

Graduiertenkonferenz 2013 | Akademie der bildenden Künste Wien

Datum | 26.06.2013, 10.00 - 17.30 h

Ort | Akademie der bildenden Künste Wien, Sitzungssaal, Erdgeschoss, EA1

14.00 h

Elske Rosenfeld

She turns her head, she lifts the pen. A vocabulary of revolutionary gestures.

Moderation: Felicitas Thun-Hohenstein

(Presentation in English)

Abstract:

The talk assembles found footage and materials from my research into the revolutions and uprisings of 2011, those in Eastern Europe in 1989, and the events of 1968, and configures these moments as a recurrent and physically constituted revolutionary outside to the political status quo.

No longer linked to a unilinear concept of political progress, these uprisings can be understood as “political events” in the sense proposed by, among others, Rancière – as moments of rupture in the normal order of bodies and their relations, as well as in the order of the visible and the sayable. This means, however, that part of their full potentiality is already foreclosed, each time such a moment of rupture inscribes itself, or is inscribed, into the languages of representation and historisation. Yet, bodily tensions, movements, gestures, facial expressions, physical intensities constitute a non-verbal, bodily level of the revolutionary experience that endures as embodied memory outside the languages in which these events inevitably come to be enclosed.

Using a set of on-screen and performative actions, the talk weaves back and forth between three historical instances – an assembly of the revolutionary council in East Germany in 1989, the end of a strike in France in 1968, a drive around Tahrir Square in 2012) – to construct a vocabulary of gestures that contain and continue the intensities, excitements of a closed revolutionary/political event.

Biography:

Elske Rosenfeld's work addresses the relationship between specific historical as well as contemporary scenarios of political upheaval and their potential for affecting political change. She works mainly in video and performance to look at how such events are constituted and remembered through bodies and passed on by physical resonance and mimicry. She is a recipient of a DOC-Fellowship of the Austrian Academy of Sciences.

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