



passages

passagen

pasáže

**Hommage à
Walter Benjamin**

af afghanistan
ba bosnia and herzegovina
br brazil
cn china
cz czech republic
de germany
es spain
fr france
hr croatie
hu hungary
lb lebanon
pl poland
sk slovakia
us united states



passages



passagen



pasáže

artist	country
video title	
year	duration hh:mm:ss

Walter Benjamin's dialectical fairy tale about the passages of Paris is one of the strangest texts in world literature. It may be completely wrong as theory, but it works beautifully as an inspiration for art and artists. Since the tragic death of its author, it has grown on us, and it has grown in stature to gigantic proportions. We cannot imagine the history of texts without the "Passagenwerk" (a book that does not even have a proper title and that had to be reconstructed from millions of notes on scraps of paper).

Walter Benjamin is the last important German writer for whom Paris was the focus, the inspiration, and the main subject. He, the German Jew, who fled to Paris and was driven to suicide by the Nazis on his way to New York (a man between all borders) has become one of the last intellectual passages between Germany and France. I am happy and see it as symbolic that this passage now leads through Bratislava, the most western capital of Middle Europe. This passage must run somewhere on Panenska between the Goethe-Institute and Gandy Gallery. In my mind, I cut a red ribbon and declare the Walter-Benjamin-Passage Bratislava to be opened.

Walter Benjamin
Einbahnstraße (One Way Street)
Ernst Rowohlt Verlag, Berlin, 1928
original book cover



Dr. Stephan Wackwitz
Director of program department
Goethe-Institut New York

lida abdul

af

dome

2005

00:04:00

In Dome the camera swirls three hundred and sixty degrees in a circular courtyard of a bombed building. The circular structure soars, leading the camera and the viewer's eye up, towards the sky of the roofless structure's remains. The camera, in the centre of the space, reveals the scene from the first person perspective of a young boy. As the camera pulls back, away from the space we can see the boy is spinning in the space, looking upwards at the sun, as we hear an aircraft flying overhead. The helicopter is not seen, but the sound of its engine passing overhead drowns out the birds who have been chirping, creating a crescendo in the piece.



zbyněk baladrán

CZ

leták / paper

2007

Newer show any initiative.

Never overexert yourself.

Always speak second.

Answer in no more than four sentences.

If somebody tells you something is the case, it probably is, if he is the only one to make the claim, don't believe him or play stupid.

Decide the way the majority decides.

Find someone you can take your anger on.

(Make sure other people have chosen the same person.).

Laugh at what other people laugh at, only louder.

Focus on what's near you, ignore things that are far off.

Arguments with acquaintances are pointless.

Try to be invisible and don't go out much.

Don't complain.

Never show any initiative.

Never overexert yourself.

Always speak second.

Answer in no more than four sentences.

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if he's the only one to make the claim,

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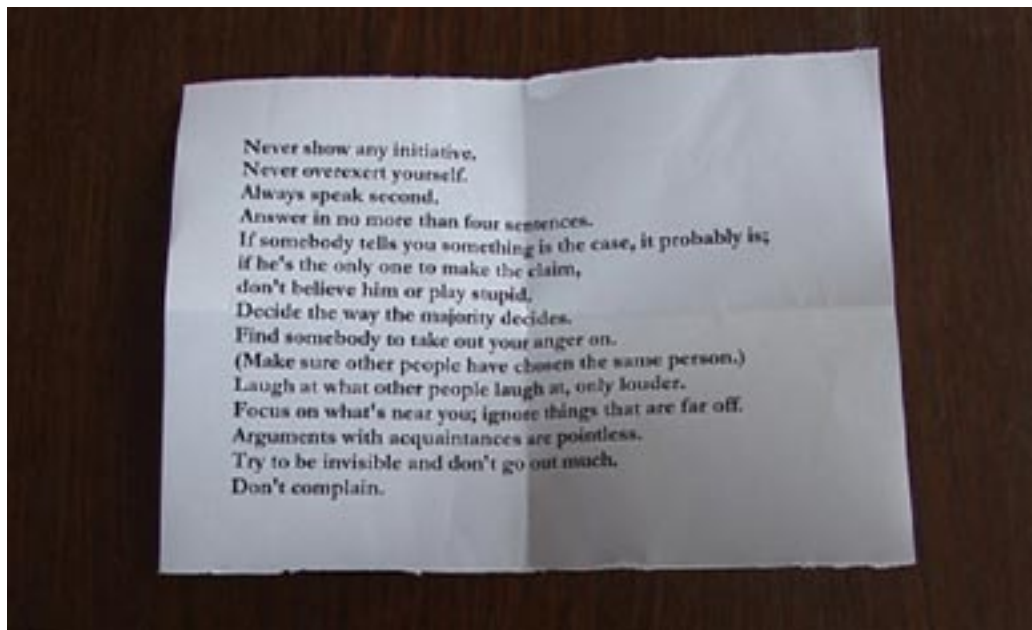
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sandor bodo

hu**paparazzi**

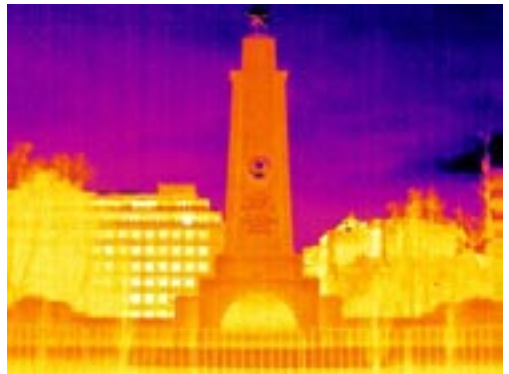
2007

Text Bodo Sandor

Long time ago I have a plan to take photos or a video or historical or communist monuments and their natural and built environment with an infra-red camera. This camera is not based on the light, but on the temperature of the environment. You would see on the photos the temperatures of the bronze monuments, our heritage from communist times, but since these cameras are very sensitive you would see also all the nature, the little mosquitos flying around then, the trees the landscape and the warmth of the people moving around the big monuments. The difficulty and part of the conceptual consideration in this project is, that these infra cameras were and are used as special tool of espionage against kgb or today in war in middle east.

Monuments and sculptures are again alive in eastern europe. this metaphorical situation arises, when they are put in Hungary into a special reservat, like indian people in US. This is an attempt to transform a historical and political paradoxon into a souvenir objects. By the attempt to transfer them in a reservat (an outdoor museum near Budapest) into souvenirs the possibility of rational analysis is thrown away. Any possibility of analysis of local and temporary meaning is rejected / blocked.

But how can we catch (grab or understand) the depicting sculptures of our nearest past? What can we do, if we do not find any other new symbol in our new world, but superman and E.T. after Stalin? Can we hope that we find other ways to read (interpret) the historical sculptures? Or is the mainstream born in Brave New World? Monuments which are placed outdoors has to suffer or stand inner and outer changes of temperature like any other objects. I would like to document these changes of temperatures as a new interpretation of the monuments. It is a metaphor of my interest towards these objects, I would like to express with this the political, environmental/social/historical transformation in animated/moving image and in photographic stills.



pavína fichta čierna sk

juvenile david r.

2004 00:03:30

Technical cooperation Dávid Beracko

Translation Mária Sedláková

... and then we play even every day with cars,
then we play such ... with cars, after we have
some ... for the cars ... they have binoculars for
that, we play with those cars, which are once
batteries, which are not flat, we charge them and
every day charges the cars ...



danica dakic

ba

lullaby of the earth, nový most

2000 | **00:09:00**

Text by Reinhard Spieler

Photo by Egbert Trogemann, VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn

A bridge, on which gentle voices are heard. Primitive tunes, lullabies conveyed by the human voice without any instrumental accompaniment, they transport us back to earliest childhood. The invisible auditory bridge is able to span distances quite other than those spanned by the architectural structure one is walking on. It traverses different languages and cultures: lullabies from all over the world sung in various languages to various melodies sound from loudspeakers spread over the entire bridge. Lullaby of the Earth – as this sound installation realized in Bratislava 2000 was called – not only traverses the world's cultures, but above all straddles the memory gap to childhood. It carries us back to a poetic age when we were protected, when the sound of a mother's voice was enough to instil in us a feeling of safety. It is a bridge that even reaches all the way back beyond personal childhood to the childhood of mankind, to that mythic age before the confusion of tongues at Babel, before cultures had separated and diversified, when the sound of a voice alone sufficed to convey its message, just as a child has no need to understand the words of these lullabies in order to experience their effect. It is a bridge to one's own, still preverbal identity, to one's own primal self as it exists prior to linguistic and cultural understanding.



david dempewol

us

site of lingering catastrophes... have you got it yet?

2006

This project insinuates the desire/wish for Walter Benjamin to not have died at Port Bou in September 1940.

Benjamin attempted to flee Vichy France with the weighty hand written manuscript for the Arcades Project in a suitcase. After crossing the Pyrenees Mountains on foot (with a weak heart and exhausted body), escorted by a handful of fellow evacuees, Benjamin was accosted by the Spanish/Franco border patrol and handed over to the police. The authorities considered

deporting Benjamin (a Berlin based intellectual and Jew) back to Germany because the author lacked the proper French exit papers. That night, in a hotel room, Benjamin committed suicide.

The narrative structure of the video references the Wim Wenders' film *Wings of Desire*. Wenders' film is loosely based on the allegorical Angelus Novus imagery in Benjamin's *Theses for a Philosophy of History*.

Within my video, an angel from Wenders' film inserts a copy of Benjamin's exit papers into a book from the Bibliothec Nationale in Paris that Benjamin references in the unfinished *Arcade's Project*.

When Benjamin discovers the planted exit papers, perhaps the author will safely be able to leave Vichy France during the beginning of the 1940 German occupation.



yang fudong

cn

the half hitching post

2005 00:06:20

Text by Sine Bepler

A beautiful panoramic landscape sets the scene for the narrative of "The Half Hitching Post" (2005). Here, we see only fragments of two stories taking place simultaneously: Two different couples are being witnessed in their attempt to ascend a mountain – a passage that takes place on a sloped and steep road. The viewer is left unaware of the couple's ultimate goal as they compete on reaching their destination. Focusing on the journey up-wards the shifting perspective of the camera depicts the mutual hindrances engaged by the couples to sabotage their opponent's success on reaching their final destination. Juxtaposing the race towards the top with the tranquility of the surrounding landscape lends the video a poetic vibe.

Yang Fudong's films and photographs articulate multiple perspectives. His works investigate the structure and formation of identity through myth, personal memory and lived experience. Each of his works is a dramatic existential experience and a challenge to take on. His work is open-ended and inconclusive, therefore open to individual interpretation. Each film and video is about the human condition. Yang Fudong's work epitomizes how the recent and rapid modernization of China has overthrown traditional values and culture. He skillfully balances this dichotomy to create works endowed with classic beauty and timelessness. Yang Fudong seeks through multiple vignettes to offer the poetics of place and people as an alternative to the prominent politics of power. Whatever occurs, Yang Fudong's film work and photography indicate that something remains untouched and unmoved, and perhaps all the more valuable for that reason.



jean charles hue

fr

sexodoloroso

2007 00:06:00

Hi boss ! My friend the Tijuana police sub commander, really likes my knife and his dad likes dogs. Together, web ring flowers on the black dog's grave which is on a moon really close by. Make one step or two and stab the blade into the stomach. Then a sort of blackish juice which tastes like my three years old comes out. Rabbits or dogs? Nevermind, they don't suffer anyway! Poco poco Don't be a fagget! You're not gonna cry are you?! Just look how beautiful it is. Looks like the moon. One step ahead, one step back. There I go, I'm flying... Flap flap!



**francisca caporali
& marta jourdan**

br

benjamin level #3

2007 | 00:07:00

Text by Pedro Mendes Siruffo & M. Wood

Francisca lives in New York; Marta lives in Rio. They produced this piece together yet they have never met in person. Through an a series of conversations and writings, these two video artists worked together around Walter Benjamin's idea of the passage. They have put something together that is extraordinary: the interpolation of the Real and the Virtual along the lines of what Gilles Deleuze called ,the space in between.' Francisca's life in Brooklyn is translated through Marta's camera as at once Marta's Rio is reflected in Francisca's studio. The editing of the video was only achieved by the use of a make-shift -- a mirror doubling the image from the screen to the web cam. As Benjamin posits the artist's work is the result of the reality's instability. The work investigates the locus where the real and the virtual stand un-upheld -- exist on their own.

"I used to think believe that essence could not be behind, above things, though I knew that it was to be found within things themselves." WB



leopold kessler | de

import budapest-vienna

2006 | 00:15:40

Camera Jan Machacek, Zsolt Keserue

A cigarette pack is transported from Budapest to Vienna on the outside of a train. The action is repeated six times.



passages

passagen

pasáže

Štetinová

Kozia

Panenská ulica

Konventná



Palisády

Sládkovičová

Štefánikova



Panenská street

Hodžovo námestie



Lýcejná

Staromestská

Bratislava



miro kohút

sk**the road**

2007

00:01:50

Knife combat on the street is public intervention which refers to the life stereotypes we live in. Social and economical structures we are part of give us limited and predefined solutions. It is up to our individual strategies to find way away, to cut out.



melik ohanian

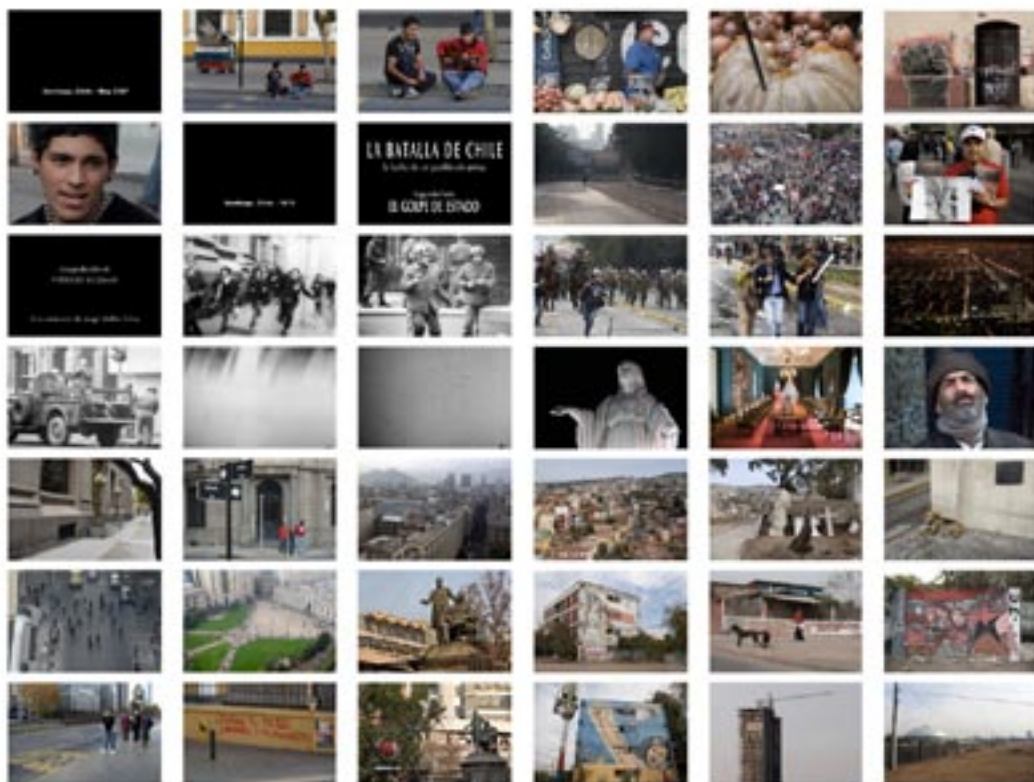
fr

HD video on DVD with surround sound. 90mn

Photos © M&V Ohanian

september 11, 1973
_ santiago, chile, 2007

2007



renata poljak

hr**skok/jump**

2000

00:04:00

The artist climbs a diving platform at the coast. She wears a bathing suit, cap and make-up. She walks along the springboard, back and forth, repeating in French, Shall I jump or not, shall I jump or not..., then in Croatian, If I jump all my make-up will be removed and starts over to walk back and forth obsessively. Her sweat makes the color in her face drip.



sergio prego

es

cowboy inertia creeps

2003

Text by Thierry Davila

Through the undeniable visual impact of this work, Sergio Prego provides a striking image of the circulation of the body in the city. This video was filmed in New York and San Sebastian, the Spanish Basque country. Everything is happening as though this man who is lying down and whose features remain undisclosed, passed directly from one continent to the other, from old Europe to the new world. On both sides of the Atlantic, a sense of wandering and isolation are predominant. Unless it is about death, whether here or there, that is lurking : a figure without motion, the „gisant“, essential motif in occidental art, as a sign of the fatal character of Passages.



katarzyna skupny

pl

ghosts / à une passante

2007 00:04:00

Hommage à Walter Benjamin
Sound installation

The image of women in contemporary media, which is the subject matter of my current body of work („Women's Studies“) consists to a large extent in fragmented sound bites, impressions, fleeting imagery which is never substantiated by a closer look or thorough examination. It is almost as

if female glamour has a ghost-like quality. I haunts the male imagination, the phantasy of the passer-by like the imagination of the flaneur in Baudelaire's poem „À une passante“ (which Walter Benjamin admired and wrote about extensively in his work „Passages“), in which there is not much more than the sound of the street-life and the image of a woman lasting no longer than the wink of an eye, the fraction of a second – enough to enamour the poet for a life-time, it seems. This poem is the model of the female image in the contemporary glamorous, frustrating, fascination surroundings of consumerist street life.



song tao**cn**

three days ago

2005 00:09:40

Text by Sine Bepler

Song Tao's film noir "Three Days Ago" (2005) is a poetic venture into the nighttime terrain of Shanghai. Along the way, the viewer glimpses certain recurring leitmotifs, such as a child playing hopscotch, a brightly lit highway tunnel and a haunting building. An electronic score that plays throughout lends the film a flowing rhythm all its own. The loop-like structure encourages the viewer to focus increasingly on the atmosphere rather than over-all narrative plot. The elliptical repetition also builds suspense that seems to accumulate towards the end. The dramatic scenes appear eternally; the urban nightly journey could take place anywhere, anytime. Song Tao presents a slice of reality as kinetic views of urban space and fragments of memory. His vision is one of documenting and creating atmospheres – he is not concerned with staging grand truths.

His own life, that of his friends and the immediate surrounding metropolis serves as his material source, as exemplified by "The Floor" (2003), a project that spanned six months and culminated in nearly 20,000 photographs of daily life in Shanghai. He selected about 3,000 photographs to create his floor-piece that was eventually mounted at the ShanghART Gallery in Shanghai. Another similar project that presently constitutes the floor of the gallery is a photographic patchwork of a lawn that he photographed meticulously throughout three changing seasons. These acts of recollecting come close to early conceptual and minimalist art approaches, that is, an incremental and repetitious alteration from one piece of work to the next.

Mirroring Song Tao's pre-occupation with 'ordinary reality' and the direct confrontation between the viewer and the artwork is his involvement with Bird Head. His work with the collective takes the form of a photographic survey of contemporary urban life in the metropolis and is a direct response to its immediate scenery of constantly changing circumstances and events. Here, the artistic practice becomes inseparable from real life: "Our hearts are filled with huge amounts of love and sadness" (Bird Head Statement, 2004/2005).



adam vačkář

CZ**zebra blurred**

2007 00:01:48

Text by Timothée Chaillou

A zebra was covered early in the morning with white powder which was dispersed and erased by passing cars and people. Documentation video and photographs capture the process of disappearance of the urban drawing, from the morning till the evening. The Zebra Blurred project is a new scheme of urban communication and it shifts the idea of a collective itinerary. Adam Vackar's extensive investigations do not consist of a descriptive and closed entity, but rather a space with infinite connecting lines which eternally shift its limits and inhibitions and in which the author prefers to search for the potential of employing a particular situation, rather than modelling it. The artist remains the owner of a given direction, the observer of a given trajectory. Through this artistic scheme – subject or fact – the transferred becomes interactive since „by now we should know that it is not people who communicate, but effects (of statements, images).“ (Serge Daney)



akram zaatari

lb

video in five

2006 00:08:50

In the late 1950s, Hashem el Madani used to take his super 8 camera with him on holidays to film his family and friends. This video looks at how a still photographer -like him- conceived movement and spontaneously directed his friends and family including himself. The rushes used in the five movements were shot in the late 1960s and early seventies in Egypt, and in touristic sites in Lebanon such as the Beiteddine Palace, Kfarhannah (covered with snow), a picnic site in a pine forest in Dahr el Ramleh, and Jezzine, which used to be Madani's summer residence.



www.open-player.com

open-PLAYER is an innovative platform for archiving, playback, synchronizing and transferring video art via Internet in optimal quality, high definition included. The open-PLAYER initiative is led by a team of cultural producers and technologists who have joined efforts to increase the awareness of conditions of display and distribution of video art in the best quality possible.

thanks to

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Bratislava

passages-passagen-pasáže

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Bratislava



Panenská ulica

The background of the entire image is a complex, repeating geometric pattern. It consists of various angular, interlocking shapes in a vibrant orange color, set against a light cream or off-white background. The shapes resemble stylized, jagged arrows or a series of nested, irregular polygons that create a sense of movement and depth. The pattern is dense and covers the entire frame.

www.gandy-gallery.com