
MUSAC marks the Spanish comeback of Pipilotti Rist with four video installations and a music compilation disc



Exhibition Title: **Pröblemäs büenös. 4 obras de Pipilotti Rist y amigas**

Artist: **Pipilotti Rist**

Venue: **Exhibition Halls 4, 5 and 6, MUSAC**

Date: **December 17, 2005 - April 16, 2006**

Curator: **MUSAC**

Coordination: **Marta Gerveno**

Pipilotti Rist, one of the artists who have marked artistic practice in the 90's with greater force, presents a selection of her latest productions, as well as a disc that gathers the best of her music, ever present in her pieces. Four video installations – in exclusive versions for MUSAC – as well as a video that will be shown in a bar in the center of León, will complete the show. The work of Pipilotti Rist is inscribed within a narrative art, whose topic is the memory of the lived experience that is not past but that makes itself present. In a certain autobiographical form, but situated further than a mere personal anecdote, the video installations of Rist make of the body, of desire, of the sexual, of the fluid, of movement and of music, her *leitmotiv*. MUSAC is an initiative of the Junta de Castilla y León through the Fundación Siglo.

Narrative Fantasy

After decades of art centered on the concept, the major part of which questioned the norms and conventions of the use of photography, a new generation of artists was born in the 90's who incorporated pure fantasy into their works. The telling of a story or the narrative structure in itself is, for these artists, a form of expression in itself that gives them a new raw material with which to construct their own iconography. The final work is a scene or ambience which the artists invent for the camera. Today, artists freely invent their cosmologies, taking elements from very diverse sources that go from Renaissance altars to video games. In their photographs, movies and videos, Matthew Barney, Gregory Crewdson, Anna Gaskell, Pierre Huyghe, Mariko Mori, Sam Taylor-Wood and, our protagonist, Pipilotti Rist, create their own imaginary universe.

Future in Pipilotti

In Rheitnal, Switzerland in 1962, Elisabeth Charlotte Rist was born. Rist studied in the Hochschule für Angewandte Kunst (Institute of Applied Arts) in Vienna from 1982 to 1986. In the eve of her entrance to Art School, Rist combined her love for the little heroine created by the Swiss writer Astrid Lindgren, Pippi Longsocks, with her own nickname "Lotti". Thus, she became Pipilotti Rist, the young artist who claimed her place in the artistic media for the next

decades. “Pipilotti”, like her heroine, declared the loyalty of Rist to the kingdom of untamed fantasy and optimism of children.

The new star of the artistic constellation and the contemporary reincarnation of Pipi Longsocks pirates pop culture and art history of the vanguards, travelling all over the world with her “boat” filled with magical dreams that she materializes in her video installations. Evoking the child heroine in innumerable interviews and public interventions, Rist maintains the story of Pipi in the epicentre of the subtle spirit of her art, where the world becomes a backdrop and a playing field, and life becomes a big adventure.

My universe in a screen

In Vienna, Rist studied illustration, photography and advertising. She also made Super-8 animation films, created specially for musical bands. After four years in Austria, Rist returned to Switzerland and, between 1986 and 1988, studied video and animation in the Basel School of Design. The serene patience of an animator combined with the exuberant irreverence of a rock star sharpened the artistic qualities of Rist.

The works of Pipilotti have taken rhythmic elements and essences of the aesthetics of video clips renewing the discourse implicit in them and giving them a restless vision filled with paradoxes, poetic ideas and, above all, charged with detonators of found sensations. Starting from a very personal discourse, her gaze is capable of opening up to others because it establishes a point of dialogue from the identification and similitude of a visual code that starts from a massive media and goes beyond its use: she uses unfamiliar images as a tool with which to allow a glimpse of the prejudices and pre-conceived notions which plague television and advertising. Although we are not fully conscious of it, these stereotype ideas determine in large part our way of viewing the world.

In one of her essays in 1989 entitled “Title”, Rist said, “To do videos... means doing a familiar therapy; the television is a member of the family that speaks. If my work is intense, honest and good, then its therapeutic function is also my social relevance.” When she wrote this, she was 29 years old: Rist’s explanation gives us a very useful point of entry in her early work. The idea that the television does not have a mere functional application but an animated character in the history of the family reveals Rist’s spirit of work from 1986 to 1996.

Her style can be compared to the aesthetics of the television channel MTV (Music Television). From the recordings of the 80’s, in which she adopts the video clip format, montages with sharp cuts alternated with rewinds and slow motion shots, are noteworthy. Without doubt, although she can be considered a daughter of simplicity, the work of Rist is rich and complex, and as she herself says, her videos are “like paintings that move behind the glass (screen).”

From video to installation

With the passage of time, her works have become more sophisticated each time. Her personal enrichment, together with technological advancement, has made way for undoubtedly beautiful and enveloping short films. What has not changed is that she still plays the role of the protagonist.

A substantial change was produced when Pipilotti decided to add a new dimension to her creations. She left behind the flat format and started to create installations which integrate videos that are directly projected onto furniture, bathtubs, or simply onto the floor and walls of the museum. The images invite enjoyment. This apparent “sweetness” of her works has provoked critiques. Pipilotti responded to her adversaries by asking them why we should we shy away from pleasure. According to her, enjoyment is maintained on the sidelines of art, as



it is considered more akin to popular culture. The artist refuses to make any distinction between low-art and high-art, without denying the existence of quality values.

From the intermittent sequence of psychedelic and pop images, up to the use of rejected video shots, the images of the author are a blend of snapshots of an oneiric universe, reminiscent of the subconscious and all that is reconstructed under a norm of free association. The videos of Rist also search for stimulation, in all senses, upon the perception of their projections in different forms in rooms so that people can sit in gigantic sofas or lie down on the floor to see and hear them. The saturation of colors in her videos – towards electric blues and reds – or the humor and her obsession for the female body, are not the only characteristics of the work of Rist, but also the possibilities that the environment may provoke on the spectator of her works.

The music

Pipilotti is not only associated with MTV for the visual aspects of her shots, but also for the importance that music plays in all her works. Before becoming a visual artist, Rist was part of a female rock group, *Les Reines Prochaines*. Since then, she hasn't stopped composing. The hypnotizing songs that accompany the videos are created by the artist with the collaboration of Anders Guggisberg, who is also an artist and a member of the group of professionals who work with her.

On occasion of this show, a music CD produced by MUSAC and edited by SUBTERFUGE RECORDS will be launched, entitled *Soundtracks de las videoinstalaciones de Pipilotti Rist*, with a total of 20 tracks. For the first time, a compilation of the music of Rist that are part of her video installations will be edited, of equal importance for the artist as her images.

Soundtracks de las video instalaciones de Pipilotti Rist

Editado con motivo de la exposición *Problemas buenos. 4 obras de Pipilotti Rist y amigas*, celebrada en MUSAC, Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Castilla y León. Diciembre 2005 - Abril 2006

Música de y con

Anders Guggisberg Música de
Heinz Röhrer
Peter Brähler
Les Reines Prochaines
Grass vom Walensee
Pipilotti Rist
Roland Widmer Música por
Suzdel Türköz

Incluido una versión de *Wie ich Gassen der Christnacht*

- 01. Pamela (Guggisberg/Rist) 02. Yes, New Birthday Song (Guggisberg/Rist) 03. Clotia (Röhrer/Rist/Baerens)
- 04. I'm A Victim Of This Song (Röhrer-Guggisberg/Rist) 05. Himalaya Goldstein (Guggisberg/Rist) 06. Kugel (Türköz-Guggisberg/Rist) 07. Hitz Die Kälte hier Die gross (Rist/Bähler/Prochaines) 08. Silberlin mit Landrot (Rist)
- 09. To See How You See (Guggisberg/Rist) 10. Ever Is Over All (Guggisberg/Rist) 11. Kommt, Helvetia (Röhrer)
- 12. Uta (Guggisberg/Rist) 13. Extremitäten (weich, weich) (Rist) 14. Homo Sapiens Sapiens (Guggisberg/Rist)
- 15. Hermano de mi madre - versión lenta (Röhrer/Rist) 16. Hermano de mi madre - versión rápida (Röhrer/Rist) 17. Herz aus Wäldern Herz aus Späßen (Guggisberg) 18. Swan (Guggisberg/Rist) 19. Zeitloses Sauerli (Grass vom Walensee/Röhrer/Rist) 20. Show A Log (Widmer/Guggisberg)



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MUSAC Soundtracks de las video instalaciones de Pipilotti Rist



Landing in MUSAC

The queen of visual narrations in contemporary art is Pipilotti Rist. Her works –poetic, playful and profoundly contemporary– completely change the concepts of space and temporality.

Dazzling, shameless, confident, as she conquered her place in the artistic media, the artist now disembarks in MUSAC, Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Castilla y León, suggesting us to enter into a universe where our dreams and fantasies spread, where our childhood memories have a place to live in, through five of the latest artistic productions of the Swiss artist, two of them from the MUSAC Collection.



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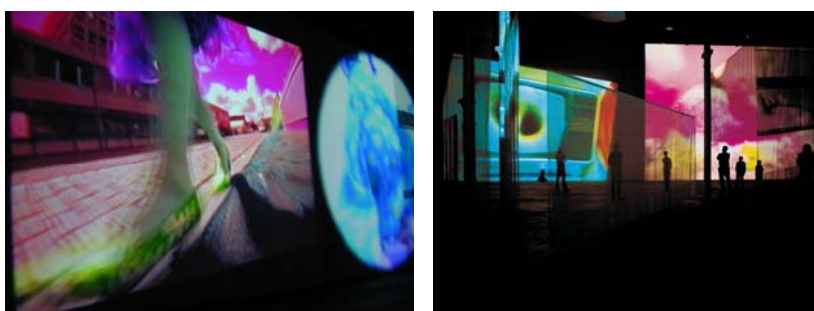
Supersubjektiv, 2001

This work from the MUSAC Collection, is a result of a residence project done by the artist in Japan. The camera of Rist analyzes in a meticulous way, the imperceptible structure of objects from an analytical point of view, close to scientific documents. The difference with this form of knowledge is the aesthetic perspective from which the artist approaches these objects, manipulating observed reality through the chromatic saturation and a staged choreography. The soundtrack is a song in English version interpreted by Rist, something usual in her works, accompanied by a male voice that sings in Japanese, and flows in a loop throughout the piece, becoming blurred with different inserted sounds of a similar captivating effect in a double hypnotic projection. The result is a fascinating amalgam of sensitive impressions, of associations and references, with an expressive vocation that surpasses the limits of conventional narration.



Related Legs (Yokohama Dandelions), 2001

In a dark fragmented space, video sequences are projected onto a bundle of white curtains. A second projection appears on the wall. Pipilotti makes the spectator move between the images, which includes two women on the street dressed in high heels and mini-skirts, a woman with boots jumping in her room, with lion's teeth moving with the breeze, a burning television monitor and in the background, a little girl's laugh, percussion beats and a mixture of ethereal tonalities. Like in her many other video installations, not one image remains long enough for us to understand its significance. Time and space are shattered and scale is distorted, figurative elements melt into abstraction, leaving us to the protection of a hallucinogenic space that is surrounded by sensual colors and psychedelic sounds.

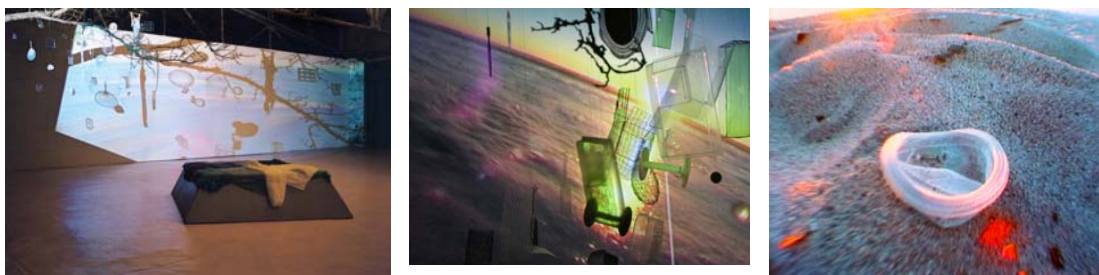


Apple Tree Innocent on Diamond Hill, 2003

The subtleness and visual saturation are contradictory but complementary motives in this video installation from the MUSAC Collection. From the branch of a tree, different transparent objects appear suspended onto which a conglomerate of abstract forms and colors are projected. The combination of both elements through a suggestive play of light, shadow and reflections, is established as a dynamic element of a piece that directly brings one to the playful world of the mobile, but with an expressive intentionality that goes beyond



mere entertainment. Likewise, the frontality that the vision of the piece demands assimilates the sculptural component of a theatrical type of vocation.



Homo Sapiens Sapiens, 2005

In the Baroque church of San Stae over the Grand Canal, Pipilotti Rist presented this video installation in the past Venice Biennial. The work was projected on the vaulted ceiling of the church while the spectators lay down on pillows on the floor, tied together as if they were branches of a tree. The projection, of an intensely oneiric character, was a door to the lost paradise: natural scenes, psychedelic colors, naked nymphs, images that are constructed and destroyed in a kaleidoscopic manner, in one of the more interesting works of the Swiss artist when it comes to experimentation and that will now be presented in an exclusive version for MUSAC.



Open My Glade, 2000

This work, which was previously projected on Times Square (New York), will be the only video projection that will not be installed at MUSAC. On occasion of this show, *Open My Glade* will be seen at the bar *Class*, located in one of the most frequented streets in the center of León, the Calle Ancha. The projections will take place on Fridays and Saturdays from the opening of the bar up to dawn.

A commission of the Public Art Fund, *Open My Glade* presents a series of videos created specially for the program, NBC Astrovision, that is projected on the Panasonic screen of the New York Times Square, and that Pipilotti understood from the start as an overwhelming space filled with “bouquets of electric flowers and an electronic flashing” that hits the visitors like “a slap on the face”. Rist uses the energy of this “slap” to emit her videographic fragments – of barely 60 seconds – once every hour. Among these fragments are ten sequences of a woman – Pipilotti herself – who squashes her face on the screen as if she wanted to break the frame that surrounds her and go out on the street, that she wishes to abandon the world of two-dimensions and go to the three of real life. The six additional sequences offer unique moments that are at once familiar and strange to us, such as the rays of a sun that shines through the skin of an ear, a woman atop a bicycle while the camera



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makes a photographic sweep of the tires, a head that can be discerned from afar... In short, diverse sequences that opens the door to the "forest" ("glade") of Pipilotti Rist: saturated colors, touching on the psychedelic, the kitsch, with images that lie on the border of reality and abstraction, creating a hallucinatory effect.

Only a few times have fiction and reality been integrated into a piece in a most apparently natural way.



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