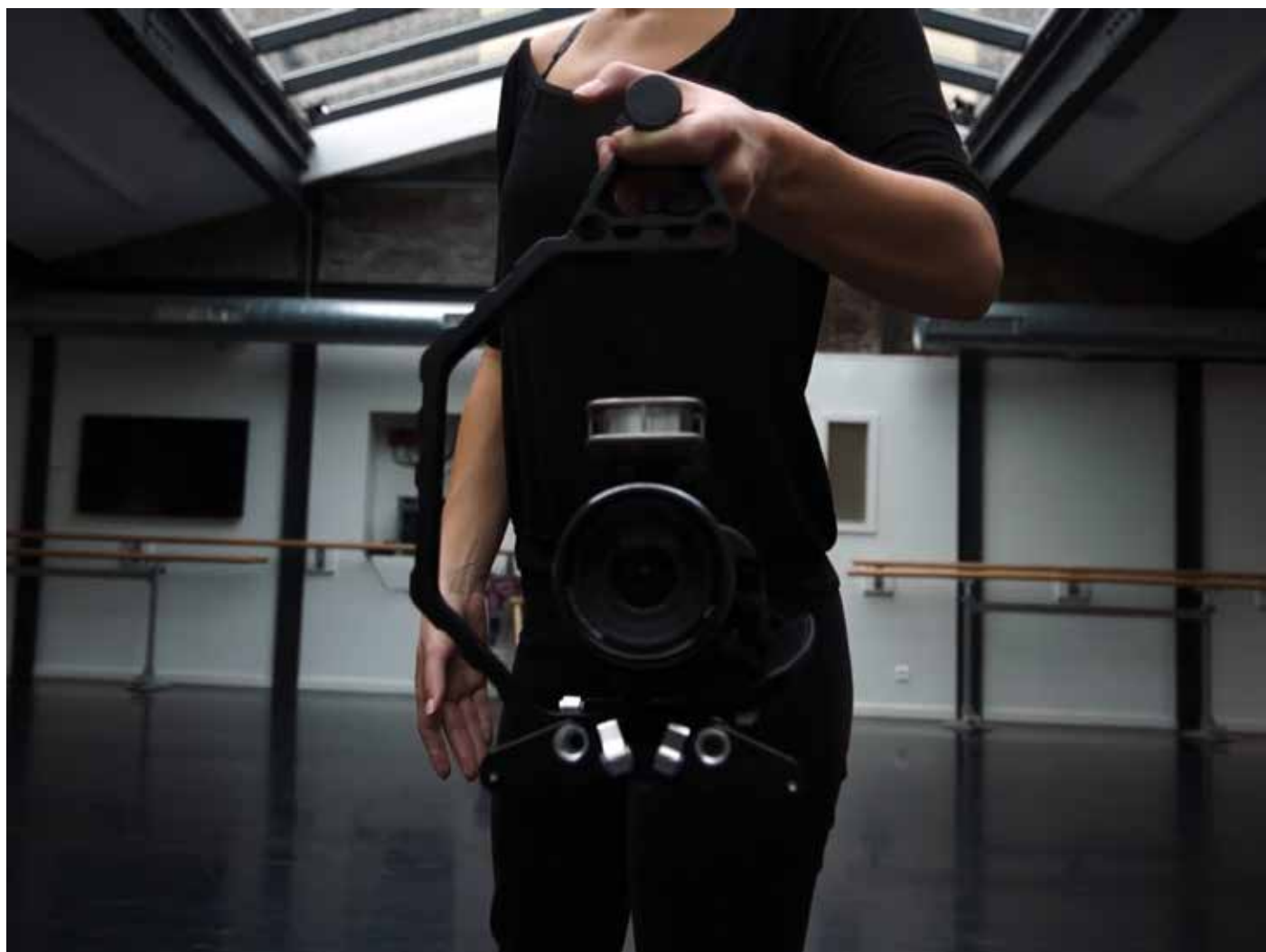
Born in 1979 in Normandy. Lives and works in Paris.

In films, installations and collages Julien Crépieux innovatively challenges and subverts the various ways still and moving images manifest themselves, from creation to reception. Focusing on forms of movement and change, he makes play with the gap between a recording and its reproduction, with the time distortions caused by slowdown and acceleration, and with the use of multiple technical effects within a single medium. In this respect his work takes us through the history of cultural forms and contemporary techniques. One of his favourite themes is the body and its displacement, together with the appearance and displacement of the subject within the space-time of the image frame. In his explorations of staging and works within works he achieves a power at once formal and poetic.

In *L'Opérateur* [The Operator] the effects of meaning triggered by the recording and playback distortions are pushed to extremes. The image itself rotates, being produced by a device like an enormous mobile with a video projector and screen at each end. The video shows a woman dancer with a steadycam in her hand, filming her reflection in a studio mirror. The aim of the dancer's movements is to exhaust all the camera's possibilities: tracking shot, front, rear and left/right panning, etc. She is accompanied by a pianist playing Erik Satie's *Vexations*, another composition using a combinatorial technique, which in this case consists in repeating the same motif 840 times. (John Cage was the first to organise a concert at which the work was played in its entirety.) By analogy the mobile becomes choreographic: onto the movement of the film is superposed that of the mobile, itself triggered by the movement of the spectators. Movement within movement, then: multiple displacements that disturb our perception.

*L'Opérateur* [The Operator], 2013  
Video installation, colour and sound, 12 min  
Frac Alsace Collection  
Courtesy of the artist and Galerie Jérôme Poggi, Paris  
© Emile Ouroumov





# Yael Davids

Born in 1968 in Jerusalem/Kibbutz Tzuba, Israel.  
Lives and works in Amsterdam.

"I am a performance. I am a moment. I am a body that documents and records."

Sparing in its movements and constantly engaging with the concept of performance, Yael Davids's work addresses the narrative potential inherent in the acts of documentation and repetition. "I am a repetition. I repeat my previous performance. It becomes a score and step by step I follow in my own footsteps, detecting step by step the moments and things that have not been named." Highly personal and poetic, her installations and performances set out to shape our memory of the ephemeral and the fleeting. Merging the conflictual political history of a growing nation with a personal biography marked by loss and grieving, they confront presence and absence, movement and speech. For this artist abstraction is a powerful, subtle language, the only one capable of attaining to that ultimate, infinitely distant point represented by absence and loss.

For this exhibition Yael Davids has come up with an installation using her usual equipment – rope, a staircase, glass panels, black cloth partitions – as stage materials for conjuring up the vocabulary of Minimalism. Her personal and professional paths are dotted with contacts with the history of the Judson Theater and Yvonne Rainer. For Rainer, as for Davids, the body as a terrain of conflict and contradiction at the junction of the private and the public, is at the very heart of artistic practice. Davids's interest in Rainer also includes the parallel between performance and lived experience, the way the individual or social body occupies a space, and the use of narration and emotion for expressing radical political and formal positions. In her examination of the way this heritage, indirectly handed on to her by her mother, is rooted in her affective and bodily memory, Davids sets out to activate her installation through a performance mingling speech, movement and handling of objects, in collaboration with two associates.

In the script of *A Reading that Writes – a Physical Act*, Yael Davids describes the landscape around the kibbutz where she grew up. We learn that this was the site of a Palestinian village whose inhabitants were forced to move and their houses left abandoned. Accompanied by André van Bergen and woman dancer Sivan Medioni, Davids brings her installation to life with poses and bodily movements through space, while reciting her script. Dictated by the arrangement of the objects in the room, her movements outline transitions from the horizontal to the vertical and vice versa. At the same time the glass plates are moved about and made opaque with paint, transforming the configuration of the space and echoing the reading of the text.

## *A Variation on A Reading that Writes, 2014*

Installation  
Restored ceramic dish, North Korea, 16th century  
Photos of pages torn from a script  
Sheets of hardboard covered with black clay  
Sheets of glass  
Rope  
Sample of bulletproof glass (safety glass from Oran, Kibbutz Tzuba, the artist's birthplace)  
Unstitched black fabric  
Steps, podium

Performance realised in association with André van Bergen and Sivan Medioni, with the assistance of the Laboratoires d'Aubervilliers.

Courtesy of the artist  
© Emile Ouroumov



# MARIA LOBODA

Born in 1979 in Krakow. Lives and works in Berlin.

For Maria Loboda the world is made up of signs and symbols to be deciphered. In her installations, sculptures and collages she uses the cultural heritages of the past to explore various dichotomies: nature and culture, order and chaos, reason and instinct, archaism and modernity. In a merging of rationality and magic she sets up dialogues between subjects and points of reference which in theory should never have come together. What at first glance appears harmonious turns out to contain a degree of confusion that destabilises received wisdom, as in the case of titles often hinging on plays with language.

With *Man of his Word* (2014) and *Her Artillery* (2014), Loboda engages with the performative issues of posture and attitude, challenging the tropes of cultural history through formal twinning of contrasts presented in the form of conceptual contractions: Hindu or Buddhist gestures with black leather gloves, and a heraldic lioness approached from behind rather than frontally.

In her series of photographs she conjures up two worlds: that of the Western gentleman whose word is his bond; and mudras, codified hand movements taken from Eastern spirituality. A mysterious, overcoated male figure whose face remains unseen performs different gestures with his black-gloved hands. There are suggestions of sign language, but the upshot of this meeting of two worlds is equivocality and uncertainty. Loboda is drawing here on a very ancient repertoire whose meanings, although they elude our contemporary understanding, trigger real interest among Western practitioners of yoga and Indian dance forms like Bharata natyam, Odissi, Mohiniattam and Kuchipudi. Mudras make up an actual language which generates a particular mental state and signals a moment when the potential of being regains lost ground from everyday life. Each mudra brings its own change of meaning: *Dharmachakra Mudra* symbolises the law and disseminates its precepts; *Dhyana Mudra* prompts a state of meditation allowing one to immerse oneself in observation of the void; *Karana Mudra* is the expression of an accumulated energy that drives out

demons; and *Varada Mudra* helps with the granting of wishes, stimulates generosity and invokes celestial forces.

*Her Artillery* was inspired by a sculpture the artist saw at Porte Dorée in Paris. The lion, feminised and shown in back view, has been subjected to a form of humiliation going counter to its usual symbolism and perhaps portending a revolt by the animal world. The Porte Dorée harks back to the colonial period, as its palace was built for the World's Fair in 1931. The palace successively housed the Colonial Museum, the French Overseas Museum and the National Museum of the Arts of Africa and Oceania. It is now home to the National Museum of Immigration History, covering some hundred years of a colonialism today's world forces us to see with greater objectivity and changed attitudes. Glancing back over her shoulder, the lioness is being obliged to leave behind part of a heroic history associated with European imperialism. With her paw she is crushing a pair of black gloves that remind us those of the gentleman in the photographs, another symbol of Western power at its height in the 19th century.

*Her Artillery*, 2014

Polystyrene, plaster, paint, leather gloves, 122 x 72 x 156 cm  
Courtesy of the artist and the Schleicher/Lange Gallery, Berlin  
© Emile Ouroumov

Left to right:

*A Man of his Word (Dharmachakra Mudra)*, 2014

*A Man of his Word (Varada Mudra)*, 2014

*A Man of his Word (Dhyana Mudra)*, 2014

*A Man of his Word (Karana Mudra)*, 2014

Photographs, each 117 x 64 cm

Courtesy of the artist and the Schleicher/Lange Gallery, Berlin



# CAROLE DOUILLARD

Born in 1971 in Nantes, France. Lives and works in Nantes.

Visual and performance artist Carole Douillard focuses on the body as sculpture, using different social contexts to test out the presence of a physical body in relation to the social body represented by the general public. In *The Viewers* she confronts visitors to the exhibition with a silent, motionless group of people. Occupying space just like the other exhibits, they observe the observers in an infinite loop of visual interplay. Douillard's piece calls for redefinition of the spectator, the performance space and the power plays between the contemplated and the contemplator.

*The Waiting Room* shows us a group of men in an empty exhibition room waiting – in vain – for an undefined something to happen. The subject here is “hittism” – from the Arabic for “holding up the wall” – a common social usage in North Africa, where unemployed men spend hours in the street leaning against walls, doing nothing. This is a characteristically Mediterranean public practice transferred by the artist into the space of the art centre. The action – or, rather, inaction – lasts four hours, with visitors invited to come and watch. Later a short text describing what happened on the day of the opening is displayed on the wall of the empty exhibition room.

*The Waiting Room* is part of the *Dog Life* research project Carole Douillard is currently working on in Algeria.

With: Laurent Cebe, Fabien de Chavanes, Franck Mas, Stève Paulet, Axel Roy, Pascal Simon

*The Waiting Room*, 2014  
Performance, six performers  
© Céline Bertin





YVONNE RAINER

## LIVES OF PERFORMERS

*Lives of Performers* is Yvonne Rainer's first feature-length film and testimony to her transition from choreography to cinema. The artistic principles of her work in dance were based on an exploration she shared with her dancers of the idea of being and performing, and of the relationship with the spectator; this was before she decided to look to the cinema in search of a more personal involvement with language, narrative and emotions.

The title sets the tone. The action begins and ends with a studio rehearsal of *Walk, She Said* for a live performance the same year at the Whitney Museum. This is one of the pieces in which Rainer defines some of her major themes: everyday movements like walking, directorial authority and the relationship between language and movement. Although the rehearsal is already under way, the film begins without sound, Rainer's intention being to make the image of the body in motion speak for itself. Leo Bersani's opening quotation about cliché and the way it is handled in the movies points up what is to be one of the film's core issues: through this recording of a rehearsal Rainer is trying to grasp the workings of cinema and melodrama. This attempt is what her investigation is all about, and this explains the "tentative" character of an otherwise highly structured film.

This first sequence is followed by a series of photographs of an earlier performance of the work *Grand Union Dream*, with a voice-over commentary by the film's participants: Valda, Shirley, Fernando, John and Yvonne. On screen they are given their real names, even though we are not sure the characters are really them. As the recollections of the performance continue, the outline of an emotional drama involving the dancers begins to form. The third sequence addresses the matter of narrative in the form of a series of try-outs. The narrative content is distanced by the way the bodies are filmed – like objects in closeup – by Babette Mangolte's camera. This distancing effect is heightened

by the host of contradictions and corrections in the actual organisation of the narrative. What emerges is the part played by each of the characters, and in particular by the three women: Yvonne's role as the authority figure, and Shirley and Valda's positioning in relation to each other and to Fernando, the man they are sharing. A fundamental question arises here – which of the women is seen as more likable by the director – as Rainer comes to grips with one of the leitmotifs of her later cinema: the politics of representation and its links with the power of the moving image and relationships of domination. We find ourselves wondering about the role played by women in society as well as on the screen. Then Valda dances a solo in which we spot references to Merce Cunningham and to Alla Nazimova's film *Salome* (1923). The lighting resorts to the cliché of the spotlight following the dancer, intensifying the way the viewer's gaze is directed and the subject captured. The rehearsal of *Walk, She Said* resumes, this time for the sequence in which all the dancers pack themselves into a large box placed against the wall. Valda has swapped her long black dress for a denim overall. Here the twists and turns of the middle sequence reach a kind of culmination, as all the characters physically test out the constraint and coercion involved in the power plays suggested earlier. The close comprises a series of tableaux vivants whose Expressionist style is in sharp contrast with the rest of the film. The characters adopt poses borrowed from G.W. Pabst's *Pandora's Box* (1929). Questions of victimisation, especially of women, would become one of Rainer's recurring motifs in her later films. *Lives of Performers* ends with the Rolling Stones's *No Expectations*, a reminder of Rainer's *No Manifesto* of a few years earlier. A new generation and a new world are on the horizon...

*Lives of Performers*, 1972  
16mm film transferred to video, 90 min, b&w, sound  
Distribution : Zeitgeist Films  
Translation to French: Chloé Pellegrin  
© Babette Mangolte (Tous droits réservés)



# PAULINE BOUDRY / RENATE LORENZ

Pauline Boudry was born in Lausanne in 1972.  
Renate Lorenz was born in Bonn in 1963.  
They live and work in Berlin.

Pauline Boudry and Renate Lorenz's film archives and installations return to materials and practices of yesteryear: photographs, texts and songs that destabilise today's "normality". Their films are usually shot in 16mm as a way of underscoring their performative character: the scenes are filmed in a single take. The couple's characteristic production aesthetic stresses the autonomy of the camera, the music, the costumes and the props. Sometimes described as "temporal cross-dressing", their works present bodies that not only cut through gender and different time frames, but also set up connections between them that reveal the possibilities of a queer future.

*Salomania* approaches Salomé as a transgender figure, an exponent of queer appropriation of the exotic. Here we witness a reconstruction of the "dance of the seven veils" as performed by Alla Nazimova in the silent film *Salomé* (1923) and a rehearsal of "Valda's solo", created by Rainer for *Lives of Performers* and inspired by Nazimova. Performer Wu Tsang plays Oscar Wilde, Alla Nazimova and Salomé. Yvonne Rainer teaches Salomé her solo, but also plays the part of her "stepfather", King Herod, for whom Salomé dances. Harking back to strategies evolved by Rainer in her own films, Boudry and Lorenz construct their characters as palimpsests – multiple strata of texts, images, and stories – as a way of developing a critical approach to the contemporary body. We "enter" this film through a forest of ostrich feather palm trees, borrowed directly from the Nazimova film and its orientalist, Art Deco aesthetic. The work is accompanied by a booklet documenting the different performers of Salomé in the early 20th century – a kind of "archaeology" of queer performance.

*Salomania*, 2009  
Installation, fanzine and color sound video, 17 min  
Courtesy Marcelle Alix – Paris  
© Emile Ouroumov



# NOÉ SOULIER

Born in 1987 in Paris, where he lives and works.

Noé Soulier's career path has led him from classical to contemporary dance – with philosophy studies along the way – and to a merging of philosophical and artistic considerations in works that explore the relationships between movement and thought processes. Drawing on an extraordinary miscellany of approaches and discourses – borrowed from music, classical and contemporary dance, cinema, science and philosophy – he delves into the way we perceive and interpret movement in media including choreography, installations, theoretical essays and performance. Since his dance work *Le Royaume des ombres* (The Realm of Shadows, 2009) and its critique of classical ballet, he has been working with a singular fusion of language and gesture. *Petites perceptions* (Small Perceptions, 2010) looks at music from the point of view of the cognitive sciences, while highlighting fluctuation of movement and memory. *Signe blanc* (White Sign, 2012) revisits pantomime, seeking an equilibrium between speech, silence and gesture. *Idéographie* (Ideography, 2012) is a choreography of “ideas” based on texts relating to philosophy, music and linguistics.

*Mouvement sur mouvement* (Movement on Movement, 2013) is based on the video *Improvisation Technologies* in which William Forsythe demonstrates various geometrical tools for analysing and creating movements. Soulier utilises these instructional images to create a dance score, and while executing the sequences of movements he speaks of the use of geometry in dance and its consequences for our apprehension of the body. He moves successively from ordinary to danced movement, referencing along the way different eras and styles in the history of dance. Containing allusions to Merce Cunningham, Yvonne Rainer, Trisha Brown and Simone Forti, this spoken segment – by turns descriptive, introspective, theoretical and fictional – counterpoints the action, sometimes clashing, sometimes harmonising with it.

Instead of Forsythe's didactic approach, Soulier works speculatively, speaking in a mix of the descriptive, the theoretical and the personal. Out of this arise new arrangements of meanings that broaden our field of knowledge. In this way he establishes a mutual understanding with viewers carried away by this lecture-performance and the combination of intelligent movement and fascination that a body in motion can generate.

This performance is scheduled for the last day of the exhibition. In the exhibition space the dance score, designed by the artist as a booklet containing the text and the instructions, is presented on a stand while awaiting its interpretation.

*Mouvement sur mouvement*, 2013  
Edition, black&white, 13x18 cm  
© Emile Ouroumov

*Mouvement sur mouvement*, 2013  
Performance  
CNAP Collection  
© Chiara Valle Vallomini





# THE YVONNE RAINER PROJECT'S PROGRAM

**Saturday November 29**

## **Tour**

Centre Photographique d'Île-de-France > Ferme du Buisson  
Shuttle service booking +33 (0)1 70 05 49 80

**2.15pm** leaving from Paris, Opéra Bastille

**3pm** talk with Pascal Beausse, Mohamed Bourouissa, I-Chen Kuo, Paola Soave (Agency), Chantal Pontbriand and Nathalie Giraudeau, about the exhibition "Photography Performs - The Body and the Archive" at the CPIF

**5.30pm** Performance by Yael Davids, followed by Émilie Pitoiset & Jessica 93 at the Centre d'art contemporain de la Ferme du Buisson

**November 4 – 30**

## **Jeu de Paume**

### **"From Choreography to Cinema"**

screenings and lectures curated by Chantal Pontbriand

**with** Yvonne Rainer, Yael Bartana, Samuel Beckett, Geneviève Cadieux, John Cage, Manon de Boer, Maya Deren, Köken Ergun, Maïder Fortuné, Hollis Frampton, Michel François, Laurent Goldring, Marc Johnson, Sonia Khurana, Florence Lazar, Babette Mangolte, Bea McMahon, Bruce Nauman, Natacha Nisic, Lili Reynaud-Dewar, Anri Sala, Richard Serra, Michael Snow, Andy Warhol

[www.jeudepaume.com](http://www.jeudepaume.com)

**Thursday November 6 at 6pm**

## **École nationale supérieure des Beaux-Arts**

Talk between Yvonne Rainer and Chantal Pontbriand

**Friday December 12, 13pm – 8pm**

## **Palais de Tokyo**

### **« Nexus Rainer »**

Symposium organized by Barbara Formis, Julie Perrin, Chantal Pontbriand

**with** Emmanuel Alloa, Frédérique Bergholz, Vanessa Desclaux, Pauline Boudry, Myrto Katsiki, Isabelle Launay, Julie Pellegrin, Denis Pernet, Catherine Queloz, Noé Soulier, Liliane Schneider, David Zerbib

[www.palaisdetokyo.com](http://www.palaisdetokyo.com)



Yvonne Rainer, *Kristina Talking Pictures*, 1973

# THE CENTRE D'ART CONTEMPORAIN DE LA FERME DU BUISSON

Located on an exceptional site, la Ferme du Buisson is a national cultural centre of international reach. This 19th Century "model-farm" features an art centre, a theatre, a cinema and a concert hall, all enabling in an exemplary manner the permeability between disciplines. The Art Centre has for over 20 years been an active producer, diffuser and publisher. Insisting on emerging or rarely seen artists in France, it is a reference for performance, pluridisciplinarity and experimentation on exhibition formats, focused on a dialogue between visual arts and other fields.

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## INFORMATION

### **Centre d'art contemporain de la Ferme du Buisson**

allée de la Ferme  
77186 Noisiel — France

+33 (0)1 64 62 77 00  
contact@lafermedubuisson.com  
www.lafermedubuisson.com

### **New opening hours**

Wednesday > Sunday, 2pm – 7.30pm

Late openings until 9pm:

November 6, 7, 15 / January 20, 21, 22, 23 / February 7

Free entrance

### **How to get here**

#### **By train**

RER A dir. Marne-la-Vallée, stop Noisiel  
(20 mins from Paris)

#### **By car**

A4 dir. Marne-la-Vallée / exit Noisiel-Torcy /  
dir. Noisiel-Luzard

### **groupes / groups**

réservations – bookings

+33 (0)1 64 62 77 00  
rp@lafermedubuisson.com

## UPCOMING

### **Emily Mast**

Solo show

March – June 2015

### **Alfred Jarry Archipelago**

Group show

September – December 2015

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The Centre d'art contemporain de la Ferme du Buisson is supported by: Drac Ile-de-France / Ministère de la Culture et de la Communication, Communauté d'Agglomération du Val Maubuée, Conseil Général de Seine-et-Marne, Conseil Régional d'Ile-de-France. The Centre d'art contemporain de la Ferme du Buisson is member of the d.c.a., Tram and Relais networks.



d.c.a.

