

Charlotte Prodger

In :-\* Charlotte Prodger approaches ripped YouTube videos, Tony Conrad's 1965 Structural film *The Flicker* and the Sharp GF767 boombox to explore a nexus of language and materiality. Prodger invites new routes of interpretation by cross-associating formal concerns (light, sound, rhythm) with speculations around queer subjectivity.

An anonymous YouTube user posts domestic videos through the username Nikeclassics, documenting various acts of adoration and destruction to his pristine collection of trainers. The ritual of destruction and its sharing seems almost sacrificial in function, like a kind of sportswear potlatch. In his video *nike air prestige high 13* the process of cutting the trainer down the middle and pulling it apart can be read as desire to see every part of the adored object, exposing in doing so the commodity as pure matter - a fetishism opposing part to whole.

The historical movement of Structural film also disrupted a whole - that of cinema as cohesive narrative. It stripped moving image back to its material innards, inviting us to examine each individual frame, now this frame, now that. Tony Conrad's seminal 1965 minimalist film *The Flicker* was composed solely of alternating black and white frames. Just as Nikeclassics' cutting video deconstructs the trainer, Conrad's filmmaking sought to deconstruct the narrative imperative of dominant film culture. Shown in cinemas, *The Flicker's* strobic effects elicited hallucinatory responses in its audience. Conrad proposed this as a conduit for narrative subjectivity, as opposed to the formalist polemic prevalent in Structural film. Prodger used a single roll of 16mm film to mechanically appropriate the historical form of *The Flicker*. The monochrome filmstrip suggested a kind of sequential graphic score for Nikeclassics' video *our new bw's* - an intricate dance between the producer and his boyfriend in interchangeable black and white sportswear, swapping their identical trainers back and forth.

Prodger presents the Sharp GF 767 boombox as another rarified object removed from its original purpose. Considered by collectors to be the holy grail of boomboxes, these coveted objects are stacked in garages and photographically submitted to Internet forums rather than being played out in the street. Prodger uses the boombox to contrast the material parameters of audio tape with a cross-pollinating collection of personal histories where, for example, the increasing obsolescence of analogue cinema coincides with the disappearance of public cruising spaces. These narrative fragments shift between tenses and persons just as the edgelessness of Internet video can be experienced everywhere simultaneously.

Ripped youtube videos:

[our new nike bw's by nikeclassics](#)

[nike air prestige high 13 by nikeclassics](#)

Thank you: Jamie Kenyon, Tom Varley, Mark Vernon, Zeynep Arman, Anne Tetzlaff, Lucy Cran.

Charlotte Prodger lives and works in Glasgow. She graduated from Goldsmiths in 2001 and completed the MFA at Glasgow School of Art, with an exchange at Calarts in 2010. She is currently Artist in Residence at CALQ, Montreal. She has had solo exhibitions at Intermedia, Glasgow; 2012 CCA, Glasgow as part of Glasgow International, 2012 and Kendall Koppe, Glasgow, 2011. She has been in group exhibitions at ICA, London; CCA, Glasgow; Collectif Jeune Cinema Festival, Paris; no.w.here, London; Transmission, Glasgow; Tramway, Glasgow' and Kunstherlhaus Bethanien, Berlin. She is currently in a group exhibition at Hotel, London. Her texts have been published by 2HB (CCA), Market Gallery, High Horse and Victor & Hester. She is a member of the collaborative writing group Brown Study, and was a founding member of the band Muscles Of Joy. Prodger will present a solo institutional exhibition at Studio Voltaire, London this fall.

“The hierarchy of substances is abolished: a single one replaces them all: the whole world can be plasticized, and even life itself since, we are told, they are beginning to make plastic aortas.” —Roland Barthes, *Mythologies* (1957).

“When we cannot be delivered from ourselves, we delight in devouring ourselves.” —Emil Cioran, *A Short History of Decay* (1949)

These works on exhibition began as an attempt to photo-document all the material in my wallet (credit cards, ID, notes, and so on) to produce some archive of the material we move through the world with on our bodies. This material, not dissimilar from clothing, manages our relation to social formations and institutional structures through the banal repetition of its everyday use—disappearing and reappearing as it is “called” to perform symbolically in relation to various forms of authority with every point of purchase and profile. This work focuses specifically on the object of the credit card. We compulsively cycle through these plastic forms of identification and currency, filing them in and out of sight in an endless strobing that fixes a singular moment of our personhood called into being for procedural identification and interpellation. This flicker, so to speak, marks each card as if to enumerate each emergence into light by scarring it with a reminder of its coming death (expiration) as scratches, scrapes and grime inevitably accumulate with each exchange. While a temporal index is written onto the surface, the cards’ mutilation promises that their subjects-carriers appear as consuming individuals; and while one’s consumption horizon expands through credit, the materiality of the cards are consumed into expiration. As credit cards become replaced with increasingly more abstract modes of exchange, e.g. Bitcoin, Google Wallet etc., their future obsolescence performs a mimesis of bourgeois economy’s accumulative expansion and eventual collapse. The capacity to transmit the remembrance of the peripatetic condition in which the card is turned in on itself becomes the condition of its potential reanimation through the digital macro lens technology used to reproduce it in these works. Now- generic DSLR technology offers further possibilities for spatial dismemberment through advanced magnification and cropping tools that hyper-intensify detail and surface resolution. Kodak produced the original DSLR apparatus, the DCS-100, in 1991; this technology, over a period of more than twenty years, became increasingly available to a large consumer market by decreasing labor costs and implementing cross-platform standardization. It left in its wake an unprecedented glut of obsolete data formats, application systems and storage processes subject to degradation or, in many cases, complete destruction due to hardware failure, bit rot and format decay. What remains is a scattered trail of a historically unmatched plethora of bit-waste, lingering in a crises-prone economy, endlessly surpassed by nascent technologies. These scraps float aimlessly in an economy in which privatization, financialization, and manipulation of crises sucks in massive quantities of surplus capital while over-accumulation and uneven geographical development alter spatial relations, generating location-specific devaluation or outright destruction of labor power, fixed capital, and consumption funds, leaving that which cannot be fully absorbed to languish and die.

In this exhibition I focus on the repeated inscription of the artist’s hand: my signature, the text grafted onto these now-expired cards that legally bound me to their application. A digital filter abstracts the printed image of the card into a rasterized metrical division of dots, transforming the image of an abstract credit economy into abstract units of color. These cards retain the memory of their use; the buildup of scratches and dirt is in direct contrast to the erosion of the signature over time. This simultaneous buildup and breakdown overburdens their plastic bodies with an almost baroque indexical excess of their having been in an economy, an excess exemplified through the continuous swiping of its magnetic tape, also a fading technology. Even the ubiquitous gesture of “swiping” that has become synonymous with consumption will be reduced to simple floating hand gestures as new technologies such as radio frequency identification and near field communication systems replace magnetic reading. In these works the accumulation of experience is an erasure—the cards’ surfaces evidence the memory of a single subjectivity managed by a system of debt and exchange. This visual overflow is not unlike the overflow of the infinite spatial dimensions penetrated by macro-photography, even as it is applied here to this ubiquitous thing.

Jason Loebis lives and works in New York. He completed the Whitney Independent Study Program in 2011, received an MFA from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago in 2007, a BFA from the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts in 2004, and attended the Yale Norfolk School of Art in 2003. In 2011 he attended the Eastern European Residency Exchange with Pavilion Unicredit in Bucharest, Romania. He has had solo exhibitions at ESSEX STREET, New York; Kavi Gupta, Berlin; Audio Visual Arts, New York, and has been in group exhibitions at Massimo de Carlo, Milan; Galerie Perrotin, Paris; Almine Rech at Art Basel; Bortolami Gallery, New York; Norton Museum of Art, West Palm Beach; NJMOCA, New Jersey; Harris Lieberman, New York; loop-raum fur aktuelle kunst, Berlin; Artists Space, New York; Milwaukee International, Milwaukee; CUNY Graduate Center, New York and elsewhere. He is currently in group exhibitions at Hotel, London and James Cohan Gallery, New York. He will present a two person project at FIAC in Paris this fall.