



Nomads at the Walls: *The Jettisoned Project*
by James R. Hugunin

Nomads at the Walls: *The Jettisoned Project*

reviewed by James R. Hugunin

The concealed essence of a phenomenon is often given by the past events that have happened to it, so that a concealed force continues to operate upon a phenomenon as a kind of transcendental memory

— Philip Goodchild, *Deleuze and Guattari* (1996)

You are in a dark gallery space. Silence prevails. The walls in front of you and on either side are each filled with looped HD projections of slow pans of three different *tableau vivants*. The *tableaux* all have different running times — five to nine minutes — so the loops increasingly go out of synch. Consequently, at any instant in time a chance arrangement of imagery runs across your field of vision. No matter which wall your focus is on, flickers of imagery from the other walls enter your peripheral vision, interacting with your main focus of attention. This recalls Able Gance's film epic, *Napoleon* (1927), where three screens produce a polyvision Gance termed 'simultaneous horizontal montage.' Slow pans across near-static scenes projected onto three walls in Yoni Goldstein and Meredith Zielke's installation, *The Jettisoned Project* (2011), makes you hyper-conscious of movement, topology and time, giving an illusion that you are *inside* time, inhabiting a sort of 'time-machine,' expanding seconds into minutes.

At first, the 'camera-eye' (to use writer John Dos Passos's term for an objective view from outside the scene recorded) keeps you passive before its intense gaze as you inventory its contents. The camera-eye not only scans across the scene, but cuts into close-ups, and medium shots, albeit steadily panning as the camera is dollied. But after several recursions of these loops, you start feeling *you* are the witness, *you* become that camera-eye, re-viewing layers of memory, personal and collective. It dawns on you, one part to this project is to get you to explore the perception-of-perception, the other, to challenge you to decode a myriad of signs, catch the inter-textual references to past art and film, and construct your own interpretation of this complex installation. For clues, you go to the artists' explanatory text:

The rigid boundaries erected by conventional interpretations of collective, conditional, and bodily identities are torn down in The Jettisoned: bodily mechanisms present sickness and health as being part of the same process of sustained loss; anachronistic renditions of epic gestures deplete the national epic of its definitive qualities; crypto-Judaic ritual offers veiled signs of a heritage while simultaneously dissolving it into another religious tradition.

Researched, cast, constructed and filmed, respectively, in Chicago, Mexico City, and Warsaw by these Chicago artists, these three *tableaux* probe the themes of duration and memory, the collective and the individual body, in a way that forces your attention toward detail and gesture and challenges you to interpret these stage sets, to unravel the complex layers of personal and social content lurking in these indirect images (signs representing other signs). To aid in such, the artists offer a list of aesthetic references:

Dutch *Vanitas*

Caravaggio — *Conversion of Saint Paul* (1600) and *Crucifixion of St. Peter* (1600)

Rembrandt — *Anatomy Lesson of Dr. Nicolaes Tulp* (1632)

Manet — *The Dead Toreador* (1864)

O. G. Rejlander — photographic *tableaux* (1857)

Frederico Fellini — Baroque lighting aesthetic

Peter Greenaway — dollied *tableaux*, long takes

But unlike historical painting where, as Louis Marin put it, 'the events seem to tell themselves,' these three filmic scenarios remain polysemic, open to various meanings constructed by you, the viewer.

North Wall: "Chicago": is a scenario of contemporarily garbed posers within a former soap factory. They pour and expel fluids, perform ablutions, in a disturbing personal vision rooted in childhood memories (from Netanya, Israel and Detroit, USA) that is a visual paean to Julia Kristeva's theory of abjected matter, as marginal stuff that has traversed the body and is jettisoned out beyond the body's boundary, establishing the frailty of the border separating the pre-Oedipal drives from that of the Symbolic Order, the border been the 'pure' and the 'impure,' between the pre-linguistic and the linguistic, through which the subject is constituted in any particular social formation. For Kristeva, the sublime arises from sublimating abjection by invoking the state of to-be-abject.

'Believe in the flesh,' the artists seem to be saying. And, unlike the other *tableaux*, there is more activity as the camera moves deeply into the unsettling scene, even into details of bodies and close-ups of fluids (what Gilles Deleuze called *molecular perception*). Flows are foregrounded as theme here, a theme that carries into the other two scenarios where potentially new conjunctions and relations can flow from one figure or object to another. This is what Deleuze terms *deteritorialization*.

East Wall: "Mexico City": situated in the site for the first official Jewish library in Mexico City, also the Jewish meeting center for Mexico's Jewish Central Committee, Bundists, labor organizers and American Jewish war dodgers during the 1920s, is a packed staging of curious cultural signs relating Diaspora, to secret rituals and objects hidden from the dominant Catholicism by Jews who immigrated from Spain to Mexico during The Conquest, where they had to cloak their Jewishness. Often overlooked in favor of the Spanish-Catholic/Indian-Pagan *Mestizo* culture, the artists here probe an alternative Otherness.

Here, genuine Masonic vestments and other crypto-Judaic artifacts mix with a Mexican working class altar, and a flower-covered 'Y-chromosomal Aaron' (the brother of Moses), otherwise known as the 'Jewish Gene,' the supposed common ancestor of a priestly caste, the *Kohanim* (Kohen or Cohen in the singular). Here history, diaspora, genetics, subjecthood, and nomadic resistance are complexly figured. Dramatic lighting adds mystery; the fact there are several rooms in the space produces a shot-within-a-shot effect, an internal montage created inside the panned scene. Hence, this *tableau* is the most 'filmic' of the three.

South Wall: "Warsaw": is situated in a large animal surgical theater, with Polish locals positioned as manipulated monuments and figures from national epics. A peculiar array of Polish types, straight and gay, traditional costumes and historical symbols abound. Again the camera probes for details during the steady pan across the scene, gives us close-ups of faces which carry ethnic traces, and so forth.

The latter two *tableaux* are imaged more 'objectively' and are less visually disturbing than the "Chicago" *tableau* which was shot first.

In lieu of action, the dress and fabrics, objects and verbal signs in these later enactments, function as modes of behavior or indices of a social situation, a *habitus*. This is not to be confused with an historical film's use of such materials.

A detailed inventory by the artists of each *tableaux* is listed below.

For images of these *tableaux* visit *The Jettisoned Project* website: <http://thejettisonedproject.com>

North Wall]
Chicago Tableau

Respective childhood memories of Meredith and Yoni:

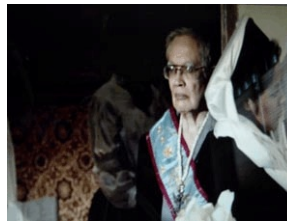
Israeli soldiers embracing and vomiting
Coroner pouring liquid into mouth of a cadaver that, through a nexus of tubing, feeds the tableau.
Woman inspecting her wound with a magnifying glass
Man urinating off chair
Pregnant woman's water breaking
Man in medical sling, hands attempting to take control over machine
Woman sitting on hospital bed with catheter
Woman with a goiter
Man sweating profusely, engaged in conversation
Two women passing liquid between their mouths
Dutch *Vanitas* still life with a skull, flowers, lit cigarette, silver pitcher, china and bread



[East Wall]
Mexico City Tableau

Diagnostic Signs of Crypto-Judaic Ritual:

To grow an apple tree and a granada tree in front of one's home.
To send either a man wearing red holding a tambourine, or a man wearing only one shoe and one foot bound in fabric, through the street to announce clandestine worship.
To place a rooster's head over the door of the room where a birth will occur.
To bind the bride and groom's hands with a white cloth while a prayer is said.
To bathe in a tub of water, rose petals and herbs, and to cut your own hair on Friday evenings.
To change the (typically white) linens on Fridays.
To light *Shabbat* candles under tables, in closets and in boxes on Friday evenings.
To face the wall just before dying.
To place money in the mouth of the recently departed.
During the Inquisition, when Jewish women no longer bathed at the Mikvah, they observed the laws of *Niddah* (impurity / menstrual-reproductive hygiene) by performing their ablutions, or *Netilat Yadayim* (hand washing), at home.
To sweep your home from the outside-in, in reverence for the *Mezuzah*.
To eat tortillas and drink chocolate on Friday evenings (to replace matzo & wine) (* This is true only in Mexico)
To pray wearing a *Tallit* over one's head made from linen tablecloth.
To sell fabric (*tela*) / to be a merchant.
Semana Santa 'Judios' (from the Museum of Anthropology in Mexico City) — the masked individuals are demonic characters from the annual Mexican indigenous performance of 'Jews' involved in the crucifixion (Allusions to mascots of Hebrew tribes like deer (*Naphthali*) and wolf (*Levi*))
Chemistry equipment / laboratory coats
Masonic aprons and sash (one worn inside-out to display the cross-bones underbelly)
Masonic gold and silver medals
Chinese WWII War Bonds (authentic family memento: These were used to help the Jews seeking refuge in China to escape persecution from Nazis and Central Europe)
The *San Benito 'X'* on Catholic flower rounds — During the Mexican Inquisition, or *Auto de Fé*, Jews who confessed before the trial wore a *San Benito 'X'* on the penitential garment.
Mexican funeral flower arrangement (the circular)
Rolls of fabric and fabric hung overhead bought from longstanding Jewish-owned fabric stores
Vendors selling baskets of granadas and apples
Eggs (alternative protein source on the Sabbath)
Membrillo (quince paste) — eaten at the end of Friday evening meals -- typical only of Mexican Jews
Mizrahi hookah pipe
Semana Santa 'Judios' — the masked individuals are demonic characters from the annual Mexican indigenous performance of 'Jews' involved in the crucifixion
Day of the Dead (Catholic-Indigenous) altar (with *Alcatraz*, *Cempasúchil* and maiz)
Incense
Blind man (school of the blind located on corner)



[South Wall]
Warsaw Tableau

material list:

Veterinary surgical theater — the idea of autopsy as a trusted method of uncovering past truths.
Horse and Cavalryman — symbols of war and power
Miners in dug-out hole - Reference to the Neal Aescherson article on digging space for oneself.
Royal couple, court painter and art inventory (art historical reference):
— Rafalala (well-known Warsaw transvestite),
— Jacek Andrzejewski (Jewish outsider artist in Warsaw), and
— Katy Bentall (artist and wife of the late art theorist Mariusz Tchorek), displaying a monument [made by Tchorek's sculptor father] as human inventory, commemorating victims of street round-ups in numbers of bodies and grams of ash.
Kissing couples — art historical reference to Giuseppe Maria Crespi's 17th-century painting titled, *Lucius Junius Brutus Kissing the Earth as the Universal Mother* (kissing couples played by queer artists)
"Nil Omni" — reference to Dutch *Vanitas* painting where 'Nil Omni' was carved in the table. *NIL OMNI* means 'nothing is secure'
Musical instruments — Ukrainian artesian tiles depicting rural musicians. They are typically seen and sold in Poland, an example of the porous borders between E. European nations over time.
Skulls, history textbooks, globe, hour glass — art historical references to Dutch *Vanitas* and their ephemeral concept of time, power, territory
Cameras, audio recorders, police, teacher at blackboard — Reference to Poland's history of cinematography.
Also, a reference to the idea of the people's documentation and dissemination of history, the public eye observing and recording itself.
Soviet era accountant — acts as a scribe, translating history into quantifiable information.
Pan Tadeusz, the national epic. Roles of Talmina and Tadeusz played by theater director Sebastian Dorosinski and his partner.



The artists provide clues to their modular video installation in which a sliding world moves before your eyes as if on a conveyor belt, existing in its own autonomous space-time — I've included some in the table above — but these are more tease than exegesis. The continually looping scene is enriched by a variety of long-, medium-, and close-up shots during the dolly. You can't escape the shock which arouses the thinker in you, just the reverse of Georges Duhamel's famous slur on the cinema, 'I can no longer think what I want, the moving images are substituted for my own thoughts.' But moving from percept to concept is not so easy. Even with the slow pan, you find yourself standing and watching each film loop over and over, selecting different features for study or anticipating the return of a certain costumed person in perpetual-pose, or watching that almost-kiss, or being both attracted and repulsed by the man vomiting at the start of the first *tableau*, or trying to catch another glimpse of a peculiar object or arcane text, or wanting to suss out that facial expression better when a close-up reappears. Then there is the possible connections (metonymies or metaphors) you could make *between* characters. You have before you a myriad of givens posing a question, which you must tear from the Situation and answer according to what you bring to the viewing. Just maybe this time you'll decipher the reference, notice something you overlooked. You fight with disturbances of memory and the failures of recognition as you move from the actual scenario to various virtual possibilities of meaning. Will you get that 'Aha' phenomenon? Make the pieces of the puzzle come together in your mind?

Minutes pass, yet you are hardly aware of clock-time for you have entered a new space-time, left the hustle and bustle of the fleeting outside world and are immersed in a simulacrum of a contents of consciousness, a hermeneutical space where duration and memory obtain as you try to interpret these cryptic *tableaux*, which you begin to gradually understand are the artists' desire to materialize history, both social and personal, within a new form of documentary. You become aware of temporal paradoxes. The continually looping scene you are witnessing is present, moving into the past, but also anticipating the future. The man vomiting at the start of the Chicago scene *is* vomiting, *did* vomit, and *will* vomit. Then, inside the *tableau*, stasis and movement co-exist: the Warsaw scene includes a costumed and frozen figure who lets swing a slowly arcing incense-dispenser, an internal pendulum ticking off time in a space where otherwise time has halted; also staged in the *tableaux* is the recurring theme of a couple asymptotically consummating

a kiss, hovering forever a fraction of an inch and instant before first contact. These devices generate a temporal uncanny analogous to Salvador Dali's painted subversion of ticking time when he renders watches as limp, impotent, in *Persistence of Memory* (1931).

This new documentary mode explored by Goldstein and Zielke shows influences from narrative paintings like Raphael's *The School of Athens* (1510), static groups which inspired popular touring groups to perform *tableaux vivants* of scenes paintings and novels (conversely, in George Eliot's novel, *Daniel Deronda*, 1876, the heroine participates in such a group); in turn, these itinerant *poses-plastiques* inspired contemporary 'living sculptures' by the art performance art duo, Gilbert and George, and nineteenth-century photo-compositors Oscar Gustave Rejlander (*Two Ways of Life*, 1857) and Henry Peach Robinson (*Bringing in the May*, 1862), approaches to art photography that modernism later demonized and banished. Later in the twentieth century, by the eighties, photographers reacted against modernist strictures associated with the snapshot aesthetic touted by MoMA Curator of Photography, John Szarkowski, espousing an alternative, postmodernist 'directorial mode' and 'fabricated-to-be-photographed' practices seen in the artwork of Eileen Cowin, Nic Nicosia, Gregory Crewdson, Tuen Hocks, Patrick Nagatani/Andrée Tracy, and Jeff Wall whose large-scale renditions are now associated with the dominant practice of 'museum photography.' Avant-garde 'structuralist' film—Michael Snow's film '45-minute zoom in *Wavelength* (1967) and George Landow's image of a looping film and his use of slow-motion in *Bardo's Follies* (1967)—focused audience attention on pure auditory and optical perception. Finally, Bill Viola's video installations and recent postmodernist engagement with spectatorship — Jeff Wall's *Movie Audience* (1979), Thomas Struth's photographs of museum-goers in *Audience 2, Florence* (2004), the glass-factory *tableau* staged early into Werner Herzog's *Heart of Glass* (1976), Peter Greenaway's "Darwin" ((1993), as well as the suspense-draining time-stretch of Hitchcock's original 105 minutes to 24 hours in Douglas Gordon's *24-Hour Psycho* (1993) — have opened fresh areas to aesthetically mine.

In their contribution to this re-examination of documentary film experience — not a little unlike Greenaway's multi-media visual encyclopedic probing of uranium, also realized as a filmic trilogy, *The Luper Suitcases* (2003) — events in the three *tableaux* are arrayed as a silent, synchronic presentation. Nothing here develops diachronically within a traditional narrative telos. Instead

of an immobile camera recording events in time, they give us static scenes (with embedded 'chronosigns,' small, isolated movements) that obsessively return again and again. Neither the natural attitude of everyday vision, nor that normal filmic progression where events are recorded in fragments of time and frames building to a conclusion, what is given is a topology of memory, an internal (almost eternal) space, where all lies before you, past and present, synthesized into a single affective state which can be perused as a whole over and over.

Although this problematization of shaped-knowledge and its recreation as database recalls the docu-drama approach of Errol Morris's film *The Thin Blue Line* (1988) — where staged scenarios, re-cycled visual material, repetition (in scene and music), and conflicting narratives are piled up before us and work against traditional documentary's telos and epistemology — Goldstein and Zielke go much further in proposing what might constitute a new type of visual document. Let me expand the comparison. Morris's film centers on the ill-controlled impulses of a disturbed young murderer, Goldstein and Zielke's videos on the sedimentation of impulses. Morris gives you faces (even the 'faces' of the rear ends of two similar-looking automobiles, a Comet and a Vega) that give conflicting evidence which, as viewer, you attempt to evaluate by careful attention to tiny local movements which the rest of the body keeps hidden. Goldstein and Zielke's *Jettisoned*, faces are frozen and mute, exemplifying what Deleuze would describe as *faceification*. Here the usual questions you ask of a face — What are you thinking? What is bothering you?, What do you sense or feel? — must remain pure speculation. Impassive screens, at best, you might project a feeling of *wonder* onto the faces in this filmic triptych. You have the uncanny feeling that if a camera was staring at you staring at the screen, *your* face would look exactly like the filmed faces you're looking at! Finally, contrasting modes of 'authorship': the *bricoleur* ('assembler') commanding the intertextual references in *The Thin Blue Line* gives way in *Jettisoned* to an *englobant* ('encompasser') who embodies, brings together into a whole, the shards of past-present onto a single plane of consistency, a stage on which an array of arcane signifiers beckon decipherment. Put simply, the faulty memories of all those agitated *poseurs* in *The Thin Blue Line* are here replaced in *The Jettisoned* by the calm posers within a memory-scape.

Memory, Philip Goodchild remarks in elucidating Deleuze's take on Henri Bergson's theories, is the plane upon which our reason acts and associates; the kinds of 'knowledge'

produced in the forms of our habits, beliefs, values, conventions, and codes relate to our own memory. But memory is not divided into separate events (like documentary's film frames); rather, it synthesizes these conventions into a single intensity of experience. As Freud proposed, an affective charge is produced by the internal resonance of two divergent series, one past and one present; this duality is grasped as whole, with a single affect. As witnessed in Proust's fiction, memory has its own expressive, experiential quality. Memory marks out a kind of territory (a living painting?) peopled by affective intensities.

The classic film code for signifying memory, temporal regression inside what is a narrative progression, is the flashback. Such can be signaled by various types of dissolve-links: the blurring of the 'now-scene' scene as the film cuts to the memory and back again, or the memory itself is rendered in black and-white while the main part of the film is in color, and so forth. Such a convention is dispensed with in Goldstein and Zielke's synchronic documentary. Here the 'momentum' of the camera captures the quintessence of a social terrain all at once, a kind of wax museum conflating history into a single NOW..

The closest experience to this in your own life might be that first trip into your grandparents' attic, seeing all the discarded items of your family's history strewn before you, as the intensities of nostalgic and traumatic emotions play within you. Like that stuffed attic space, Goldstein and Zielke's large, slow-moving frame is informatically saturated, displaying visual data tapestry-like across your field of vision. Movement inside the frame is minimal. When it does occur — in 'chronosigns' such as dripping water, incense being dispensed, an eye blink — it seems uncanny (familiar, yet unfamiliar). Here motion is mainly the result of the camera's scansion across the plane of the posed characters, who then alter their relationships in optical space (if not in actual space). Of course, this use of static-scene/moving-camera reverses the usual static-camera/moving-events of traditional documentary.

The architectural spaces in which Goldstein and Zielke situate their *tableaux* are deserted 'theatres' emptied of the operations that once took place there (recalling similarly emptied spaces in Jean-Marie Straub's films). Then they fill them to capacity with an artificiality of set and characters *seemingly* trapped in the space and social roles (as are the people trapped in the drawing room

in Luis Buñuel's 1962 film, *The Exterminating Angel*). Such an emptied space, as well as one marked by an artificiality akin to a comic opera kingdom, are closed worlds that Gilles Deleuze elaborates on in *Cinema I: The Movement-Image* (1983) as species of what he calls *originary worlds*. If one were to view the array of people and objects on the set from directly above, drawing lines connecting them, it would trace a *rhizome* of multiple interactions. Usually film develops its themes along a branching *arborescence* of logical relations: 'because,' 'although,' 'so that,' 'therefore,' 'now,' etc., and generates linkages of situation-action, action-reaction, excitation-response. But in *The Jettisoned* these are brought to a near zero-degree. The notion of space in these three *tableaux* is 'local': starting off with a small material element (a person, an object) which forms, with other such entities, a fragment of space which then, in turn connects to other fragments of space in a myriad of possible vectors, until the whole ensemble of autonomous events have been arrayed for the shoot. In "Chicago" these fragments are bodies in the state of accepting abjection, a liberatory discourse of the body at the liminal zone between the pure and the impure; in "Mexico City" the fragments are that of mixed identity, genes; while in "Warsaw," the fragments are drawn from the historical drama of national epics.

The filming of these scenarios does not cover space as much as permit us to sink into time (memory and history). People and things within these *tableaux* occupy a place in time which is incommensurable with the one they share in space (that 'time-machine' aspect I previously hinted at). Whereas the method of assemblage behind the aforementioned photo-composites of Rejlander and Robinson are arranged by their authors to easily add up to a meaningful whole occupying a single moment in time, Goldstein and Zielke's networks remain fragments of a puzzle-to-be-solved *in potentia*; the potential of their visual 'databases' is activated when the viewer assumes the agency of computing arrangements (a sort of virtual montage) out of the raw material the artists have provided. Such arrays of material will mostly like change your thinking — you, the 'compiler' — every time the film loops before you. But you are *not outside* the piece: sitting on the viewing bench, you become part of the 'fourth wall' in the space, completing the space, but when people *stand* in front of you, the looped images become viewed as projections on their backs, suturing them into the *tableaux* you are viewing *and* are part of.

Deleuze reads such spaces of pure optical situation as a steep slope of compressed time in between. However, in *The Jettisoned*, that slope gets steepened to a perpendicular where beginning and end merge and time unravels into an eternal return. There *is* a Situation, but it goes through no transformation *on* screen. But, unlike an annoyingly stuck record, repetition in *The Jettisoned* is, as its title suggests "a project." To put it in Deleuze's anti-Platonism, being *is* becoming (cf. *Difference and Repetition*, 1968), so repetition in the *tableaux* is not that of a boring habituality, nor that of re-enforcing a stable identity, but a repetition that differs-from-itself from within, that involves awareness of a becoming that you must participate in. This has been aesthetically probed in Minimalist sculpture in which the viewer moves around a self-similar object (like a Donald Judd cube) where, although the viewer's movement involves time, what is viewed doesn't itself change, but the before-and-after of oneself as a subject perpetually differing from itself (not to be confused with the preceding and subsequent images of the object during this scansion). This is a repetition-with-a-difference (not unlike the repetition-memory machine constructed by Alfred Hitchcock in *Vertigo*, 1957) that evokes a concern with active consciousness, with perception itself, with perception-of-perception, that engages a circuit between object and self. No mystery why these minimalist objects came to be referred to as 'phenomenological artworks' and were attacked for their 'theatricality' by the formalist critic Michael Fried.

In music, Philip Glass and Steve Reich have explored such 'repetition-as-difference-in-itself.' Gilles Deleuze, apropos repetition in literature, notes that French writer, Raymond Roussel, an author dear to the surrealists, developed 'scenes' or repetitions told twice over: in *Locus Solus* (1914) eight corpses in a glass cage reproduce the event of their life, and the mad protagonist of that book repeats indefinitely the circumstances of the murder of his daughter. These repetitions seem to function in a liberatory way for their subjects. However, in Buñuel's film *The Exterminating Angel*, the people trapped in the drawing room are released only to be trapped again, this time inside a cathedral, and are so caught up in a hellish repetition (habit rooted in the *habitus* of bourgeois existence?). So you may ask, is the eternal return manifested in *The Jettisoned Project* aimed at: 1) revealing a fettering, degrading habit; or, 2) simply posing a stable memory within the flow of subjective experience organized as an 'ego'; or, 3) a repetition-in-difference directed towards a future becoming where the unity of the traditional ego is replaced by a 'subject-in-process' who, in order to 'grow,'

is perpetually 'othering' itself, a subject exemplified by a person jettisoned from their homeland (a member of a diaspora, an immigrant, a refugee) or perpetually on the outside of dominant society (nomads)? I think the latter.

Czech philosopher, Vilém Flusser has theorized our post-modern subjectivity as a subject-in-process in his brilliant study, *The Freedom of the Migrant* (2003). I cite him at length as his summation of our post-industrial landscape could preface Goldstein and Zielke's installation. Might not Flusser, had he lived to see it, described *The Jettisoned* as a network with an omnipresent potential, an aesthetic mirror of our evolving posthuman condition?

There can be no doubt that we are leaving our enclosure and moving out into the dust. The objective, physical world is disintegrating into dust, into particles. Life within it is also disintegrating into dust, into genes. Our thinking is disintegrating into dust, into bits of information. Our decisions, into dust, into decisions. Our actions, into dust, into actemes. And everything about it is getting dusty, such as culture turning into a dust pile of culturemes; language into a dust pile of phonemes. And we rove ghostlike about the windswept, shifting dune in this Saharan landscape, like scraps of a previous but now definitively lost rational, conceptual, and scientific understanding. In this sense we are undoubtedly nomadic. But something in this description is not quite right, because after we have laid waste to everything through calculation (granulation, pulverization), we can make it blossom again thanks to computation (assemblage, networking). We can concretize something out of the abstract dust particles . . . Computing is the concentration of abstract, potential particles out of a networked dispersion. . . . What at one time was called the 'self' or the 'I' is just such a realization of potentials. . . . I am what I am because a few dispersed potentials concentrated together. And the more densely they concentrate, the more realized I am . . . We approach one another for our mutual realization, and (somewhat more concealed) to create an objective world (Flusser, 50 - 51).

Moreover, in contrasting the stolid, settled person with the creative, restless nomad, Flusser describes a notion of time, a *posthistorical consciousness*, relevant to how time is envisioned, retrieved, and cast upon the three walls in *The Jettisoned*:

The settled person has a clear and distinct concept of historical time, but one that falsifies the concrete experience of time. Only when we have broken out of our walls, which tag us with the three coordinates of address and the coordinate of date, will we be able to experience time again.

We are in the process of learning that with some difficulty. Words like *synchronicity* and *retrieve* are symptomatic of this learning process. They imply that time is a potential from which we may compute concrete things that can be experienced. So-called events can be observed and stored everywhere simultaneously and can be retrieved from storage for the purpose of computation. This means that only the present (that is, existence and storage) is concrete and that the past and the future are interchangeable potential forms of time (Flusser, 52).

In summation, what is *The Jettisoned Project*? Briefly put, it is synchronicity and retrieval from a film plane (a visual database projected on walls) that holds heterogeneous subjects and artifacts together by their mutual action on each other and on viewers, implying continuity through repetition, while affirming a nomadic desire that blurs any distinction between the psychic and the social. Once inside this installation, where the nomads are at the walls, you become a vital part of what Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari would term 'a desiring-machine.'

Goldstein and Zielke's installation demands much from you and is *unsettling*. You can't help becoming a bit 'nomadic' in the process of connecting and reconnecting the flows of its many strata, for as you construct and reconstruct the meaning of this project, you find yourself having to desert your preconceptions to make new connections within the aspects of your own experience and history. In the process, you are brought to allow new liberatory desires to flow. As Philip Goodchild, elucidating Deleuze, puts it:

. . . the liberation of desire aims at the production of mutant flows and successive quanta of absolute deterritorialization that will make the whole system explode (*Deleuze and Guattari*, 161).

— The End —

About the Artists

Yoni Goldstein is an Israeli born, Chicago-based filmmaker, cinematographer, and editor whose work puts forward multi-sited transects of body, conflict, and diaspora. Developing multilayered approaches to the documentary, Goldstein has gone on to work on a number of socially critical film projects: from examining hybridized healing practices in the Northern Andes (*La Curación*) to critical visualizations of trauma and disembodiment (*G-Loc: Vivid Dreamlets / Beautiful Places*). His films have circulated in numerous regional, national, and international festivals, conferences, and galleries.

Meredith Zielke is an award-winning American independent filmmaker, photographer, and performance artist. Zielke's creative practice appropriates and embodies the medical and anatomizing gaze. She co-directed a series of large scale video *tableaux vivants* with Goldstein titled *The Jettisoned*, currently touring internationally as a modular video installation produced and developed in Chicago, Warsaw, and Mexico City. Her work has been presented internationally across several major cities, including London, Paris, Berlin, Warsaw, New York, Chicago, Montreal, and Seoul.

In the summer of 2004, Yoni Goldstein and Meredith Zielke founded *Standing Point Films* as a vehicle for socially critical and community oriented film art production.



About the Author:

James Hugunin teaches the History of Photography and Contemporary Theory in the Department of Art History, Theory and Criticism at The School of the Art Institute of Chicago. He is the founder of two art journals, *The Dumb Ox* (1976 - 80) and *U-Turn* (1982 - present). In 1983 he was awarded the Reva and David Logan Award for Distinguished New Writing in Photography.



James Hugunin (photo by Marianne Nathan, digital manipulation by John Longnecker)