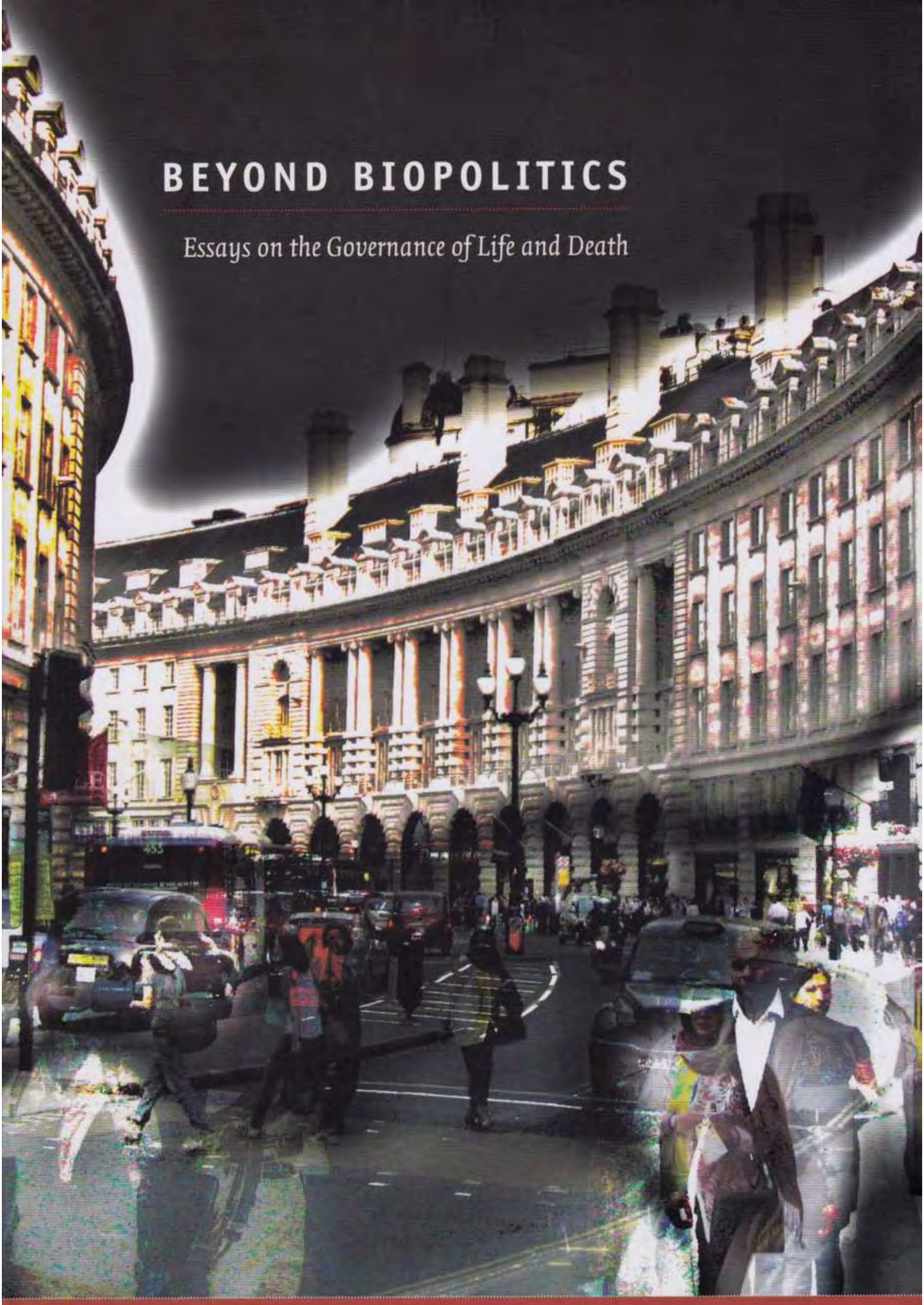
BEYOND BIOPOLITICS

Essays on the Governance of Life and Death



PATRICIA TICINETO CLOUGH & CRAIG WILLSE, EDITORS

long hours of poorly paid work as "'dehumanizing' labor typically Chinese" might well be understood as a defense of American capitalism, a defense meant especially to "realign proper divisions of work and play, or legitimate work and entitlements to play, with an American nationalist-capitalist masculinity." This also serves as "a matter of a racialized economic superiority of . . . a proper capitalism" and a shaping of "the meaning of humanness in human rights or human security discourse."

We take our analysis of virtual gold farming back to a discussion of political branding and population racism. Without forgetting the poor working conditions of many Chinese both in the country and the cities, we question what is being produced by branding labor or the accumulation of capital as monstrous, dehumanizing, and Chinese. What is the difference between branding labor and capital for the sake of political critique, as Anagnost does, and branding them for the sake of defending an American capitalism? Can such a difference be maintained? Or to put it another way: What of the indeterminacy arising in the space-times of the long chain of value? The answer perhaps lies in a discussion of representation and the place of representation in a biopolitics joined with cybernetic capitalism.

INTERMEDIALITY, INDETERMINACY, AND CRITIQUE

While the authors of a number of the essays collected here had recourse to film representations, magazine photographs, video, blogs, graphs, and other mediated texts upon which to rest an argument, authors of other essays included here have more explicitly engaged the deployment of representation as such. These authors suggest that what is at issue in questioning representation is an encounter with indeterminacy, or the threshold between the present and the near future as it is felt and lived, a threshold in which the present is full of the ghostly presences of the past and future and loaded down with life after death, life before life, future-life, and potential life before its actualization. To approach indeterminacy is to attempt an account of multiple times, an account that itself performs in multiple times in a moment in which indeterminacy reveals itself.

In her essay, May Joseph uses the question of representation to explore the event that has implicitly, if not explicitly, left its mark on all the essays collected here, the attack on the World Trade Center. But Joseph puts her essay at some distance from the event. She offers a meditation on Pia Lindman's performance art, which is not only about mourning and grief but about New York City's effort to monumentalize the event and the site of the catastrophe.

Ever aware of "the gaping hole of Ground Zero," Lindman's art "excavates the aftershocks" of the event as an "'interrupted spectacle' between the city and its people." For Joseph, Lindman's performances, along with her use of sketches and digital imaging technology, are exemplary of Jacques Rancière's concern with the (im)possibility of the unrepresentable. Without representation, what happens to mourning, understanding, and, perhaps most importantly, critique?

Joseph concludes that no matter how catastrophe is staged for a performance of remembering, there is always forgetting, but there is also an excess beyond the will to know, a surfeit of affect, even what Joseph calls a "surfeit of witnessing." The performance, however, offers some possibility of moderation in that it fails to be coincident with a lasting representation. As such, Lindman's performance is able to touch on the "nervous embodiments of living within hardscape," as an ever disappearing event. Nonetheless, in its insistence on conjuring ghosts of the past and of the near future, the performance spreads phenomenological doubt as an urban art form. While Joseph poses the question of representation to the traumatic and to a not-knowing that ever returns, demanding the (im)possibility of representation, other authors writing here all but give up on representation, not only because of unrepresentability but because of an ontological shift from performance in the construction of meaning to performance with the aim of the affective modulation of bodies or populations. In this shift, excess is displaced by indeterminacy, opening critique to a nonphenomenological approach.

In her essay, Una Chung addresses indeterminacy as a matter of incommensurability of language, cultures, and media, taking as her subject Lin+Lam's *Unidentified Vietnam*, an exhibition based on the Library of Congress's holdings of the Vietnam/American War, shown in 2006 in a gallery at the edge of Chinatown in New York City. In recognizing the biopolitics at play in the transport of the war archive from Vietnam to Washington, D.C., to Chinatown (a construction of the so-called ethnic enclave) Chung underscores the challenge of finding a "particular (historical) method of art" that might counter biopolitics; the difficulty is that biopolitical "governmentality *is* the art of method." Chung understands the archive, or the installation of an archive, as a spatial expansion of limbo that is "capable of eliminating the multiple temporalities of transition, transience, transport, transfer, precisely by insisting on its own domain of liminality." Always a supplement that repeats a repetition or endures it, the installation of the archive lays bare the difficulty of an account of and in multiple temporalities.

FASCIA AND THE GRIMACE OF CATASTROPHE

The face is the only location of community, the only possible city.
—Giorgio Agamben, *Means Without End*

"Are some things unrepresentable?" asks Jacques Rancière in *The Future of the Image*.[1] And if so, what might it mean to engage in the activity of representation at this point in history? In particular, the desire to represent the unrepresentable, to materialize the unthinkable through art, without reducing its affect to an excess?

Rancière's inquiry into the unrepresentable and the unthinkable opens up the dialectical space between intelligibility and erasure, between what is seen and what is inconceivable. The distinctions between voice and sight, between speech and vision, Rancière argues, is the liminal space between the unthinkable and the unrepresentable. It is the immeasurable space between the performer and audience, between art and its sublime possibilities. In this interminable expanse is the practice of "little perceptions," as Rancière puts it, the place of knowledge-effects and pathos-effects, each an incomplete symptom of the totality.[2]

Rancière elucidates one such little perception, the "interrupted spectacle," which he identifies as an "accident of representation" that unfolds unpredictably.[3] The moment of the interrupted spectacle for Rancière lies in a prose poem by Stéphane Mallarmé about a dancing bear and a clown. In "Un spectacle interrompu," Mallarmé portrays the scene of a dancing bear with a clown. The bear puts his

paws on the clown at a critical moment, thereby diminishing the distance between animal and human, introducing danger to the delicate balance of power between the clown and his counterpoint, his bear.[4] The bear's gesture erodes the distance between audience and the performer's space. It contracts the arrangement between viewer and viewed. This unstable moment of action startles the calibrated distance between performer and audience, unexpectedly equalizing them on a continuum.

In this gap between exhibition and signification, Rancière suggests, is the demarcation between action and reception. How much is seen, and how much heard, determines the distance between representation and the unrepresentable. Scale, temporality, and distance from the unthinkable impinge the perceptual trace of the disappeared. To see too much, but hear nothing, diminishes the scale of the unthinkable. To hear the unimaginable, and leave to the imagination its visualization, leaves the possibility of experiencing the sublime, a kind of sacred terror, the terror of the unrepresentable, for Rancière.[5]

Rancière's inquiry into the ethical imperative to represent, or not to depict, devolves around the materialization of inconceivable events and the call for an art that marks the unthinkable. The predicament of recording "the trace of the unthinkable," as Rancière puts it, poses infinite challenges. Arguing between the perils of forgetting and the excesses of materiality, such as are seen in the physical depictions of dead bodies in the concentration camps, Rancière opens up the conundrum of staging catastrophe and its irretrievability.[6]

Sophocles's *Oedipus* embodies for Rancière the sublime experiment in the limits and excesses of theatricalizing catastrophe. To depict the distraught Oedipus, gouging his eyes out in grief, is to make visible the unrepresentable. Its materialization reduces absolute horror to a grotesquery on stage. Drawing upon seventeenth-century arguments favoring visual restraint in the staging of Sophocles's *Oedipus*, an approach formalized in France through Corneille's rewriting of the Oedipus play, Rancière demarcates the philosophical distinctions between the physicalization of an act of savagery and the visualization of extreme violence through speech. Using seventeenth-century notions of decorum, Corneille's Oedipus does not enucleate himself, marking a departure from Sophocles's version of the tragedy. But, as Rancière underscores, to resist representing the primal scene in Oedipus's diabolical catharsis is to partake in a double negative, to leave silent that which is unrepresentable and doubly erase it because of its unthinkability.[7]

Nowhere in recent American history has the ethical challenge of representing the unthinkable and portraying the unrepresentable been more debated and subject to maudlin sentiment than in the events following the gaping hole of Ground Zero. Contorted by the United States' bombing of Baghdad in March 2003, the political underpinnings of each shred of metal pulled from the site compounded the grief and guilt of representation following the catastrophe of September 11, 2001. The event of catastrophe remains irretrievable. It is marked by an abyss. But an excess of affect followed the event, putting all efforts to document, capture, or memorialize the aftermath in danger of a surfeit of witnessing. The scale of the event made efforts at representing the unthinkable a literal expression of the intelligible. A surplus of visual images reduced the unimaginable to its edited materiality, a photogenic cornucopia of rubble and ruination. One was left shuddering, "The horror of it, the horror of it."

Searching for an intricate balance between a restraint of vision and the urgency to trace the disappeared, the performance artist Pia Lindman excavates the aftershocks of 9/11 as an "interrupted spectacle" between the city and its people. Through a series of performance acts in public sites around New York City, Lindman investigates the perceptual distance between performer and the passerby, between New York City and the world.

Lindman's gestural friezes are practices of "little perceptions," to draw upon Rancière's term. She skillfully examines visibility against the overdetermined backdrop of a surplus of seeing. Working against a public enervated with witnessing, Lindman demands the attention of those blinded by overexposure to the unthinkable, those numbed by repeated replays of the unrepresentable. Her work probes the interstices between literally living death (as Lindman worked next to Ground Zero in 2001, atop the World Financial Center, overlooking the World Trade Center site) and working through the fragments of death.

EMBODIMENTS: LUXE GALLERY, NEW YORK CITY, 2006

In a compact, midtown Manhattan gallery, a simple theatrical space is set with three spotlights and a grey backdrop. Most of the audience stands around, some sitting on the floor. A woman in a grey pants suit takes her place and begins a series of slow-motion, freeze-frame poses. She huddles and crouches. Slowly transitioning to a standing pose, she stares askance in hopeless horror. Her body turns in profile, hands grasped, eyes tightly shut. She bends, convulses, contorts a grimace. She clenches fists in to-

Tracing of a photograph found on the pages of the *New York Times*, Pia Lindman.

ment. She moves slowly to pick up a grey placard, holds it up, head upturned, stands erect, eyes angular, mournful. Standing with arms bent, her hands clasp the grey placard as one would a photograph, her arm supports the face, she stands still. Her face turns stage right, eyes closed, hands curled. She positions her leg on a grey cloth pile, arms akimbo at her sides, body leaning back, face upturned. Her mouth agape, face taut, eyes fearful, she throws her head back, exposing a tense torso, an angular spine. She hunches over, legs apart, shoulders hunched, grasping an infant swaddled in grey fabric. Her anxious body grips the bundle of grey fabric close to her face, the imagined body of the child held angular. Her hip is bent, her face desperate, initially fearful, then frightened, then upturned. She slowly stretches her mouth into a pained frown, a grotesque howl, a scream, her teeth bared.

At the Luxe Gallery in New York City in February 2007, the woman in grey performs a series of embodied drawings reproduced from pencil drawings

of freeze frames. She depicts in stop-motion poses scenes of grief collected from the pages of the *New York Times* over the course of 2002–2003. Her body journeys through physicalizations of extreme sorrow as shock, hopelessness, and anger congeal into the grimace of catastrophe.

FASCIA OF GRIEF

On a clear Manhattan day in downtown Foley Square in 2004, the woman in a grey pants suit howls in horror, her face distorted in grief. Another day in 2005 finds her in front of the Freedom of Expression National Monument in Foley Square, where she kneels bereft. Again in 2005, she squats in despair by Luis Sanguino's 1981 statue *The Immigrants*, located in Castle Clinton, Battery Park. At a gallery called the Storefront for Art and Architecture in 2006, the performer enacts a single half-hour act titled *30-Minute Gesture*, consisting of a figure in a black dress standing on a black box. A video performance titled *Fascia* plays alongside. In the duration of thirty minutes, she performs seven gestures, gradually moving her left arm from a vertical position pointing up to eventually realize a vertical position pointing down. Her body transforms from the Black Panther salute to the Hitler salute, from the blowing of a kiss to the making of a stop sign, from a handshake to giving the obscene middle finger, and finally to the painterly depiction of God banishing Eve in her naked shame out of the Garden of Eden. The nearly still figure moves imperceptibly. Her entire body and face glide from the Black Panther salute to the Statue of Liberty pose to a sequence of studies in skeletal mobility. The audience is drawn into an emotional journey by its own projected sentiments and the implied gestures of the performer. Detailed anatomical studies of the fascia of emotions transfix the spectator as the performer's eyes transform from staring ahead to downcast and pensive, from raised and questioning to beckoning, from melancholic to fascistic, and from passionate to cynical. Her hands move from holding the torch of liberty to unclasping slowly, from a flat-palmed halt to the fascistic hail of Hitler's era, to a beckon, to a flying kiss, a pause, a farewell, a blessing, an extended handshake, and a disillusioned withdrawal.

URBAN FACIALITY AND THANATOS

New York performance artist Pia Lindman uses her body, pen and ink illustrations, and digital technologies to create public installations that investigate the public culture of grieving after September 11, 2001. Lindman's explorations suggest that the events of September 11, 2001, triggered a new logic of

Kneeling in front of the Freedom of Expression National Monument in Foley Square, 2005.

Pia Lindman, Castle Clinton, Battery Park City.

Fascia, 30-Minute Gesture, Black Panther salute.

Fascia, 30-Minute Gesture, hand outstretched.

gesture in New York City. This logic effects a nervous movement punctuated by resilience as much as by melancholia in response to a catastrophe whose symbolic import was cynically misused as a cause for an even more devastating sequence of wars in Afghanistan, Iraq, and the surrounding region. In Lindman's public portrayals, the unsettling momentum of war continues to shift and transform the way people inhabit the vertical imaginary of New York and its environs as wanderers and travelers, as dwellers in and dreamers of the city.

For Lindman, the event of grieving triggered by the cataclysm has spilled into the larger arena of public mourning. Her anatomical portrayals open up the historicity of location and dying in public spaces. Her investigations detail the fundamentals of human gesture in states of tragic shock. The lunging body of terror, the last salute for the fallen soldier, the distraught mother and swaddled child, the squatting despair of the Holocaust survivor, the grieving elation of immigrants to the new world, these attitudes of pathos are figments of a larger history of morbidity and public spaces. At the core of Lindman's work since September 11 is the idea that the United States is a culture at war and grief is the uncontainable symptom of the terrible melancholy of unsustainable modernity.

Grief, Lindman suggests, is the most evocative staging of bodily habitation within space. It is the place of unexpected corporeal and somatic shock, performed in conditions of spatial vulnerability. Grief shrinks distance and distorts time in ways that exceed the bounds of the city, yet is shaped by the geography of the city. Her performances play in crowded public places, accosting passersby. How do we cope with grief in New York City, Lindman asks. Does the space of grief matter? Is grief a universal experience that can be pared down to its most minimal of structural gestures? Are experiences of grief the great equalizer, she queries.

Lindman's interest in the intersections between the body of the city dweller and the faciality of the city's grief is a deeper investigation into the neural habitations of contemporary urban life. She is preoccupied with the nervous embodiments of living within a hardscape. Eyes askance, face taught, lips drawn apart, teeth exposed, Lindman embodies the restrained emotions of a damaged world city processing its neural pathways. At Foley Square, a body sits on its haunches in abject sadness. At *The Immigrants*, the performer lunges in fear. Another gesture has the performer holding her arms in the attitude of carrying a dead child. Evocative, imagistic, detailed, these extensive, close studies of pathetic gestures are culled from the *New York Times* during 2003,

Black Square drawing. Based on stills from the Lakonikon video of the artist reenacting gestures of grief she found on the pages of the *New York Times*.

the year of "shock and awe," when the United States began its strategy of rapid dominance over the city of Baghdad on March 20, 2003.

The face of Lindman's embodiments is both the physical space of the city and the emotive plane of the performer's face. Faciality is a process of dwelling in which actual locations function as expressive triggers for the emotional life of a city. To this extent, Lindman's choice of locations and her enactments of loss examine the gestural structures of melancholia embedded within the built environment of the necropolis of downtown Manhattan. The task of mourning is an ongoing practice, Lindman iterates. The muscularity of pathos, its underlying mess of nerves, sinews, bone, and tissue, stretch the face of the city open, muscle by muscle. Neck taut and tilted, eyes startled, skin drawn thin, hair tightly pulled back, cheeks distorted, lips distended in a grimace of horror, Lindman confronts her audience with the mechanics of faciality and death, of public space and private grief.

Lindman's anthropomorphizing of the urban landscape in a series of facial gestures has the effect of transforming her body into a flexible structuring entity of the built environment. Through her performances, the city is given many faces, and her body is transformed into a moving architectural

detail. Lindman's hyperextended physiognomy unpacks the face of a city in pain, a city that shudders a grimace.

MOVEMENT AND DWELLING

Movement within the built environment is a collaborative production of muscular activities and civic understandings. How we move in particular contexts, why we occupy the spaces we do in the manner we do, impacts the gestures of everyday life. These improvisations generate the sensibility of powerfully evocative and globally dispersed cities. In Lindman's work, the city is larger than its mapped, planned, and plotted vectors. New York City's perspectival axis and great buildings, its monuments and sweeping vistas, invoke aspects memorably captured in a photograph or in the mind's eye. But for Lindman, it is in the compressed transitory gestures and provisional dwellings that capture the fleeting sense of what a city really is, and how life in a city connects nonlinearly with events and emotions experienced elsewhere. Through touch, movement, smell, and sound, life is indelibly etched as a memory, a taste, a shot of adrenalin. Lindman's visual and sound environments excavate the unstable matrix of movement and dwelling. Her dramatic environments investigate compressed flows of information and raise the questions: How do people dwell in cities of distraction? How do they grieve?

Asking a similar question in the aftermath of the Second World War, Heidegger writes, "What is the nature of dwelling in our precious age?" For Heidegger, the shape of cities and the density of populations within cities forced the perpetual concern of the modern era, the concern for housing, which was symptomatic of a deeper anxiety. "On all sides we hear talk about the housing shortage . . . the real plight of dwelling does not lie merely in a lack of houses. The real dwelling plight lies in this . . . that mortals . . . must ever learn to dwell."[8] This considerable challenge that mortals must "ever learn to dwell," as a condition of modernity, underscores the escalating tension in Lindman's performances, tensions between bodies and the built, between mortality and fatality, even amid catastrophe.

Drawing from the international landscape of grief, pain, and public stagings of loss, Lindman digs into the city's emotive structure. She forces the hardscape of the vertical city to an encounter with its own repressed traces, those past and lingering on the sidewalk today. In Foley Square, near city hall in lower Manhattan, Lindman captures the ghostly hauntings of the urban piazza. Foley Square is built over the old Collect Pond, a marshy, inclement terrain of swamp outside the boundaries of historic New Amsterdam that

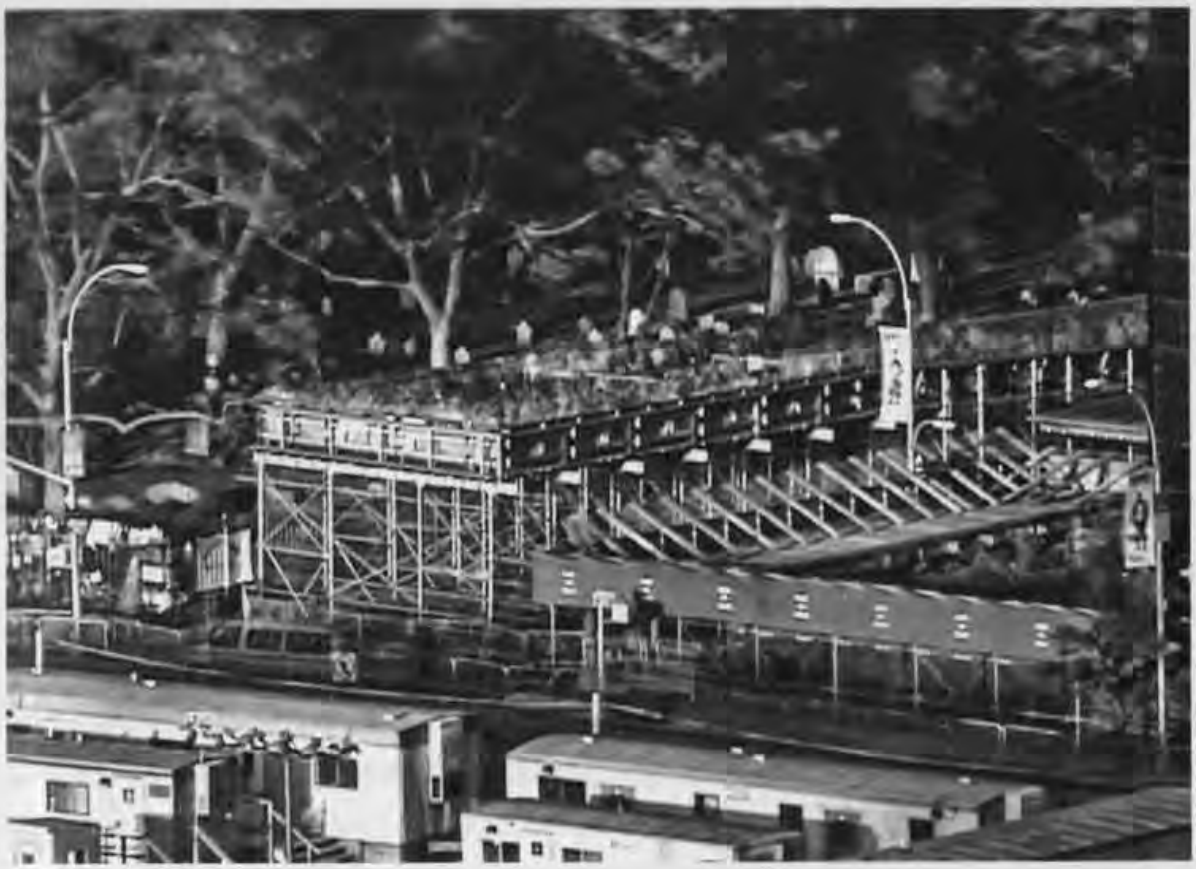
was used as a burial ground by slaves of African descent who were forbidden to bury their dead within the walls of the colonial Dutch city. Now a busy hub of court buildings, immigration offices, and city hall offices, this densely packed area is estimated to hold roughly 20,000 bodies of New Yorkers of African descent. During the nineteenth century, the area around Foley Square and the courthouse became part of the Five Points neighborhood, a notorious enclave of poor Irish tenements. Lindman's stagings of grief at this locale remind onlookers of other histories of violence that haunt the space of performance, even as her contortions take spectators beyond the literal event.[9]

The city is simultaneously a burial ground and a theater of public mourning, a place for unexpected encounters and sudden departures, in Lindman's art. She is interested in the membranes of civic forgetting. Her public acts of mourning in New York City overlay older histories of grief and death from the historic city onto the present city. Freeze frames disinter the harrowed spirits of those who were buried secretly, in the dead of night, outside the city walls of colonial New Amsterdam, and later colonial New York. Enslaved Africans, Jews, the Lenape and Munsee Indians, all spirits buried outside the walls of the colonial Dutch city, a boundary now plainly called Wall Street, haunt spectators through Lindman's tactile permutations of loss.

VIEWING PLATFORM (2002)

Gesture forms the structural vernacular of Lindman's documentation of wounding. It is a language of event and the built environment communicated through the human form and transformed by the materiality of flesh, bone, and blood. The detailed recording of grief and mourning in those first few months of posttraumatic dailiness foregrounds the condition New York City was very much in the grip of, and struggling to move beyond: the staging of public grief. Through her relentless camera lens and its distended, layered imagery, Lindman forces us to consider the modern preoccupation with the need to look, the need to perform grief rather than be in grief. The boundaries between melancholia and necrophilia are blurred. This very disturbing and scopophilic engagement with gaping at the scene of death is accompanied by the multiply situated, painful conversation on how to memorialize and honor the dead, a conversation on what sort of form the remembering should most suitably take in light of the impossible task of realizing a perfect memorial.

In *Viewing Platform*, Lindman focuses on the structure built by the architects Elizabeth Diller and Ricardo Scofidio that opened on December 10,



Viewing Platform (2002).

2001, to allow visitors to view the inconceivable gash of Manhattan, raw and still acrid. The *Viewing Platform* video was funded by a grant by the Lower Manhattan Cultural Council and World Financial Center for Arts and Events for the revitalization project of the Ground Zero area. It was a site-specific video installation that hung in the main thoroughfare of the World Financial Center's corridors, located right next to Ground Zero in Battery Park. The video is a portrait of the architectural gesture of collective grief in all its troubling and empathetic manifestations. It was shot from the nineteenth floor of One World Financial Center, Tower One, overlooking Ground Zero at a time when the area south of Chambers Street was blocked off to traffic during the spring of 2002 and visitors were forbidden to photograph the Ground Zero area. A city injunction against recording images of the site went into effect as the video was being made.

A static camera captures a blurry, layered image of crowds moving in double exposure on a makeshift viewing platform above Ground Zero. At first glance, there is nothing spectacular except for the high angle of the shot, a rare documentation of curious onlookers on a makeshift lookout at the former World Trade Center at a terrible moment in New York's history. A layered, palimpsestic loop records the dense weaving of people hovering over

the cavernous chasm of Ground Zero and repeats its ghostly musings. The viewer is suddenly privy to a more ghastly, otherworldly scenario of spectral figures superimposed on more saturated human forms, coalescing and disappearing simultaneously. Elizabeth Diller and Ricardo Scofidio's *World Trade Center Viewing Platform* becomes an architectural embodiment of the collective gesture of mourning, as specters transform over time within the frame of the video. The spectator is confronted with the ghosts of loss wafting through the city. The installation at once dramatizes the impossibility of representation and the burden of an absolute monument to commemorate the event of catastrophe.

The layered technique of multiply exposed, superimposed film, explores mournful daily life in all its voyeuristic minutiae. Throngs of individuals morph into a congealed moving mass of curious mourners. The viewing is constant, urgent, and somehow casual. The scene is transformed from a site of catastrophe, a ground made sacred by the murderous death of nearly three thousand people, to a disaster site to be visited.

Lindman's *Viewing Platform* confronts the public with the ambivalence of grieving as spectacular entertainment. It records the shift of Ground Zero from a space made ceremonial by the ravages of death to a cult destination for disaster tourists. The film's enigmatic loop investigates the interstices between sudden death and the absent space of catastrophe. It focuses the viewer on the repetitious invocation of what the anthropologist Michael Taussig calls "the space of death."[10]

The site of tragedy is transformed into the mutable space of the sacrificed citizen through the sacred figure of the dead as sacrifice. The installation marks the condition of those violently sacrificed but who will not be killed, for they will be mourned, commemorated, remembered, memorialized. It archeologizes the negative space of disappearance—the literal chasm of the gaping hole of the World Trade Center that is inverted into the proliferating space of commemoration.[11]

Viewing Platform (2002) was met with great consternation from the World Financial Center Arts and Events organizers as Lindman prepared the piece for the inaugural reopening of the destroyed Winter Garden Atrium housed in the World Financial Center. World Financial Center Arts and Events was alarmed by the spectral nature of the installation, and there were concerns that the video was too disturbing in its ghostliness. The original version was not permitted to be exhibited at the opening of the Winter Garden in fall 2002. Instead, a linear version of the video was made in real time, without

Lindman's signature effect of the spectral haunting that the palimpsestic editing creates.

PHENOMENOLOGICAL DOUBT

Viewing Platform (2002) is a technological investigation into the techniques of grieving. Lindman is interested in the process of grief. To produce *Viewing Platform* (2002), Lindman positioned a fixed camera focused on the Diller and Scofidio *Viewing Platform* constructed in December 2001 for the public. With digital editing software, she made the video footage transparent and cut it into one-minute segments. She layered these segments on top of each other and thus, during the duration of one minute the viewer sees the entire sixty-minute video in real time, but simultaneously as multiple layers. In the process, time and motion oscillate and create the illusion of disappearance. The extraordinary effect of spectral disappearance draws the spectator into a somatic shudder. It engages the viewer in a dialogue between dwelling, death, and the moving body.

Using the techniques of photographic development and superimposition of negatives, Lindman examines grieving as a public ritual expressive of a larger sentiment of nationhood. She opens up the question of how time shapes the production of space, of how the technologies of visual manipulation reinvent memory over the course of a twenty-four-hour sequence. Her compressed editing of images over a sixty-minute period condensed to a one-minute loop asks searching questions about the spectacularization of catastrophe. Deploying gesture as a technique for documenting grief through movement and photography, Lindman's vignettes offer an archive of the aftermath of catastrophe. Instead of offering grief's monumentality emptied of significance through memorialization, Lindman probes deeper into the comportments of loss. The spectator is distracted from the spectacle and drawn toward the intimate space of the encounter with calamity.

To allow the residue of the encounter to emerge, Lindman introduces into her work what Vilém Flusser calls "phenomenological doubt." "The act of photography is that of 'phenomenological doubt' to the extent that it attempts to approach phenomena from any number of viewpoints," writes Flusser.[12] In contrast to Flusser, who held that the deep structure of this doubt is determined by the camera's program, Lindman is interested in that which exceeds the program of the technologies of documentation, such as the photograph, the video recording, the camera, the performance. She is preoccupied with the excess, the trace, in what is left over, in that which can-

not be photographed. Lindman is interested in what Flusser describes as "the improbable images that have not been seen before."[13]

The act of viewing, for Lindman, is a moment to witness: "It is not so important that you see the site, rather you need to symbolically bear witness to it, and to there execute some sort of ceremony, however small. The seeing is rather looking inside yourself."[14] Lindman's hypnotic loop foregrounds the melancholic repetition of the grafting of trauma upon the built environment and comments on the arrest of mourning through the spectacularization of death.

VIRTUOSITY, GRIEF, AND MEMORIALIZING

The *New York Times* performances presented in February 2007 at the Luxe Gallery in New York City are a series of embodied drawings reproduced from pencil drawings of freeze frames depicting scenes of grief collected from the front pages of the *New York Times* from 2002–2003. In these pieces, Lindman offers a glimpse into what escapes the camera's program.[15] Lindman's technically virtuosic bodily gestures reinforce the interdependent histories of grief between there and here, between elsewhere and now, between wars and tragedies played out abroad and the lives bereft at home. Through her performances, grief exceeds the limits of the individual photographer's program. Grief transmutes into a project of action, a process that requires an audience to exist.

The displays of grief become, for Lindman, what Paolo Virno calls "an activity without an end product." Virno observes, "The performance of a pianist or of a dancer does not leave us with a defined object distinguishable from the performance itself, capable of continuing after the performance has ended. An activity that requires the presence of others: the performance makes sense only if it is seen or heard."[16] Drawing upon Aristotle's idea of political action or praxis, elaborated in *The Nicomachean Ethics*, Virno argues that performance is virtuosity, whereby the notion of virtuosity is a form of praxis "when the purpose of action is found [to be] action itself."[17] Virno contends that every political action is virtuosic, while all virtuosity is intrinsically political.[18] He locates the fundamental model of virtuosity in the "activity of the speaker."[19] Extending Virno to Lindman's articulations, the argument can be made that her virtuosic stagings of mourning demand a political engagement with the process of violence. Lindman's perfectly modulated grimaces cut through the veneers of composure and demand a return to the unfinished project of

working through the experience of loss and public death within the space of the city's imagination.

At the crux of Lindman's physiological excavations is a question that Judith Butler eloquently asks: What is a grievable life? Whose death matters more? What does it mean to grieve, and at what point in time is grief an accessible emotion to a public?[20] Lindman's unapologetic investigations into the structures of melancholia within public spaces of New York City critically interrogate the mechanics of becoming in a global city. Grief is not extraneous to quotidian city life. The reclamations of urban spaces haunted by grief and the iterations of city space as divorced from grief are articulated simultaneously. Lindman's work investigates the numerous vernaculars of loss and mourning. Their translations as symbols of human worth are highly contingent on the winds of politics.

Against the relentless backdrop of grievable landscapes and lives brutally eviscerated without a modicum of grief, Lindman's deliberately depersonalized gestures of dehumanized states drawn from images across the world beg an ethical accountability for the memorialization of grief. Is public grieving a process of selective memorializing, Lindman's performances of grief seem to ask. What makes a life worthy of memorials? And whose lives are extinguished silently, outside the spheres of the visible? Watching Lindman perform in New York City as the numbers of dead in Fallujah, Najaf, and elsewhere in Iraq grow, a result of the American-led invasion of Iraq, presents the dilemma of the inconceivable. Lindman's movements hold the audience hostage to her disquieting questions: Can gesture make intelligible the unthinkable? Can performance actively engage the terror unfolding outside the spheres of the visible, without the raw truth of the photograph to document the garrulous casualties of war?[21] Lindman's actions ask those for whom grief necessitates memorializing to pause to question the premises of remembering and forgetting, of commemorating and eliding, to articulate that most tenuous of questions, what is a grievable life.

TOWARD A PRAXIS OF LITTLE PERCEPTIONS

Pia Lindman's artistic practice is a public praxis. It is an invigorating instance of Rancière's little perceptions, offering multisited analyses into the machinations of what she identifies as "doing grief" rather than being in grief. It is Virno's "political virtuosity," as it uses found action to engage public reasoning. Lindman is critical of mourning and grief as acts of incapacitation. In-

stead, she proposes that such an anomaly of human affairs be transformed into an active state of political becoming, especially in a climate of endless war. For Lindman, the displaced physiological and neural imaginings of a city through violent derailment must be short-circuited to allow public engagement. Lindman's interrupting spectacles generate a disturbance among passersby. These spectacles deflect the passer's habitual path with sudden meaning. The little perceptions she offers are a call to reclaim the city as a space of the living, rather than to submit to its location as a memorial to spectacular death.

A chilling backdrop to Lindman's series of investigations into corporal morbidity from 2001–2007 is the inconceivable reversal of power from the right to make life, as Michel Foucault observes, to a right to take life.[22] Lindman's performances were taking place in New York City even as the writ of habeas corpus was being threatened by George W. Bush's administration under the Military Commissions Act of 2006. Her performances around New York City from 2003 to 2007 foreground the underlying implications of staging the unrepresentable in a climate of visual censorship.

In an unprecedented return to ideas of power reminiscent of the sovereign in early modern Europe, authority under George W. Bush specifically entailed the right to take life. This terrifying overreach of modern presidential power undergirds Lindman's analysis of melancholia. The ancient writ first recorded under the Magna Carta of 1297 is one of the critical rights that predates the Bill of Rights. The move to eliminate, rather than limit, habeas corpus is a juridical-political departure from Foucault's assumption that political modernity, as it is embodied through modern law, signals a move away from the savage excesses of the sovereign's right to take life.[23] Under George W. Bush, the rule of law was literally threatened with being set back 700 years, as GOP senator Arlen Specter remarked, despite proceeding to vote for the motion to eliminate habeas corpus. On June 12, 2008, the Supreme Court voted to restore habeas corpus, striking down key parts of the Military Commissions Act of 2006.[24]

Lindman's refracted depictions of public grief from the global arena coincide with the impending demise of the right to produce the body before the law. Habeas corpus signals a shift from what Foucault delineates as medieval logic to the emergence of modern forms of governmentality based on concepts of public and individual rights. The threatened erasure of habeas corpus, as an inalienable right to be seen and therefore to be heard, is the trace

of the unthinkable that ultimately haunts Lindman's investigations of public melancholia.

Lindman's performances interrogate a society hopelessly embroiled in the perpetuation of organized death through war. For Lindman, to grieve is to engage with the public repercussions of what it means to be in grief, to be a society at war. Activating the spaces of death through the powerful enunciations of "little perceptions" makes possible a shift in the relationship between individuals, and the silent histories of the places they traverse. The city is the place of unplanned encounters. It is a place of unstable power differentials between social imaginaries. In the city, subjectifying experiences transform into activating possibilities for political becoming. Lindman is ultimately interested in a dialectic between the silent spaces of organized and accidental death and the built environment, between citizens and the cities they inhabit.

NOTES

1. Rancière, "Are Some Things Unrepresentable," in *The Future of the Image*.
2. Ibid., 121.
3. Ibid., 122.
4. Ibid.
5. Ibid., 134.
6. Ibid., 132–35.
7. Ibid., 112–13.
8. Heidegger. "Building Dwelling Thinking," in *Poetry, Language, Thought*, 161.
9. Berlin and Harris, *Slavery in New York*. See Hansen and McGowan, *Breaking Ground Breaking Silence*. See also *New York Journal of American History* (fall/winter) 2005.
10. Taussig, "The Image of the *Auca*," in *Shamanism, Colonialism and the Wild Man*, 121.
11. See Agamben, *Homo Sacer*, 72, 73. Also see René Girard for an extended discussion on the relationship of violence and the sacred to the spaces of death through the figure of the scapegoat in Girard, "Violence and Magic," in *The Scapegoat*.
12. Flusser, "The Gesture of Photography," in *Towards a Philosophy of Photography*, 38.
13. Ibid.
14. Pia Lindman (artist), interviewed by author, February 7, 2006, New York City.
15. Flusser, *Towards a Philosophy of Photography*.
16. Virno, *A Grammar of the Multitude*, 52.
17. Ibid.
18. Ibid.
19. Ibid., 55.
20. Butler, "Violence, Mourning, Politics," in *Precarious Life*.
21. See Kambar and Arango, "4,000 U.S. Deaths, and a Handful of Images." The case

of the photographer Zoriah Miller who photographed the dead bodies of American soldiers in Iraq in June 26, 2008, and was censored by the U.S. military, brought to the fore the silence of images from Iraq since 2003.

22. Foucault, *Society Must Be Defended*, 248, 254–56.
23. Ibid., 248.
24. Greenwald, "Supreme Court restores habeas corpus, strikes down key part of Military Commissions Act."

SOCIAL THEORY/CULTURAL STUDIES

Under the auspices of neoliberalism, technical systems of compliance and efficiency have come to underwrite the relations among the state, the economy, and a biopolitics of war, terror, and surveillance. In *Beyond Biopolitics*, prominent theorists seek to account for and critically engage the tendencies that have informed neoliberal governance in the past and are expressed in its reformulation today. As studies of military occupation, the policing of migration, blood trades, financial markets, the war on terror, media ecologies, and consumer branding, the essays explore the governance of life and death in a near-future, a present emptied of future potentialities. The contributors delve into political and theoretical matters central to projects of neoliberal governance, including states of exception that are not exceptional but foundational; risk analysis applied to the adjudication of "ethical" forms of war, terror, and occupation; racism and the management of the life capacities of populations; the production and circulation of death as political and economic currency; and the potential for critical and aesthetic response. Together, the essays offer ways to conceptualize biopolitics as the ground for today's reformulation of governance.

"*Beyond Biopolitics* explores new forms of life emerging while modern strategies for the governance of populations mutate and metastasize into strange new configurations: biosecurity, biocapital, thanato-politics, speculation, risk, and violence. The contributors document the myriad ways that the old racisms and colonial power relations are re-energized by state and market tactics to govern terrorism, environmental catastrophe, and the global flows of information, people, genes, and viruses. In its prescient identification of these dynamics, *Beyond Biopolitics* gives us a map of life's near-future."—**CATHERINE WALDBY**, co-author of *Tissue Economies: Blood, Organs, and Cell Lines in Late Capitalism*

"These essays by some of today's most exciting and innovative theorists interrogate the connection between biopower and governance from an extraordinarily wide range of perspectives. Together they give us a complex and multifaceted view on the contemporary nature and functioning of power."—**MICHAEL HARDT**, co-author of *Commonwealth*

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THE VISUAL GRAMMAR OF SUFFERING
Pia Lindman and the Performance of Grief

Kriss Ravetto-Biagioli

Pia Lindman is perhaps best known for her *Public Sauna* at P.S.1 in 2000, where she installed a working sauna in an artspace and invited the audience to join in the performance, defying the taboo of nudity in American culture and foregrounding the centrality of the human body in art. Like *Public Sauna,* her more recent work belongs in the tradition of minimalist and community-oriented art. Site-specific in nature, it concerns the relation of the body to public space in everyday life and the broader socio-political issues inscribed in those dynamics. Lindman provokes us to think about how everyday interactions with bodies, architecture, media, and public art affect our sense of self and our experience of social space. By drawing attention to how social interactions are themselves performative, her work also reveals the inherent performativity of making and experiencing art.

Her recent *New York Times* demonstrates the tensions between human gestures of private suffering and the political motivations for monumentalizing personal grief. Lindman has performed *New York Times* in Mexico City, Tokyo, Helsinki, Vienna, Berlin, and most recently at Battery Park, the Vera List Center, and the Luxe Gallery in New York. The actual performance is the last step in a long and complex process of tracing out the mechanics of making and publicizing gestures of grief. Lindman begins by videotaping herself re-enacting some of the 600 photographs of Afghan, American, Iraqi, Sudanese, Palestinian, Israeli, Balinese bodies in pain collected from *The New York Times* from September 2002 to September 2003. She then sketches out her re-enactments (with particular attention to facial expressions and hand gestures) and shares this set of drawings with the audience at the beginning of each public performance. The drawings outline the bodily gestures of grieving captured in the photographs, but are devoid of any feature that would indicate where the image comes from, or whom it depicts. By exhibiting her own sketches of her own re-enactments of the images of grief from *The New York Times* rather than those images themselves, Lindman demonstrates that gestures are not forms of pure expression but interpretations meant to frame information.

On one occasion, Lindman begins her *New York Times* performance dressed in gray and carrying a gray flag to lead a group of spectators through Battery Park, stopping first in front of the National Museum of the American Indian. At the foot of the

museum's marble steps, she pulls out the sketchbook and places them on a simple stand in front of her. Without speaking a word, she then selects one sketch and carefully reconstructs the gesture. First she poses her torso, her head, then her facial expression, and finally her hands, slowly freezing herself into a pose. She spends about ten minutes striking three poses in front of one of the four monumental sculptures that watch over the entrance to the museum. In her third pose she kneels before the statue to the Americas—a colossal feminized gray granite figure that sits with eyes closed and hands peacefully resting on its lap. This monumental woman dwarfs the three figures that crouch alongside it (a Cherokee, an Arawok, and an African-American slave). The juxtaposition of stone and metal sculptures, concrete pavement, and granite buildings to Lindman's gray attire suggests a visual metonymy, yet one that short circuits at the sight of flesh. Lindman bows her head, holding her heart with one hand and stretching her other hand up along the pedestal of the sculpture, as if trying to touch something entombed inside**.** Just as her hand touches the monument, security guards approach to remind her that this is a federal building and it cannot be touched. The audience reacts with a serious, moving silence, as if somehow they were directly witnessing someone else's pain. But it is the gesture of the National Guardsmen removing Lindman from the premises (or at least onto the sidewalk) that reminds us how public acts of grieving can still be seen as politically threatening, especially when a country is at war.

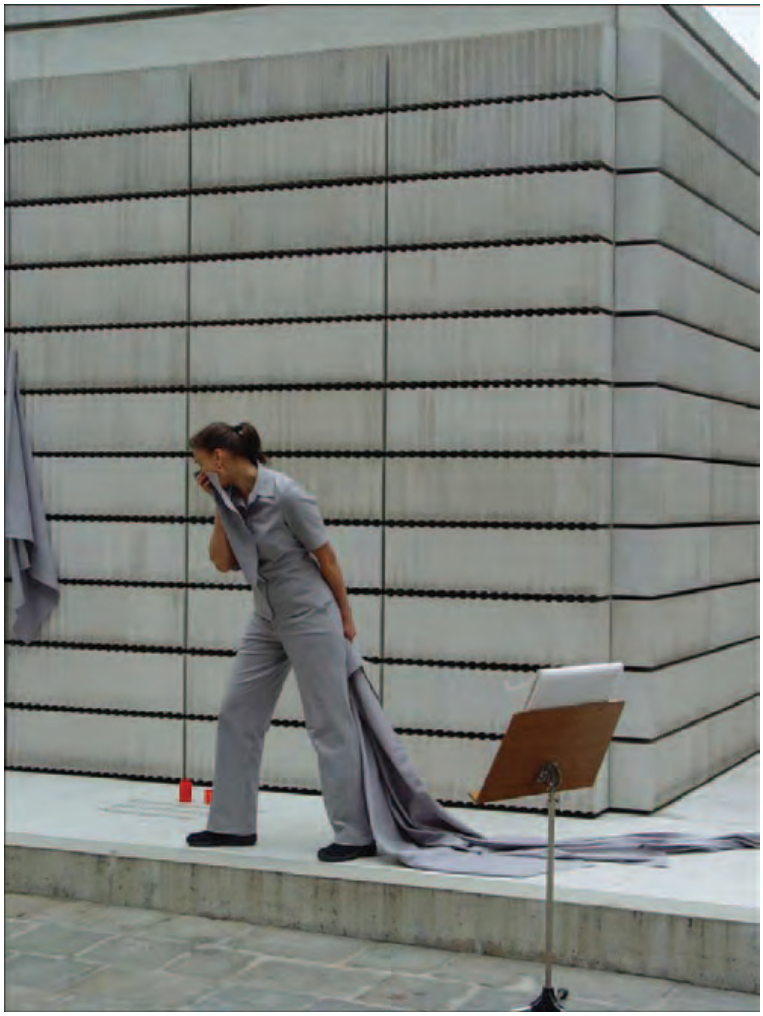
Lindman's gestures, however, are not simple statements about public grief and are not as emotive as the reactions they elicit. Because she takes a few minutes to embody a gesture and less than a minute to hold the pose, the gestures come off as oddly unnatural, though no less unnatural than the museum's own monuments. The immediacy of the gestures is not immediate: the performance requires an exchange of roles between performer and audience, between impression and reception. In order to be understood as a gesture of suffering, the performance must display what Jean-François Lyotard calls the "capacity to be affected by objects by means of sensibility,"[1] that is, it must demonstrate its own capacity for receiving interpretations. The juxtaposition of Lindman's carefully reconstructed gesture of grief to the gray granite sculptures above and the sepia-toned banner (a photographic image of the backs of six Native American men in ceremonial dress) hanging at the entrance of the museum exposes sensibility as an aesthetic feeling rather than an empirical phenomenon. This constitutes what Kant called the "transcendental illusion"—treating presentation as situation. The temporary but visibly orchestrated embodiment of grief draws attention to the emotional manipulation produced by the monumental gestures of suffering embedded in the museum itself. Lindman's performance shows how impressions of grief are ordered and objectified through aesthetic forms.

The sense of pain produced in this performance is only an effect of juxtaposition. There are both similarity and contrast among the sculpture, the images on the banner, and Lindman's re-enacted gesture. On one hand, her pose mirrors the figures of the Native American and the two slaves that lean on the shoulder and huddle at the feet of this seemingly indifferent feminine figuration of the Americas. On the other hand,

it does not participate in the monumentalization and celebration of the Americas, but rather emblematizes the cruelty of colonization: forced labor, slavery, and the extermination of the native peoples. Like the Native Americans represented on the banner, Lindman's back is turned toward the audience, making both her and the Native Americans appear distant, unaware of being watched, and vulnerable. While her gesture makes suffering present, the sepia-toned banner displaces the suffering of the Native Americans into the aesthetics of the historical past, making reference to "authentic" photographs of the "Old West." What is preserved is not just what is captured in the image, but also the sense of loss marked by the photograph—the loss of the very Native Americans it represents. Lindman's pose, instead, makes loss present by performing an explicitly temporary gesture of grief in front of the image that claims its own historical permanence. By demonstrating how gestures, images and monuments are depicted, selected, framed, and situated within urban environments, she reveals how both the sculpture and the banner manufacture the sense of permanence of the past they represent.

Focusing more on the processing of images of grief than on the gestures, her performance incorporates drawings, painstaking rehearsal, and posing. Lindman's gestures become gray signifiers, simultaneously pointing to and problematizing the visual association of suffering with the exposed body. While her gray attire blends with the granite figures, the flesh of her exposed arm and hand calls attention to the fact that the symbolic figure of the Americas is robed with immobile but seemingly flowing garments. In contrast, the suffering peoples who huddle beside her are gray but scantily clad. The proximity of these gestures brings to life a sense of vulnerability embodied in these exposed figures. While they provide a sense of chromatic continuity (gray on gray), the juxtaposition of the performance to the gesture of suffering, as well as to the buildings and the monuments mark the different material relations of power between the global capitalism of neighboring Wall Street, the beige and black uniforms of the museum guards, and the sculptures that use female figures to emblematize continents (but not the peoples) of the Americas, Africa, Asia, and Europe.

Lindman's work involves multiple border crossings by bringing to each performance site gestures of suffering from Europe, Africa, the Middle East, Asia, and the Americas. The effect of such decontextualized gestures is different with every performance as each site is differently enframed by architecture, urban planning, and the power relations ingrained in the social behavior of those who live in these spaces. Her work responds to what Edward Said called the feminization of the other in the practice of Orientalism. But rather than repeating Said's critique of connecting the "Oriental" to the feminine (as a sexualized body), she circumvents the differentiation of gestures of suffering in terms of race, gender and class. Lindman does not deny that Western discourses feminize third world subjects, but challenges notions of identity (whether imperialist or multiculturalist) rooted in difference. As Gilles Deleuze points out, difference does not exist in and of itself but must be related to a preconceived concept of ground.[2] By demonstrating how similar gestures of grief are used to differentiate



Pia Lindman performs *New York Times* in the streets of Vienna. Photo: Courtesy the artist.

victims from victimizers, us from them, or men from women, she shows how such gestures do not mark actual difference but only ground and legitimize pre-existing relations of power by repeating them.

Rather than declare there is no feminism or post-colonialism free of asymmetrical power relations, Lindman makes this asymmetry a central concern of her work.[3] Her embodiments are not offered as political statements, but as questions about how media, architecture, and public art address us, installing us in ideological, imperial, and patriarchal structures in ways that we cannot avert or avoid. She does not address particular site-specific issues, such as genocide or mass rape in Sudan, terrorism, human rights abuses of prisoners in Iraq, etc. Instead she draws on images of people who have suffered abuse or the violent death of loved ones to explore how the representation of vulnerability calls on us to react. I read her work as paralleling the discourse of Judith Butler and Adriana Cavarero who have turned away from arguments based on the notion of feminine experience to explore how any "structure of address" introduces its own "moral authority."[4] Given the international visibility of *The New York Times*—a newspaper that often blurs American national interests with geopolitics—Lindman's *New York Times* performance constitutes a poignant and timely critique of the political use of human gestures by the media.[5]

In the tradition of minimalist performance art, her work resists commodification while exhibiting a nuanced critique of current political issues such as the global effects of the war on terror. Her performance cannot be reduced to a single message, like "the media manipulates the way we perceive grief" or "the media instructs us on how to express grief." Nor do these gestures of suffering reproduce simple dichotomies between the feminization of grief as opposed to the masculinization of power, or between an ephemeral feminine "performative" art and a masculinized object-oriented art. I agree with Peggy Phelan and Amelia Jones that the art world is dominated by male artists and their privileged objects, but find equally problematic the connection of performance art to an essential feminine experience, and the reading of all performance as an attempt to make visible the radical ontology of presence, that is in turn feminized.[6] But if we agree that gender is a performance, then it can only be defined as an act of repetition (as Butler argues) rather than an act of erasure disappearing as soon as it appears, as Phelan instead proposes when she says in "The Ontology of Performance" that: "Performance's only life is in the present. Performance cannot be saved, recorded, documented, or otherwise participate in the circulation of representations of representations: once it does so, it becomes something other than performance."[7]

While concurring with Phelan that performance consists in its commentary on its own medium and that it calls attention to the interaction between itself and its spectators, I do not see how her definition of performance art makes it essentially feminine or transgressive. Her definition of performance art is tautological, replacing art with life and femininity with disappearance or non-subjectivity.[8] Lindman's work engages feminist arguments like Phelan's and Jones's that performance art does not allow for the formation of any stable subject position, but does not do so on

account of the uniqueness of the performance itself. Because her embodiments are simultaneously performative and documentary, they challenge theories of gender differences that end up essentializing gender. She purposefully puts sexual identity in a gray zone, questioning arguments that attribute feminine experience to radical ontological presence and spectatorship to an oppressive (if not formative) male gaze that objectifies it so as to fix bodies into a space governed by male hegemony.

The process of objectification—of a woman into an image through the male gaze, or of someone who suffers into a victim—is, as Samuel Weber argues, tantamount to an attempt of the subject "to set or bring things before itself to fix them in place and then to declare the truth of objectivity is thereby determined as its capacity to fix and secure the subject."[9] By stripping gestures of trauma and grief from their contexts, Lindman demonstrates how the repeated embodiment of affective gestures does not reaffirm stable subject positions. Dislodging gestures from contexts, she upsets the translation of emotions into identifiable gestures; into a telos designed to fix and secure subjects. No stable identities form in her performances to establish relations between victims and victimizers, between events and their geopolitical consequences.

Lindman does not see performance art as a self-conscious phenomenological experience (of being a woman), but as a coding of experience as affect. Her embodiments examine the various political investments inscribed in visualizing and publicizing emotional expression. Instead of disclosing how we perform gender, she reveals how we perform our grief. She outlines the processes by which gestures are generated: from the media's representation of bodies in pain to the selection and framing of pain "that's fit to print." She also asks us to think about how media aesthetics affects the way people learn how to perform their grief (as Marcel Mauss did concerning bodily gestures). Hers are not performances of an authentic immediate experience (using the body as evidence of some truth), but a process that is methodical, thoughtful, and reflective about the artificiality of what is conventionally presented as immediate.

Lindman's embodiments express multiple possible relations between time and space: the time of a site-specific performance, the moment caught in the photograph, its displacement onto the front page of the newspaper, the framing of the image, the staging of the image next to monuments and memorials, the time and space of suffering, remembering and grieving. Such repetitions and juxtapositions of gestures connect the uniqueness and vulnerability of sentient bodies to their abstractions, what Butler calls the dehumanized image of suffering, and what Cavarero calls the generalization of ideology that divorces politics from reality.[10] Rather than treat the body as discursive (that is, as performing social critique), Lindman's work instantiates the public dimensions of the body, its materiality, vulnerability and relations to other bodies. The vulnerability of the body to violence, abstraction, aestheticization, and enframing puts the notion of the bounded individual into crisis. Butler says that the exposure of such vulnerability places us outside of ourselves or beside ourselves with grief or rage. Lindman exposes this space and time between violence and vulnerability.

New York Times engages with media criticism, photography's relationship to the aesthetics of reality, the use of photographs as documents, and also theories about the theatricality of human gestures. Lindman's performances reveal (through staging) the processes that turn expression into meaning. The performance is clearly repetitive: over and over she selects an image of suffering, rehearses it, and strikes a pose. These reiterations of gestures emphasize the media's constant use of images of suffering to illustrate events, focusing particularly on their political and emotional coding. Gestures of kneeling in prayer, clutching one's heart, covering one's eyes, saluting dead fathers, brothers and sisters, holding pictures, flags, guns, and dead loved ones are all placed next to each other. Lindman's repeated embodiment of disparate gestures of grieving calls attention to how the media's recycling of images of suffering seems to suggest that one gesture can be exchanged with another, and that any gesture can be taken from one context and placed into another. While the repetition of gestures likens one to the other, the juxtaposition of one unrelated gesture after another produces and effect of difference, a difference between the gesture of suffering and the environment in which it is situated.

In one such embodiment she pulls out a gray stick out of her bag of props, handles it carefully, and brandishes it as a militant would a machine gun that is not meant for use, but only for show. The stick, as the gun once was, is held at waist level pointing toward the ground. In each of the three occasions I have seen her perform this particular gesture, her stance is almost identical: the stick is held over her right hip, which is rotated a bit forward, her legs are parted, her body erect, and her head is slightly tilted back in anguish. But even if the stance is identical, the effect is not. When performed next to the lady liberty impersonators that stand on wooden platforms in Battery Park so tourists can take their picture next to them this gesture evokes a completely different response then when performed next to *The Immigrants* sculpture in Battery Park, or between the two panels of José Clemente Orozco's mural at the New School—the *Struggle in the Orient* and *Gandhi and Imperialism*. Lindman's gestures, then, are both symmetrical and asymmetrical to each other.

She reveals two distinct but simultaneous types of repetition. When performed next to *The Immigrants* in Battery Park, the gesture of holding the gun disrupts both the gesture of suffering and the gesture embodied in the sculpture. The aggressive gesture of militancy and grieving seem to guard and mourn the multi-cultural group of immigrants celebrated in the sculpture. But it is not clear whether this is a gesture to protect or quarantine immigrants as Others. For instance, when performed next to the Statue of Liberty impersonators, this same gesture comments on American intervention throughout the globe—to "make it safe for democracy"—and on the reaction to such intervention by foreign militant groups; this gesture also comments on gender roles. Lindman dressed in gray unisex clothes brandishing a stick (as she would a gun), appears as a militant woman or a women dressed as a militant man. But when placed next to the three green-faced Lady Liberties (performed by men in drag), this gesture of militancy becomes a parody of stereotypical gender roles. Parody, however, does not stop at simple role reversals since it becomes less

Top left: Lindman performing in front of the Korean War Memorial at Battery Park; Bottom right: Lindman in front of the East Coast Memorial for Coast Guard casualties in WWII at Battery Park. Photos: Daniel Marzona. Courtesy the artist.

Top: Lindman performing *New York Times* for the Vera List Center in the Orozco Room at the New School; Bottom: Lindman in front of "The Immigrants" at Battery Park. Photos: Amanda Matles. Courtesy the artist.

clear why militancy should be inherently masculine, or why democracy should be emblematized by a female figure.

While the repetition of gestures produces a disjuncture between their instantiation and the conceptual framework from which they emerged, they also produce something in excess of the ideas they were meant to express. What emerges is both a critical reflection on subjectivity and identity politics, and the repeated displacement of images into ideologically charged narratives. Such repetitions undermine the construction of stable subject positions, re-envisioning what we take for truth as a special effect or pure affect. The repetition of such diverse gestures in one specific place (in front of monuments, murals, or in a gallery) calls into question their authenticity as embodiments of suffering. This does not mean that Lindman treats the image of someone's grief with irreverence. She is remarkably faithful to the gesture she embodies, taking a long time to study it and to strike its pose, but she also demonstrates how the gesture itself is recyclable, exchangeable, and consumable—that it has political use-value. She makes "public" images of trauma and suffering. By embodying them next to monuments, murals, and memorials, Lindman recalls the suffering of both those who are memorialized by the image, the mural or monument itself, and those who grieve their absence. Yet this juxtaposition of image to monument, memorial, mural, and gallery suggests that the image and the gesture are also monuments, memorials, and commodities.

Contrary to Bill Viola's *Passions* (a recent series of video installations that link the expression of suffering to iconic Medieval and Renaissance paintings to intensify the affect of emotion), Lindman does not represent human suffering as much as she calls attention to the gestures of grief, loss, and trauma that have themselves become iconic. Rather than trying to capture some ephemeral moment outside of time, she demonstrates how such gestures are timely and point to the external manifestation of trauma or grief rather than to an internal expression. The images in *The New York Times* constitute an instruction book on the aesthetics and visual grammar of gestures of grieving, but Lindman's work questions the translation of personal suffering into a universal image of suffering. As she puts it: "the universality of the expressions of grief we observe in the public media does not derive from the direct human response to individual internal processes via culture, but from a response to the *mise en scène* created by the presence of the camera—the mobile media machinery units on the sites of disasters."[11] This "opportunity"—being at the right place at the right time—may look like a random event, but comes equipped with its own structure of address, its own aesthetics of capturing the moment. It is the aesthetic of suffering that poses an ethical problem concerning how or whether photographs of trauma and grief should be used to illustrate events. "Media ethics" seamlessly slips into violence when the specificity of events are misread as generalized political positions that embrace "any means necessary" to achieve pre-established ends. It is the imposition of exclusionary ethics that renders judgments indifferent to those individuals who are most vulnerable. Lindman's processing of images into generalized gestures (but ones that are once again embodied within a unique situation)

calls attention to how gestures themselves translate a unique sentient experience into a generalized form.

Ironically, it is the generalized and sentimental form of suffering on the front page of the newspaper that, Susan Sontag maintains, will produce "a grammar and ethics of seeing."[12] But in her more recent *Regarding the Pain of Others*, she argues that: "certain emblems of suffering can be used like memento mori, as objects of contemplation to deepen one's sense of reality; as secular icons."[13] These icons are not simply an "invitation to reflect and learn," but an obligation to act. Sontag's call for an ethical response to the image of the Other's suffering seems to draw on Emmanuel Levinas's argument that all suffering is useless, and that we have an ethical obligation to the suffering of the Other.[14] But instead of exposing political and ideological biases and forcing us to think about what is ideologically and politically at stake, the media asks us to respond emotionally. This results in a hyper-valuation of private suffering, to the point that private psychological trauma replaces political consciousness. Politics is no longer conceived as the field where human freedom is unfurled (as it was for Hannah Arendt), but is reduced to the field of secular icons of suffering bodies.

In *Camera Lucida*, Roland Barthes observes that the subject (whether the nation, the individual self, or the Other) is "doomed by (well meaning) photography always to have an expression; the body never finds its zero degree . . . ."[15] There is always already a gesture that makes the body readable not in particular, but in general terms—namely, aesthetics, and their historical, moral, and political associations. Making images readable involves the disjuncture between description and prescription. The photograph is "invaded by language at the very moment that it is looked at: in memory, in association, snatches of words and images continually intermingle and exchange for the other."[16] This invasion marks the transformation of the figure (without words, history or narrative meaning) into a sign (something with meaning) that then becomes an icon for an event. But here we cannot forget the role of the medium, the newspaper whose contents are forms of exchange predicated on consumption value (infotainment) and on censure that prohibits information that would damage its interests.

In this sense, Lindman's *New York Times* can be seen as a challenge to the media's spectacularizing of September 11th in stark contrast to the lived experience of many New Yorkers. Her response to "the usurpation of the representations of public mourning via the media for the purposes of justification of war" was one of indignation, questioning "who has the right to define how Americans, Palestinians, Israelis, or any other individuals affected by terrorism should grieve and who has the right to make those gestures of grievance public and official."[17] The journalistic photograph lies precariously between empirical evidence (the witnessing of the Other's pain) and outright propaganda (the manipulating the way we see). The image also cultivates a public awareness of the plight of the Other. It constitutes public taste and the aesthetics of Otherness. In the process, it tells us not only who the Other is, but how

to read the Other. Through an intricate process of identification, "we" are addressed as a virtual subject and then are asked to witness "events," experience these "events" by proxy, and ultimately react to such "events" by giving consensus.

Lindman's work reveals both the politics and the theatricality of photojournalism. Her repetitive gestures question how photojournalism simultaneously gives a "human face" to events while decontextualizing actual bodies, a decontextualization that freezes them in space and time. Photojournalism turns images of people into a virtual body (a pre-determined one) that can be installed in an unlimited number of politically and morally charged discourses. But Lindman shows that because these images arrest a moment, separate it from the here and now, and then reproduce it within multiple contexts, they cannot be stilled (made to represent one unique expression or experience). She marks the ambivalent site between violent acts and their separation from the here and now in the form of an image, which is already a form of interpretation. This "human face" is reduced to a "reality effect" for the purpose of augmenting the ideologically charged interpretation of events.

There is nothing unique to the media's monumentalization of bodies in pain. Memorials and museums do the same. Lindman's performances, in fact, uncover the political consciousness embedded in the spaces we inhabit, and how these spaces reflect their own violent framing of human bodies. For example, when she stops in front of the iron eagle perched atop a dark gray granite block memorializing Coast Guard casualties in WWII, her gestures of suffering call into question both the gesture of the sculpture and the environment in which it is situated**.** In the last pose she strikes in front of the iron eagle her body seems to abandon itself to suffering: arms are flung open slightly behind the shoulder line, and the head is tossed back. Yet the juxtaposition of this particular embodiment with the eagle makes the American icon appear as a bird of prey swooping down from the monuments of industrial capital (the buildings of Wall Street that loom in the background), and closing in on the gesture of suffering performed by Lindman. Her gesture imitates the form of both the bird and the buildings: her arms are open like the wings of the bird, stretched out between the two Wall Street buildings. But Lindman's gesture of arms flung wide in distress calls attention to the disjuncture between the pained gestures she embodies, the gestures to industrial capital inscribed in the architecture of Wall Street, and the gesture of American nationalism embodied in the eagle.

It is not just photojournalistic images and human gestures, but urban environments that call on us to react. Lindman's performance too interpolates us, but not like a photograph in *The New York Times*. It does not oblige us to respond to the Other's suffering. What is ironic about her gestures is that they are more than familiar, and yet not easily placeable. We cannot tell where they come from or whom they designate. Even when we attempt to project our own sentimental interpretation onto them, this sentiment has no subject, object, or Other, nor any ethical or political teleology to follow.

Lindman performing *New York Times* in front of the Memorial for the Merchant Marines at Battery Park. Photo: Daniel Marzona. Courtesy the artist.

Responses to Lindman's embodiments reveal how perception slips into interpretation. Photojournalism, as Don Slater puts it, "marks very clearly the constant pressure to move from a sense of vision as the route to knowledge, to experience as [a form of] cultural appropriation."[18] Her embodiments of grieving explore how gestures of suffering (found in photographs), of heroic sacrifice (embodied in monuments), and of urbanization (embodied in buildings) are only readable in their immediate context. Her gestures at the Korean War Monument, for example, visualize the conspicuous presence and absence of bodies**.** The penumbra of the missing soldier is marked by a metal outline into a granite obelisk, while the presence of Lindman's body is momentarily frozen into a gesture of grief. The effect is one of interruption, both of the monument's heroic gesture and of any singular emotional reading of Lindman's performance. Both appear to be displaced gestures: one of enduring heroics and sacrifice embedded in the monument: and the other of fleeting yet multiple gestures of suffering.

But these gestures cannot stand apart from the frames of reference in which they have emerged. Each gesture defers to something else to give it meaning. The gesture of loss defers to and is given meaning by suffering, while sacrifice is given meaning through the triumphal monuments built by an industrial, military, and financial power. At the same time they mark radical differences: the ephemeral presence of suffering in the media, the repetitiveness of suffering, the aesthetics of suffering, the aesthetics of monuments, the repetitiveness of monuments, and the monumental presence of absence which defers its sense of loss to a triumphant ideal. By juxtaposing embodied gestures to monuments, buildings and urban landscapes, her performance interrupts any one possible reading of the relationship of gestures of pain to memorials and the power they represent.

Lindman's performances offer us a way of rethinking how we ground discourses about Others on notions of difference. By focusing on repetition rather than difference, Lindman's performances do not allow any subject position to form. She shows that gestures or emotional expression cannot be immediate. Involving interpretation and perception, they cannot be construed as authentic. Without stable ground to determine identity, the difference between actors and situations dissolve. What is left is the theatricality of political gestures that seek to conceal themselves in the image of someone else's pain. By exposing the process of making bodies readable Lindman reveals that affects (emotional gestures) and perceptions (the reading of those gestures) are only perceivable through gesture (affect). She lays bare the processes involved in turning lived experiences, events and sensations into forms of representation. More than simply reminding us about the manipulation of images and gestures into representations, her work makes us think about the way we consume images, make gestures, interpret events, and even how we can make political and feminist art.

NOTES

1. Jean-François Lyotard, *The Differend: Phrases in Dispute*, translated by Georges Van Den Abbeele. Minneapolis: Minnesota University Press, 1988, 61.

2. Gilles Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, translated by Paul Patton. New York: Colombia University Press, 1994, 66.

3. See Indrepal Grewal and Caren Kaplin, "Warrior Marks: Global Womanism's Neo-Colonial Discourse in a Multicultural Context." *Camera Obscura* 39 (1996): 5–33.

4. Judith Butler, *Precarious Life: The Powers of Mourning and Violence*. New York: Verso, 2004, 130.

5. The credibility of the *Times* has been in question in the wake of the editors' public apology for their sensationalized reporting on weapons of mass destruction in Iraq and its controversial treatment of Judith Miller's involvement in the Valerie Plame Wilson case.

6. Amelia Jones claims: "The artist must be embodied as male in order to be considered an artist—placed with a (patri)lineage as originary and divinely inspired—but his embodiment (his particularity as a gendered and otherwise vulnerable, immanent subject) must be hidden to ensure his transcendence *as* disembodied and divinely inspired." See Amelia Jones, *Body Art: Performing the Subject*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1998, and Peggy Phelan, "The Ontology of Performance," in *Unmarked: The Politics of Performance*. New York: Routledge, 1993.

7. Phelan, 148.

8. See Philip Auslander, *Liveness: Performance in a Mediatized Culture*. New York: Routledge, 1999. Auslander explores how the concept of "liveness" has been confounded with "realness," and questions Phelan's claim that performance art is a unique ontological experience. Instead he claims that early television exhibits similar qualities. See also Bert O. States, "Performance as Metaphor." *Theatre Journal* 48,1 (1996): 1–26. He argues that: "Phelan's notion of performance seems to come down to a thematic matter, rather than to an ontological one . . . ." (12).

9. Samuel Weber, *Mass Mediauras: From Technics to Media*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996, 48–49.

10. See Judith Butler's *Giving Account of Oneself*. New York: Fordham University Press, 2005, and Adriana Cavarero's *Scene di un Massacro* (forthcoming Enaudi), 71 of the manuscript. Cavarero argues that the "I" is not a unitary subject closed upon itself, but a set of relations. She suggests that we disband with the term "We" that includes the gesture of speaking in the name of others (an abstraction of immediate relations), in favor of focusing only the I/you relation.

11. Pia Lindman, "The New York Times, Art and Affect: Re-enactments in grey-scale." In *Art in the Age of Terrorism*, edited by Graham Coulter-Smith and Maurice Owen. New York: Paul Holberton, 2006, 87.

12. Susan Sontag, *On Photography*. New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 1973, 3. She distinguishes between two types of knowledge: one analytical, ethical, and political, and the other a cynical form of sentimentalism. Here she argues that the photograph is cynical and sentimental. Although she later notes that "photographs cannot create a moral position, but they can reinforce one," she claims that "exceptional" photographs like those of the Nazi camps have "gained the status of ethical reference points," that maintain their emotional charge (17–21).

13. Sontag, *Regarding the Pain of Others*. New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 2003, 119. In this book Sontag shifts from an earlier analytical approach to photography as an act of non-intervention, to a later one of bearing witness and serving as a medium for a more ethical type of watching, which involves "coming close to the intimate pain of others," and "letting the atrocious images haunt us" (115).

14. See Emmanuel Levinas, "Useless Suffering." In *Entre nous,* translated by Michael B. Smith and Barbara Harshav. New York: Columbia University Press, 1998. He argues that the suffering body is the ultimate source of moral value, the response to bodily suffering, the ultimate test of moral responsibility.

15. Roland Barthes, *Camera Lucida*, translated by Richard Howard. New York: Noonday, 1980, 12.

16. Victor Burgin, "Seeing Sense." *Artforum* XVIII (February 1980): 62–65.

17. Lindman, 84.

18. Don Slater, "Photography and Modern Vision." In *Visual Culture*, edited by Chris Jenks. New York: Routledge, 1995, 232.

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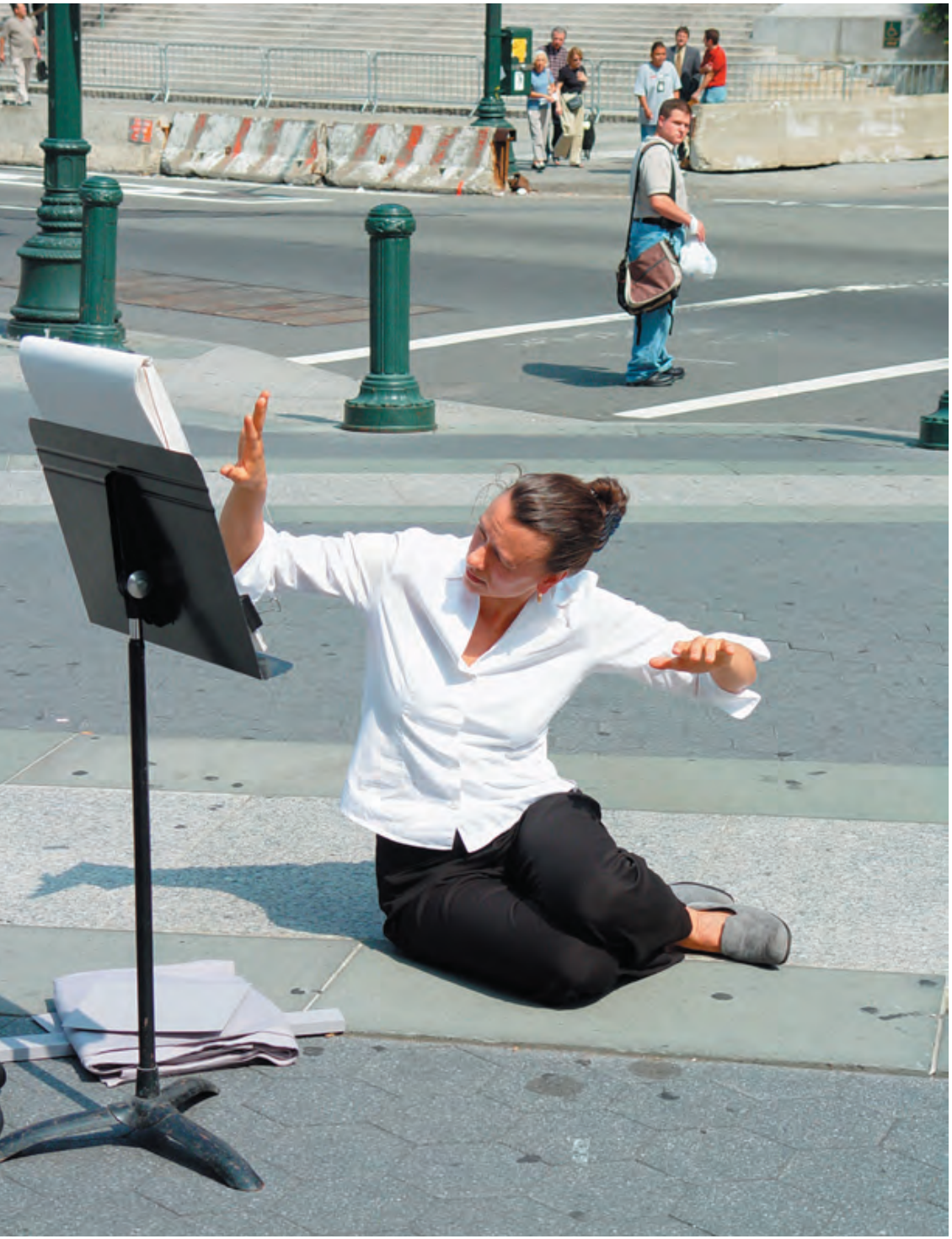

The New York Times, Monuments, Art and Affect: Re-enactments in grey-scale

Pia Lindman

I believe in the impact lived experience as such has on people—involving all of its materiality, embodiments, and acts. By performing re-enactments of various social forms of human life, I inhabit life. I hope to engage art as an experience, which has the potential of forcing re-evaluations and a re-processing of life. I will in the following outline a conceptual framework for my series of art works in progress about gestures I perceive to be expressing human relationships based on affect. I will then investigate in depth one of these projects, the *New York Times 09/02-09/03*.

SOCIAL ORDERS OF AFFECT

With my recent work on gestures I explore the various tactics human beings employ to situate the 'Self' in orders that organize, value, and signify the reality surrounding us. This is not only an issue of identity, but rather of its tactical partitioning and enactment, deployed to make the 'Self' attach to the surrounding order, to fit and even hide within the order.

The first work in this series was the *New York Times 09/02-09/03*. This work is a series re-enacted gestures, based on images I collected off the pages of The New York Times depicting people grieving. In these images, a grieving individual is simultaneously in the middle of global political events and in the flashlights/focus of the media. In this situation, the individual will make an appearance of himself available for framing: fit the 'Self' into the order of public media and photography. The 'making oneself fit' is a process I believe the individual participates in partly actively, partly passively. The situation is being recognized by the individual to be calling for certain responses. The individual is passive in respect to the situation, he does not create the situation, nor seek to change it, but will simply respond to it by performing—actively—one of the appropriate identities available to him.[1]

The second project I have realized along these lines is *Corpcomm*, in which the employees of a corporation direct me as I re-enact their everyday gestures in the office. These gestures are not based on my observations, but rather on the way the employees perceive themselves to be performing them, as they go about doing their work. Through *Corpcomm*, I explored the tactics of employees to situate their 'Self' in the order of the corporation, and in a larger sense, in the order of global capital.

PREVIOUS PAGE Pia Lindman, ***New York Times*** performance, Foley Square downtown Manhattan in front of the Freedom of Expression National Monument, New York **ABOVE** and **OPPOSITE** ***New York Times*** performance, Maria Theresien Platz, Vienna

The third project, scheduled to be shown in Jamaica Center for Arts and Learning in Queens, NY, in January 2006, is *Worship* (a working title): Queens is perhaps the most diverse of the boroughs of New York City and consequently hosts a multiplicity of different religions and systems of belief. By visiting houses of worship in Jamaica, Queens, I aim to learn the various gestures that are used within religious ceremonies or that the worshippers make as a reaction to their experiences at these ceremonies. Through these gestures worshippers enact their belonging or, perhaps, longing to belong, to the envisioned spiritual connection, i.e. the order of the spiritual.

Affect is an important dynamic in all of these relationships; an emotional trigger that assures us that we exist in this particular world. More so, the trigger prompts us to enact the appropriate 'Self' as well as experience ourselves as that 'Self' in the order we are encountering at that particular time. Social behaviorists explain socialization processes

by showing us how children learn to feel an emotion by first learning to enact the physical manifestation of the emotion. I understand the distinction between emotion and affect by this socialization process; affect is the reciprocal relationship between a person and his social environment and is based on social conventions[2]. Emotion need not necessarily refer to anything but itself. However, if the emotion has not entered language, it may then also be something of which the person feeling it is not aware[3]. This emotion could be called emergent, because it has not yet, but may be about to, enter consciousness. Affect and the assertion of the 'Self' prompt the question of subjectivity. Psychoanalysts and especially the Lacanian tradition of psychoanalytical practice stress the importance of language and the speaking subject in the process of subject formation. Equally, in traditions of Western philosophy, as explained by Giorgio Agamben (Agamben 1999),[4] subjectivity is understood to be what remains of the constant process of subjectification and desubjectification, in which the act of speaking, the utterance of 'I' is of essence. In the process of conceptualizing and creating this work, I have come to suggest that there indeed exists something between the verbal and the being of the uninscribed body[5] that is visualized by my work. Gestures are simultaneously both enunciations of one's biological existence outside the verbal *and* linguistic. Albeit gestures may be understood as a kind of a language, they nevertheless pertain very closely to the personal experiences of one's body and to some degree may be manifesting something of it that never enters the realm of verbal language. Michel Foucault's ideas of bio-power may explain how these

ABOVE and OPPOSITE Pia Lindman, *New York Times* performance, window display at a New York gallery.

manifestations of subjectivity maintained in the realm of the body are systematized and politicized. In making my artwork, I collect, re-enact, and re-trace a repertoire of human gestures. This process opens up possibilities for an analysis of bio-power at work[6]. In repeating these gestures—consciously and studiously—I emphasize the linguistic quality of the repertoire. However, these enactments—as they are indeed embodiments—also maintain their quality as enunciations within the realm of the body and thus something of the uninscribed body is rendered visible. This may make it available to us to look at a process of subject formation that is taking place without language.

THE NEW YORK TIMES, 09/02-09/03

My work on grief started with a personal experience of a major public disaster, the attacks on the World Trade Center in the year 2001 in New York City. The spontaneous personal and collective processes of mourning were very visible, intense, and omnipresent in the city after the World Trade Center collapsed. This shared process, that took place in the streets, parks, and squares of New York City, helped me live through my imminent fears and sense of bereavement. I am sure I am not alone in this experience. In indignation of the usurpation of the representations of this mourning via the media for the purposes of justification of war, I asked myself: Who has the right to define how Americans, Palestinians, Israelis, or any other individuals affected by terrorism should grieve and who has the right to make those gestures of grievance public and official? My further exploration through my New York Times project showed me how this is a futile question indeed.

The scene is set before the question can ever enter onto the stage.

In the spring 2002, eight months after the attack, I was invited to participate in an art residency program in the World Financial Center[7]. World Financial Center is the building complex right next to the ruins of the World Trade Center. In my residency, I observed people in the environment as they were interacting with the transforming architecture, human flow, and the overarching sense of history in process. These interactions were further made complex by the mix of various groups of people having very different motivations to visit the site. There were the employees of the various companies located in the World Financial Center, who were gradually returning to work and to the site after experiencing almost unendurable trauma on the day of the attacks. There were the myriads of tourists from elsewhere in the United States and from all over the world, coming to the site to have their own personal 'brushing' with this history. If not antagonism, at least tension was evident between the two differing groups of people. In the public spaces in the World Financial Center, opaque white plastic covered all the windows that opened up to the smoldering site of the disaster. As long as the site was declared a 'rescue and recovery site'—which meant that it was likely that remains of people were still being recovered—public authorities would not allow any visual connection between the general public and the site. In frustration, many visitors had pried and scratched the surface of the plastic in hopes to obtain even the smallest glimpse of the ruinous pit. However, less than two months after the attacks, a viewing platform designed by architects Diller and Scofidio was built on site for the use of the general public. The almost scopo-necrophiliac urge was substituted with a publicly controlled ritual. The viewing platform offered both the possibility for reiterating the spectacular and

a place for mourning and reconciliation with a trauma. Here, the act of viewing is perhaps better described as a moment to witness. It seemed not so important to see the site, rather there was a need to symbolically bear witness to it, and to there execute some sort of ceremony, however small. As a facilitation of these personal acts of mourning, the viewing platform itself was the architectural and collective gesture of mourning. In first response to this site at this particular moment in history, I made a video portrait of the viewing platform, which was later shown in the plasma screens in the public spaces of the World Financial Center.

In June 2002, the site was declared a 'construction site' and the visual impediments, as well as the viewing platform, were removed and a wholly new organization of spectatorship, memory, and site developed. Again, ritual was replaced with a search for the spectacular: cameras came out and the pit became as if a monument against which family members posed. Guided tours targeting tourists were based on detailed legends blending in official history and personal experiences. These legends were retold by the guides in street corners, next to piles of rubble, and even next to the plasma screens showing the video of the viewing platform, which now had become part of the memorialized past.

GRIEVING PROCESSES AND PUBLIC MEDIA

Observing the various grieving processes at the World Financial Center—and indeed, all of the moments I describe in the previous passage are grieving processes—I have seen in practice how emotional response in a social context does not directly correspond to the bodily functions producing an emergent emotion. In order to give these emergent emotions shape, to communicate them to the world and ourselves, we enact them by cultural forms. Furthermore, if the expressions become meaningful to others only as cultural shapes, an individual's emotions may take on a 'life' of their own; they are given form and direction within a society that are dependent on its structures, rather than on the individual's personal experience[8]. This is how personal emotion at the point of its emergence to consciousness is—as Althusser states it—always already socially constructed, an affect, and political. In highly publicized traumas the media captures personal expressions and transforms them into public collective performances that may be used by opportunist authorities to promote their political goals. Within the functions of the biological body we can imagine a moment between emotion, its coming into consciousness, and affect, i.e., emotion based on social conventions. This moment can be a process in time. It is in the concentrated intimacy between oneself and one's biological self that one is supposed to learn how one feels or thinks about something[9]. In a situation where personal and public collide to become a joint performance for television cameras, this moment is squashed and emotion is short circuited into affect. One is made to feel before one has been able to present the emotion for oneself. In performing one's affects in the public in this way, the concerns are with the audience and the repertoire is a given. However, the uninscribed body that one is trying to fit into

the social order by the grieving process is left uncommunicated. Some observed reactions from the audience seeing my work suggest that the work opens up a possibility for reprocessing this lost moment of emotion.

I have now looked at how personal emotions become public performance—especially when framed by public media, which has participated in creating a contemporary culture of grief (and of other emotional processes rendered collective). We may very well talk about cultures of affect. Public media also partakes in transforming the personal into fake universalism, which at first glance may seem to be bringing together diverse cultures under the umbrella of universal human emotions[10]. However, the universality of the expressions of grief we observe in the public media does not derive from the direct human response to individual internal processes via culture, but from a response to the *mise en scène* created by the presence of the camera—or more precisely, the mobile media machinery units on the sites of disasters. This *scene* sets the emotional responses before anything else may happen and invites site-specific performances, however, only specific to the media company that happens to be recording and broadcasting at that moment. The media company stakes out the parameters of the site, chooses the elements to be used to obtain the effect and meaning that is sought after. The actors are equally chosen and posited within the frame, even though the actor may be any passer by.

THE COLLECTING AND RE-ENACTING OF THE REPERTOIRE

To engage these issues by ways of art, I collected images from the New York Times, from issues published between September 2002 and September 2003. Eliciting the bodily gestures out of the news context I made drawings/diagrams of these gestures by tracing them with pencil on vellum. The images ranged from mourners in the aftermath of the World Trade Center, terrorist attacks in Israel, funerals of Palestinians, Chechnyans being attacked by Russians or vice versa, to African American teenagers killed by police. Using these drawings as my 'instructions', I re-enacted the gestures in front of a video camera without revealing their original context.

I have not invested the re-enactments with emotion, nor have I interpreted the enactment as an actor would perhaps do. I simply wanted to repeat the physical gesture with my own body as accurately as I could. I then printed out my poses of these gestures from stills of the video recordings. I traced by pencil on vellum almost four hundred stills. By exhibiting both the tracings and the re-enactments, I aim to illuminate some of the relationships between a photograph, its mediation, and the idea of original content, in this instance human emotional reaction to terrorism. The video of the re-enactments is titled *Lakonikon* and the drawings edited and composed in several books are titled *Black Square*. The *Lakonikon* video shows me adjusting and seeking out the correct gesture, sometimes painstakingly slowly, and often evoking comic aspects of the process. Then there is that moment when I

ABOVE Pia Lindman, *New York Times* performance, Vienna
OPPOSITE Pia Lindman, pencil drawings from *New York Times* performances.

'strike' the pose and stay in it for twenty seconds or so. This difference between the construction of the pose and the pose itself suggest an almost Brechtian interruption in the logic of representation of emotion[11]. By decontextualizing every single image I worked with and by bringing each of the gesturing human bodies to the same scale and similar form of—laconic—representation, I attempted to discard as much of the politics of affect of photographic representation as possible and instead analyze the gestural repertoire of grief.[12] It was foreseeable that the politics of affect of social conventions and identities of the viewers would emerge—perhaps even more than when comparing images in The New York Times. What I had not foreseen, however, was how the simple pencil line drawings of myself became almost like empty containers, depositums, creating room for emotional investment by the viewer, something I perceive all but lost by the browsing of one's daily newspaper over breakfast, or better yet, the flow of multiple images and crawling texts on today's hyper-mediated television or computer screen. I mentioned earlier in this text that my audience finds opportunity to reprocess lost moments of emotion with my artwork. These drawings are the very site for that process.

PUBLIC PERFORMANCE

After re-enacting in front of a video camera in my studio, I have now moved into the public space and perform the re-enactments live. The locations of my performances have varied, and range from a window display at a New York gallery to Foley Square in downtown Manhattan in front of the Freedom of Expression National Monument[13].

In November 2004 in Austria, I took the audience on a guided tour through downtown Vienna and performed for approximately five minutes in front of each monument we visited. The itinerary traverses points of interest suggesting the societal interconnectedness of religion, genocide, corporate capitalism, oil, global market, imperialism, charity, and policing. Among others, I performed next to the medieval monastery of Schottenstift[14], Rachel Whiteread's Holocaust Memorial on Judenplatz, a view of the OPEC Head Quarters[15], Maria Theresien Platz and Fountain[16], and a memorial for policemen killed while on duty[17].

I consciously framed myself by the monuments and allowed a dramatic dynamic to emerge between my gesturing body and the various motives of the monuments. I see these monuments as potential containers of collective emotions and memories and my aim is to set them in process. Most often the collective emotional and social process needed to come to grips with an historic event (which always also means trauma, however victorious it might seem from a narrow perspective) to the point that we may seriously speak about healing, is replaced with public authorities seeking to package the event into an aesthetic modality informed by myths of heroism, national unity, victory, etc[18]. By the erection of monuments, official history closes the arteries of a healing process on an individual, but socially shared level. However, as I stated before, the monument is a potential container of collective memories and emotions: by performing the gestures of grief I aim to bring into relief the irony of my mimesis against the containment and stasis of the monument, effecting an unraveling of the sincerity and authority—the inhibition—of the monument. Take for example the enactments I performed at the Schottenstift monastery. I chose to perform next to a relief depicting Heinrich II Jasomirgott, the 1155 founder of the monastery. The King is looking down on a subject kneeling in front of him. I tried to locate myself in the trajectory of the gaze of the King, thus animating the social and political relationships embedded in the motives of the relief and forcing a contemporaneity onto them. Performing next to the Maria Theresien Fountain made my point even clearer. I re-enacted gestures in close proximity of the equestrian statue on the fountain. My arms gesticulated in similar manner as the statue's, however, my gestures were temporal and showed a variety of gestures from contemporary media imagery. The variety makes it clear that none of the gestures we see—neither the statue's nor mine—can be placed in any order of preference, hierarchy, or appropriateness. There is always a possibility of yet another interpretation of what the gestures represent and to what event they refer. There is a multitude of experiences and narratives that may be imagined as the context to my performance as well the performance of the statue.

FROM MONUMENTS TO WINDOW DISPLAYS

My friends and I followed closely the only non-cable TV-channel still operating in New York City after the tower with the broadcast antennas

had collapsed. Mayor Giuliani appeared almost every hour to report on the situation in the city. I remember him distinctly telling all New Yorkers to not let terrorism take effect, but to go out, go to a Broadway play, a favorite restaurant, book store, etc. In other words, he asked us to continue consuming. At the same time, a New York City government website urged us to stay indoors, tape our windows, and if we had to venture out, wear particle masks.

The monument inhibits collective social and emotional processes from unravelling in public, at least in ways uncontrolled by public authorities. Another social order that captures collective social and emotional processes is consumerism. It offers multiple *scenes*, mainly in the retail store and various advertisement venues, one of which is perhaps the oldest public stage of this social order of desire and lifestyle identities: the sidewalk and the window display. Performing my New York Times re-enactments in window displays is in a similar manner as next to the monuments an effort to set the locked relationship based on affect between a consumer and his or her objects of desire into process.

Consumer culture has appropriated photography as one its most effective tools for creating affect. Photography also functions as a trace/evidence, perhaps, but it is not the trace-quality of the photograph that makes the full meaning of that evidence. I stated earlier in this text that the media sets the *scene* at a site of trauma. We respond to this *scene*, not the trauma itself. The way in which we have already learned to understand photographs as sites of consumption, or sites for enactments of desired lives and lifestyles, becomes an active component of our response to the *scene* of trauma.

We are indeed trained throughout our entire lifetime to be ready to enact the role of witness the moment the flashlights go off. We are also trained and ready to be on the other side of that 'Kodak moment' and to turn that photograph into 'evidence', a socially constructed meaning. Photography as practice and discourse, is a meaning-making structure that simultaneously implicates and interpellates bodies in action. Implicates, as it refers to the actual bodies that are captured by the camera in the image. Interpellates, as in calls for the viewer to experience and fit into the pose of the bodies in the image. In my mind, this structure is more than a language explaining the world: it is itself a world within which every person living today is in one way or another situated. We all know how we should fit ourselves in the frame of a photograph, when we see a camera and even when we do not see a camera. Being constantly as in the frame of a potential shoot is one of our identities. For example, when we see a grieving person in a picture, we imagine the moment of the capturing of the photograph. The picture becomes a gate for our own affective response to the imagined situation. This is how we are prompted to feel an emotion we have learned is befitting, identifiable to us, and pertaining to our identity. The photograph makes a gesture we recognize by way of affect. Indeed emotion can be left unfelt, because we may assert our identity through a rehearsal of affect within the structure alone.

Pia Lindman, Frames from *Laokonikon*, 2004, DVD

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES: THE NEW YORK TIMES 09/02-09/03

The video of the re-enactments is titled *Lakonikon* and the drawings edited and composed in several books are titled *Black Square*. In *Black Square Flip Book* the drawings are edited so that they may be looked at as an animation. The flip book also includes articles by Barbara Formis and Susanna Cole. *Lakonikon* is included in the show 'Art in the Age of Terrorism' at the Millais Gallery, Southampton, November 2004—January 2005. *Lakonikon* and *Black Square* are included in the show 'American Visions and Revisions' at the Kunsthalle Exnergasse Vienna, November—December 2004 and in 'Global Priority', touring in: the Herter Gallery at the University of Amherst, San Francisco Art Commission Gallery, Korea, Istanbul, and Berlin. *Black Square* is included in 'The Book as Object and Performance' at the Gigantic Art Space November 2004—January 2005. The complete *New York Times* project with live performances and *Lakonikon* and *Black Square* was exhibited as a solo show at the lab at the Roger Smith Hotel, New York

Pia Lindman, *New York Times* performance, New York

City, in September-October 2004. I addition to the performances at the lab, I have performed the re-enactments live in the year 2004 at Sculpture Center on October 24th, 1st of November at Foley Square with Lower Manhattan Cultural Council and Creative Time, as a guided tour in Vienna on the 11th of November in conjunction with the 'American Visions and Revisions' exhibition at Kunsthalle Exnergasse, Vienna, and on the 16th of December 2004 at the Gigantic Art Space in New York City.

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Lower Manhattan Cultural Council 2003 'New Views, World Financial Center', Lower Manhattan Cultural Council

NOTES

1 These thoughts are indebted to an inspired reading of Erwing Goffman's *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*, (Goffman 1959).

2 "Affect**:** the conscious subjective aspect of an emotion considered apart from bodily changes" (Merriam-Webster).

3 Further research into the words 'affect' and 'emotion' show that distinctions between them are unclear except for the fact that affect may involve consciousness and emotion may exist without it. *Merriam-Webster Medical Dictionary*: "Emotion **3**: a psychic and physical reaction (as anger or fear) subjectively experienced as feeling and physiologically involving changes that prepare the body for action". In *The American Heritage Stedman's Medical Dictionary* (Houghton Mifflin 2002) emotion is defined as "An intense mental state that arises subjectively rather than through conscious effort and is often accompanied by physiological changes."

4 See especially the chapter: "Shame, or on the Subject".

5 I am using the concept "uninscribed body " to denote human existence pertaining to a body's biological life, which is neither conscious nor of a linguistic subjectivity.

6 Michel Foucault argues that a convergence of the idea of power and that of the truth form a structure of power in contemporary society that is camouflaged as rationality of the societal and of the functions of the human body. This enables an exercise of *bio-power* on each and every individual body by the state in the guise of care for its citizens. Foucault uses the concept of *bio-technico-power*, or *bio-power* first time in his introduction to *The History of Sexuality* (Foucault 1978)

7 From 1997 to 2001, the Lower Manhattan Cultural Council, LMCC,

hosted *World Views*, an art residency program in the World Trade Center, NYC. After the attacks had destroyed the facilities of the program, LMCC co-organized with the World Financial Center Arts & Events another art residency program: *New Views, World Financial Center*. The program started in May 2002 and was completed with an exhibition in the public spaces in the World Financial Center October 2002-January 2003. In the introduction to the exhibition catalog, Moukhtar Kocache, director of Visual and Media Arts at LMCC, states the purpose of the new program: "to provide artists and the council the opportunity to respond to emerging political and cultural realities". The artists in residency were asked to "consider the psychological, geographic and traumatic experiences of the site" (Ibid.). For more information, please see LMCC website: http://www.lmcc.net/Residencies/Past_Programs/NewViews_WFC/NV_WFC_Exhibit/NV_WFC_exhibit_main.html. See also exhibition catalog: "New Views, World Financial Center" (Lower Manhattan Cultural Council 2003)

8 Reading Althusser's notions of the Ideological State Apparatuses forces me to question the possibility of any personal experience of emotion in any way differing from those that are available in the repertoire of emotional experiences of the society within which the emotion emerges. However, I am using the distinction of personal vs. public for making this point of how the public media may interpret something that we perceive personal and unique into a message quite different from the personal perception. Indeed, this is how personal is public. Althusser, Louis: 'Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses (Notes towards an Investigation)', (Althusser and Brewster 2001)

9 This process is understood as a personal matter, however, our beliefs regarding its proper forms may very well be socially constructed.

10 Grieving Lady Diana changed the forms of grieving in many parts of the world. In Finland, teddy-bears were not commonly used to mark a site of an accident. Now this item has been introduced to the Finnish public grieving culture's repertoire.

11 Regarding alienation effects and illusions of representations, see for instance: Bertolt Brecht, 'Alienation Effects in Chinese Acting' (in Brecht and Willett 1964)

12 Although not the content of my analysis in my artwork, a structure of how the New York Times seems to organize its imagery emerges clearly. For instance, looking through all the images published in the New York Times, issues from September 2002 to September 2003, I made the following observation: whenever a bomb had detonated in Israel and the consequent retaliation from the Israeli army upon Palestinians had been exacted, the article reporting on the events in the New York Times showed without exception a close-up of an Israeli mother grieving her child and another image of a Palestinian funeral-turned-riot: a mob of angry men throwing stones. Perhaps we understand the dynamics of the violent acts, but the psycho-dynamics of the affects from the two juxtaposed images put another kind of twist on our collective mind. It is easier to sympathize with a grieving woman, especially when shown

in close-up, than it is with an angry mob of depersonalized men.

13 Please see notes for *The New York Times 09/02-09/03* at the end of this text for more information on each location.

14 As many monasteries in the medieval times, the monastery of Schottenstift was open for anyone to enter, stay and be sheltered, even if he or she was the worst kind of criminal. This is also why the plaza next to the monastery is called Freyung, a space of freedom.

15 At the end of Judengasse, where the street transforms into a stair leading down to the Donau canal, from the top of the stairs, one has a view over the canal to the OPEC Head Quarters. This building was the site of a 1976 kidnapping by infamous Carlos the Jackal.

16 Maria Theresien was the sole female empress of the Habsburg dynasty. She was popular enough to acquire the title "Mother of the People". Although not abolishing serfdom, she alleviated the living conditions of the serfs with her law reform *Robot Patent*. She tolerated Jews as long as they converted to Christianity.

17 Across the Burgring from the Maria Theresien Platz you find a steel monolith, a memorial for policemen killed while on duty. This monument is at the edge of Heldenplatz and next to the Burgtor, both monumental constructions of the dubious Austrian history of the 1920's and 1930's, marked by the eventual nazi invasion.

18 My dialogues with artists such as Dennis Adams, Antonio Muntadas and Krzysztof Wodiczko have inspired me greatly in my own aspirations to make critical artworks around public space and especially monuments. Also the work of Jochen Gertz has been of great influence to me.