

A high-contrast, close-up photograph of a person's mouth. The tongue is extended and curled, with its tip touching the lower lip. The skin and lips are a warm, reddish-pink color, and the lighting is dramatic, highlighting the textures of the skin and the moist surface of the tongue. The background is dark, making the mouth the central focus.

HATJE
CANTZ

INTO ME / OUT OF ME

Robert Boyd

Robert Boyd's single-channel video works including *Patriot Act*, *Heaven's Little Helper*, *Exit Strategy*, and *Judgment Day* form a multi-channel video installation parodically titled *Xanadu* (2006). For *Into Me/Out of Me*, *Patriot Act* is positioned in a larger context defined by physical violence and the changing roles of bodies within domestic and global power structures. Commenting on the proliferation of violence throughout the world since World War II and the contingent role mass media has played in its portrayal (or suppression), staccato "bytes" of recorded historical events are employed to reveal how even a fleeting image can transmit a plethora of meanings and associations. In the video, images of world leaders basking in the warmth of unconditional loyalty and self-congratulatory military parades accelerate to the cloying beat of a dance track. These deftly edited passages increase in intensity and culminate in scenes of total devastation, brutality, and de-humanization. Contrasting the camp nostalgia of disco with a barrage of catastrophic news footage, Boyd's video measures the realities of collective consciousness against the ways in which these images are represented, remembered, or forgotten. ar

Stan Brakhage

By means of scratching and painting on film material, the superimposition of images, and an aggressive, staccato editing technique, the experimental film pioneer Stan Brakhage aimed at achieving a state of original viewing, freed of all linguistic, cultural and social constraints. Time and again, the filmmaker used his camera to depict bodily developments, impairments, death, and decay. In what is probably his most figurative film, *Window Water Baby Moving* (1959), Brakhage documented a cultural taboo: delivery as a sensual, painful, and existential event. During a time when this sight was exclusively reserved for physicians and midwives, Brakhage filmed the birth of his first child. In poetic images vacillating between total abstraction and shameless directness, and through a climax produced by non-linear, rapid edits, the viewer is drawn into the stream of consciousness of a father filming the miracle of a newborn life. js

Günter Brus

Günter Brus's first works were strongly influenced by Art Informel, yet in 1964, prompted by his artist friends Hermann Nitsch and Otto Muehl, he began creating "self-paintings." Renowned at the time as a co-founder of Viennese Actionism, he caused a shock with his notorious performance *Kunst und Revolution* (Art and revolution, 1968) by urinating and masturbating in front of his audience. His "body analyses" pushed his explorations of bodily functions to the last extreme until, at the beginning of the 1970s, he ultimately completed his Actionist body of work. As is the case with many of his actions, *Transfusion* (1965) was staged for a photographic series. The images of Brus's wife Anni, documented and thoughtfully composed by Ludwig Hoffenreich, depict numerous recurring motifs in the artist's work—self-inflicted wounds, operations, and dissections. In his ongoing explorations of the use of the body as a canvas, Brus expanded the limited, black-and-white palette of his initial actions by using powerful colors and pigments. A woman lies on a bed of nails, and it appears as if she were smeared with blood. The blood seems to come from her vagina to invigorate the artist who has deathly pale make-up on his face and is attached to her as with an intravenous drip. The transfusion, the exchange of lifeblood, is stylized as a pseudo-medical experiment. ar

Chris Burden

The performance artist Chris Burden accepted the risk of injury and pain in his aggressive and hazardous body experiments. On November 17, 1971, the artist had himself shot in a gallery in front of visitors. The atmosphere in the super 8 documentation of this act, called *Shoot*, recalls execution scenes in which a person sentenced to death stands against a wall waiting to be shot. As early as the 1970s, gun battles were already commonplace on American TV, in western films or news footage of victims of the Vietnam War dominating airwaves at the time. Against this background, *Shoot* is a perfect example of the radical stance taken by some artists in the late 1960s and early 1970s to plumb the physical borders of their bodies and their mental resilience, so as to propagate the individual's power to intervene and compound the critique of capitalism and war. Burden

Robert Boyd

* 1969 in Mansfield, Ohio. Lives and works in Brooklyn, New York

Patriot Act (from the series *Xanadu*). 2004. DVD, 4.32 min. video stills

In Boyd's video collage, iconic media footage of world leaders, military parades, and atrocities of war accelerate to the cloying beat of a contrasting dance track, measuring the magnitude of catastrophic events against their media representations.

