

Wednesday, 6th October - Joanne Richardson

19.00

Carte Blanche

Ici et ailleurs (Here and Elsewhere)

Jean-Luc Godard & Anne-Marie Miéville, France 1970/74, 16 mm, French & Arabic w/ German subtitles, 55'

21.00

Letter from Moldova

Joanne Richardson, Romania 2009, DV, OmE, 28'

Red Tours

Joanne Richardson & David Rych, Germany 2010, DV, English, 48'

Joanne Richardson

was born in Bucharest, Romania and emigrated with her family to New York when she was nine years old. In 2000 she quit her PhD studies and returned to Romania to co-found the media activist NGO "D-Media" in Cluj. She has been a regular participant at events of the "counter-public", exhibitions, festivals and biennials. Her most recent work is currently in the exhibition „Transient Spaces – The Tourist Snyderome“ at NGBK, Berlin. Joanne Richardson lives and works in Berlin and Cluj.

A dominant focus of her work is the social upheavals and the politics of identity in post-communist Eastern Europe. She uses video as a medium of public discourse, but also as a means to express herself personally and artistically. Her work makes equal use of documentary and experimental techniques and is often essayistic in style. Her fundamental question remains: What does it mean to make video politically? For her it implies a moment of self-criticism: *"It is literally a second search. Once the first search produces a certain type of knowledge, the second asks how that knowledge was produced, what its conditions of possibility have been. And what those conditions leave out. This second search is not something that is specific to art - it is an indiscipline that resides at the core of every discipline, an immanent critique that seeks to expose and transcend its own limits."*

Travelogues and ghost rides

In her latest videos she entangles memory and commemoration in a critical dialogue with residues and souvenirs of the former "Eastern bloc". *Letter from Moldova* is a personal travelogue told through 10 letters that reflect on the collapse of the Soviet Union. *Red Tours*, a collaboration with David Rych, explores how the communist past is remembered as well as repressed in various museums and tourist sites. Both in form and narration, the film experiments with different, and at times oppositional, documentary gestures.

Both works quote related films by Chris Marker. Through its reference to *Letter from Siberia* (1957), *Letter from Moldova* reflects on the problematic authority of the travelling narrator and the paradigm of a "trip back in time" prevalent specially when it comes to Eastern Europe. By evoking Markers' and Resnais' *The statues also die* (1953), *Red Tours* adds a post-colonial framing to the museumification of soviet artefacts. The film was shot in Budapest, Prague, Vilnius and Berlin, in theme parks,

museums and participatory re-enactments, to which historical discourse seems to have surrendered any critical claims.

“I am writing you this letter from a distant land. She lies somewhere between the Middle Ages and the 21st century, between nostalgia for a failed revolution and an imaginary hope called Europe... Was it our compulsion for travelling that first brought us together? Why have we always chosen destinations that no sane tourist would ever visit, places at the crossroads of turmoil and transformation? Perhaps it was the threshold of the indeterminate that attracted us, the promise of a different becoming, even though its moment has now been lost. But in its failure we can still imagine remembering a future that never was.” (from *Letter from Moldova*)

Carte Blanche: *Here and Elsewhere* (Jean Luc-Godard, Anne Marie Miéville)

Of all of Godard's films Joanne Richardson appreciates this one as the most profound reflection on the difference between making a political film and “making films politically”, as Godard himself had proclaimed in 1970. And it is the filmmakers' self-critical investigation into their own militant stance which makes for the film's lasting impact.

More about Joanne Richardson and her work: <http://subsol.c3.hu/joanne/home.html>