

Video purified of television

On why video art wants to be boring

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Galleries used to be white. Maybe they still are but it's harder to tell now that they've all turned off their lights. The reason for this shadow cast across the contemporary art world is video. Particularly the video projection. It's difficult to believe these days that this dominating presence made its debut in the world of art not so long ago and that it did so very sheepishly indeed. Shoved in the corner of the gallery, video art was initially seen as nothing more than a modish, relatively inconsequential presence. Then, it would seem, video art learned to accommodate itself more fully to the logistics of the gallery. Videos on monitors in the notoriously chapel-like confines of the white cube were always going to find it difficult to compete with the visual punch of painting and sculpture. However with the increased availability of the video projector and cheaper portable cameras, members of that new profession, the video artist, were able to project a large-scale image onto the gallery wall. For the artworld, video art arrived in a big way when it demonstrated it could hold a wall, fill a space. Bill Viola fills as much space as anyone. Insofar as video art has amassed its own set of delusions, however, he is both hero and culprit. Combining as he does the spectacular sight of multiple and elephantine video projection with empty displays of humanist heavy-breathing, Viola's art takes itself very seriously indeed. And it is more than a coincidence that serious video art looks nothing like television.

Big Guns and Big Ideas

The big guns of contemporary video art invariably share Viola's sense of scale, even if they recoil from his cosmic ambitions. Gary Hill, Bruce Nauman, and Tony Oursler dramatise the presence of video in their own distinctive ways. Oursler's precise installations are a diversion of sorts, but they are no less bombastic than the more typical wall-sized projections.

The new guns are matching the established video artists yard for yard and hour for hour, with massive and lengthy works produced by Steve McQueen, Gillian Wearing, Douglas Gordon, Sam Taylor-Wood and Jaki Irvine. If it's not size that matters then no-one has told video artists, yet. Just like in the Salon of the eighteenth- and nineteenth-centuries, size is a marker of value and ambition in contemporary video art. There were times in the 1990s when the long night of video projection's reign seemed in danger of never ending.

It is increasingly hard to shake the notion that video projection will come to be seen as a defining embarrassment—like shoulder pads and big hair in the '80s—not just for being there, but for being *everywhere*. Of course many in the artworld would find this statement both preposterous and scandalous. After all, video is at present the great white hope of the artworld, heavily invested with dreams of cultural liberation and accessibility through the power of a new media technology. If everybody has a video recorder, a camcorder and a DVD these days, the argument goes, then video art uses a 'language' that everyone understands. Video art's populism is bogus. Indeed, while the physical presence of video art in galleries is meant to testify to art's inclusiveness, the manner of this inclusion—the forms of address and forms of attention of video art—reinstates art's own values, not those associated with popular video production, television, cinema and home video.

Video, as a technology, was no virgin when it got involved with art. Video had already had a series of liaisons with image production that hard-

ly even qualified for commercial and industrial uses, never mind Culture with a capital 'C'. In this sense video as art was always a potentially volatile combination. Video is a contaminated area, which, if you enter without adequate protection, will infect you with all manner of fatal diseases. Culturally, video is a carrier, and what it carries is the irksome and vulgar spirit of mass culture and popular pleasures. Artists who fear this sort of contamination need to take precautions. Like a politician who's crossed the house, video's position has to be continually questioned, its honesty cross-examined. Ominous soundings of rampant, crass, commercial television, big-budget Hollywood blockbusters; all that could and would devour, chew up and spit out art.

When an artist does take popular culture as raw material in video, the host culture often cooks it up for cultivated tastes, as a narcissistic display for the culturally astute. Think of the monumentality of Douglas Gordon's '24 hour Psycho'. Mass culture is retained in the gallery on the condition that it lose its capacity to entertain (pace, dialogue, soundtrack, narrative, all have to go), a conversion that is made all the easier by the fact that Hitchcock has been transformed into a cult auteur by the *Nouvelle Vague*. You could say the same for Steve McQueen's badly retold Buster Keaton joke. Such examples of the collision of art and mass culture in contemporary video make explicit what is implied in almost all video art.

Video Purified of Television

The fact that there is so much video art around does not disqualify these observations about its low and threatening status within art. What happens is not that art, or artists, exclude video from the gallery and the seminar room. Rather, video is managed (that is, the fundamental contradiction is smoothed over); it is recoded by including it in ways that inoculate art from its dangers. To put it bluntly, the fear that video art might just become television or film is almost enough in itself to guarantee that video art will tend to be boring to watch. Video's cultural threat is not fixed into it as a form or a medium but stems from the forms of attention that it harbours, that it seems always already to be contaminated by. This is why the cultural adversaries of TV and the movies make their presence felt in video art by using extreme slow motion, undramatic events and failed jokes.

Video art, it seems, wants to be boring. The proximity of video technology to television, and the culture industry generally, brings video art into contact with exactly that which the adversaries of popular culture oppose. If such an adversary were also a video artist, then she or he would want video art to be boring. Boring, here, means not entertaining or not taking pleasure in popular pleasures. It is not so much that video art is boring, but that it promotes prestigious pleasures, that which Bourdieu describes as 'pleasure purified of pleasure'. It produces video purified of television.

In this way video art, therefore, must sacrifice—or annihilate—the pleasures associated with TV and the movies. Matthew Higgs has recently made the same point about art in general, commenting that:

there was more pleasure to be had—both intellectually and viscerally—in any randomly selected five minutes from Wes Anderson's recent film *Rushmore* than in almost the entire ... Liverpool Biennale.¹

Higgs' point, put in Bourdieu's terms, is that art is purified of culture. Video purified of television is just one more example of this general cultural

tendency, and yet, it is the sharpest example because the two extremes are brought in such proximity with video art. What is at stake, here, is the division of culture couched in terms of the preservation of one side of that division. To speak of video art as boring, therefore, is intended to antagonise an antagonistic situation. As an insult, calling video art boring is intended to support the further integration of art and the rest of culture, to regard video and television as existing in the same world. We do not regard popular pleasures as 'more' pleasurable than the pleasures of art, literature, theory, the theatre and so on but this fact cannot be used to condone existing cultural divisions. As such, we are not even opposed to video art that happens to be boring so long as this is not an effect—a symptom, we might say—of the fear and loathing that art has for television, cinema and popular culture. If cultural division is going to be challenged and overcome then we must make efforts to think some crude thoughts in order to protect our intelligence from the sophisticated consensus that perpetuates cultural division by defending art against its adversaries. We don't always actually find video art boring, but we are politically obliged to emphasise it when we do.

If we leave the matter there, though (as a question of rival and competing—and hierarchical—tastes), then we misunderstand something crucial to the cultural tendency of video art to be boring. It is not that video art fails to be interesting and is boring by default, but that video art actively *seeks* to be boring. The choice, we think, has something to do with power and prestige. It is, in short, a question of pedigree. In order for video to become art it must pick up some pedigree. And it does.

Back in 1972, when May '68 was recent enough to taste sour and Terrorism was chic, Peter Wollen wrote an article in defence of Godard that began with a list of seven sins and seven virtues of filmmaking. Fiction is bad, while reality is good; pleasure is bad, un-pleasure is good; identification bad, estrangement good; transparency bad, foregrounding good; closure bad, aperture good (he means meaning should be left open to the viewer, not *managed* by the film-maker); single-diegesis bad, multiple diegesis good (not one storyline but several incompatible ones—he's not after a complex texture of narrative, but wants one narrative to disturb and subvert another); and finally: narrative transitivity bad, narrative intransitivity good (instead of a chain of events he wants fragments and breaks and discontinuity).

Wollen attacks popular pleasures head-on in favour of a more robust culture. This preferred culture is a counter-culture, for sure, but rather than merely being the opposite of popular commercial culture—the antidote to the seductive products of the culture industry—it must have something more to recommend it. What makes Wollen's unappealing criteria attractive or defensible is that they guarantee a special form of subjectivity, one which is active, contemplative, critical, intelligent, alert, vigilant. It is the subjectivity of what we have called the 'good student'. Wollen's prescriptive list is a vivid insight not only into the values and categories of experimental film, but also into the ways in which pleasures are conceived as rival and competing. It is not so much that experimental film denies pleasure and mainstream cinema supplies it in abundance, but that they promote adversary forms of pleasure. If we said nothing more about these rival pleasures we would perhaps regard them as equal and a matter of taste or opinion. What we must add, however, is



LEFT:
Bruce Nauman
Clown Torture
1987

that these rival and competing pleasures are subjected to hierarchies. It is through the prestige accorded to certain forms of pleasure that experimental film—and later, video art—gains, or finds, its pedigree. Wollen's prescriptive list is as good an example as we're likely to see of how 'pleasure purified of pleasure' actually sees itself not as self-contradictory but as intelligent, sensitive and worthy. It feels like the Enlightenment dream of the marriage of aesthetics and truth come to life. It is not surprising, therefore, that it casts a spell across film and video art well beyond its short, politically charged heyday. In the terms laid out by Wollen, it is not merely possible for experimental film and video art to fail to be entertaining, it becomes one of its central duties. And, we may add, one of its principal pleasures. It may even become an exquisite gesture for the video artist to resist vulgar pleasures so much that he or she could shoot a movie of a large group of people posing as if for a snap but holding their position for an hour or more. Such works are at war with popular pleasures, of course, but they are also conscientiously anachronistic, confining themselves to the filmic grammar of the very earliest flicks. In the early years of the cinema films were shot with stationary cameras, without editing, and without sound. Recorded sound wasn't available, cameras were too cumbersome and heavy to move about and editing hadn't been thought of. After the invention of editing, film-making had not only surpassed the miracle of pointing a camera at a moving subject, but constructed these images in narratives. This is why the Soviet pioneers said that 'editing is everything'. Nowadays the edit isn't everything. In fact, the edit usually counts less than character, dialogue, special effects, *mise-en-scene* and the soundtrack. Video art, from its inception, harked back to the era before editing, in the filmic Stone Age when a stationary camera was placed in front of an event and recorded it in real time without interruption. Why?

New Kids and Old Codgers

There is a growing consensus that the reason video art is slow and looped and at pains to distance itself from the movies is essentially due to the nature of the gallery. Video art apes painting, it is said, by filling the wall, slowing its action to a minimum, preferring contemplative or meditative subjects, and doing without narrative, dialogue and character. However, it is too easy to blame the preponderance in video art of the filmic Stone Age and the loop on the desire for film to be seen in institutions designed primarily for paintings. The resemblance is not trivial, but these features of video art would not have emerged if they were merely a function of the gallery. For one thing, as we have said, art demands pedigree. For another, we would expect the emergence, development, maintenance and monitoring of a cultural form to

be multiply and contestedly determined, not merely the product of one, isolated factor. The idea that video art looks like it does because of the way that galleries are, or because of some presumed envy of painting, conveniently dampens consideration of the contestation that inevitably takes place in the institution. To be sure, we need to explain why video art is so well placed to reconfigure the hierarchical relations between art and popular culture and yet reconfirms them more than perhaps any other art. In fact, there is a comic irony at work when video artists emulate modernist painting and look anachronistic while painters get funky and leave the old painting behind. Technically, video is the new kid on the block, yet culturally it comes over as the old codger in care.

It's no coincidence that a large proportion of monographs on video are also on Performance art. In many respects Performance art is, in the official history, credited with giving birth to video and then guiding it along the path to cultural legitimacy. Tracing video art's genetic history back to Performance gives us another perspective on video art's cognitive style. In particular, what we have identified as video art's resistance to entertainment and popular pleasures has its correlation in Performance art of the '60s and '70s. These are deep and complex issues but they show themselves in the most trivial and insignificant details. Consider, for example, the simple fact that Performance artists, without exception until recently, always looked so glum. Keeping a straight face was as dear to Performance artists as keeping a smile on your face is to the chorus line. One of the reasons why performance artists in the '60s and '70s looked so glum all the time was because they took culture seriously. Looking glum is good for business if your business is elevated or critical culture. Historically, glumness goes deep. Performance artists, on the whole, went along with the modernist maxim that 'art is concerned with the *how* and not with the *what*'. So, just as abstraction had been against realism, Performance sets itself against theatre. Performance came to be all act and no acting; real events in real time; hence, so much glum endurance, for the artist and audience alike. Similarly, video art set itself against TV and the movies.

Thirty years ago, when video art was in its infancy, it was often tied up inextricably with Performance, functioning as documentation and as audience. It was the dramatic drop in video camera prices for domestic use which allowed artists to utilise their potential. Up until this point it had stayed pretty much within educational campuses, small businesses and projects in the community. Later on, video came into itself initially in the form of performance specifically

designed to be recorded on video. What's more, the equipment for making videos was practically as heavy and cumbersome as early movie cameras. Rosler and Nauman didn't have the option to use a palm-held digicam or to edit their footage offline. This is one of the reasons why even the best examples of early video art have the technical capacity of the very first cinema: Martha Rosler performs her 'Semiotics of the Kitchen' straight to camera; Bruce Nauman walks around his studio; Vito Acconci lies on his back serenading the viewer; Gilbert and George stand in front of the camera and bend over a lot to a pop song. Fast-forwarding thirty years, the persistence of the look of early video art by contemporary artists finds its necessity not in the technology of the day (a lot of it is made digitally and burned onto CD or DVD) but in the uncritical assimilation of '60s and '70s critical art and the cult of Conceptualism. So much new video art recycles the formula just as text art and what's left of 'idea art' do.

Many cinemagoers would be surprised to learn that video art's lack of filmic sophistication has been done on purpose. There is, it seems, an inverted economy in operation when artists, instead of entertainers, get hold of a camera. That means any camera, whether it be a videocam, digicam or 16mm cine. Devotees of 'film as art' or the new romanticism of the video-projected miracle would prefer us to discriminate between the materiality of one medium and the reality of the other, or between the ready to hand production of video and the obsessive intricacies of film production, or between the chemical and the digital. If you wake up now and smell the coffee you will notice that the sensitive souls who celebrate video and film 'as art' talk almost exclusively about form. There is no richer source today of the residue of that old modernist preference for discussion of the 'how' over engagement with the 'what'. Which is why most video and film art seems so boring: it has little or no regard for what it is of, or how it might begin to engage, enthrall, absorb or entertain the viewer. Strictly speaking, then, video and film art is boring only to those who either haven't been initiated into these specialist forms of attention or have no interest in them. Again, though, it must be said that these rival and competing forms of attention do not stand shoulder to shoulder; they are arranged hierarchically according to the constellation of cultural divisions.

The elevation of video that we are trying to describe will be seen as a strange story to those who imagine its democratic credentials are guaranteed either by its technical accessibility or its distance from the smear of elitism. What is stranger still, however, is how the assumption that video is always already placed outside of the history of art proper, turns into an alibi for producing work that makes little sense outside of the modes of attention of that tradition. Sometimes the relationship between video art and elevated forms of attention are made explicit, such as in Douglas Gordon's statement that his favourite artist is Barnett Newman. Other times the relationship is more insidious, such as when Steve McQueen backs up his argument that he is against the 'pop-corn mentality' by describing his desired film as being elusive and romantic, "like a wet piece of soap—it slips out of your grasp."²

The Cold Bath and the Hothouse

Despite its technological novelty, however, this is not a conceptually new situation for art. Thomas Crow identifies a similar breach of artistic protocol in 18th century France. There was "an abiding problem for those in authority over French art because of a fundamental contradiction at the heart of academic doctrine: a universalizing conception of artistic value had to be mapped onto a divisive social hierarchy."³ In other words, the expansion of art's public does not necessarily mean the extension of art's pre-established tastes, modes of attention and so forth, but may, on the contrary, be the source of a particular kind of challenge or crisis. The arrival of video art in the art world renewed these questions of art's authority and its relation to another broadening of the cultural environment in a very intense way. Video was not as manageable as a newly arrived public was for the French academy because its threat

would be made manifest not through the presence of an excluded, philistine public but through the activities of artists themselves. It was, in this sense, more insidious, more cunning, more deceptive. It brought questions of cultural division into the very practices—the thoughts and activities—of artists. (One of the dangers for video artists, clearly, is that they open themselves up to the charge that they are themselves philistine.) As such, the problem of mapping artistic value onto a divisive *social* hierarchy has to be construed as the mapping of certain artistic values onto a divisive *cultural* hierarchy. Video threatens the fundamental contradiction of cultural division from the inside. But not for long.

Video art's refusal of filmic sophistication can be traced, we have suggested, to the glum earnestness of Performance art, the political and cultural desires embedded in Wollen's litany of instructions, back to the cognitive style of modernism's foregrounding of form and technique. A good case can be made for going back further, to what Michael Fried called "the beginnings of the pre-history of modern painting",⁴ articulated in the writing of Diderot. In his early treatises on the theatre, Diderot urged playwrights to turn away from surprising turns of plot, reversals and revelations, and instead seek, in Fried's words, "visually satisfying, essentially silent, seemingly accidental groupings of figures ... expressive movement or stillness as opposed to mere proliferation of incident".⁵ (Notice how that statement could just as well be a description of so much contemporary video art.) Fried spots a fundamental paradox in this aesthetic which he argues is unavoidable in art of the highest ambition. The paradox is: Art is made to be seen but the best art pretends (to itself or to us) that the viewer does not exist. In painting this means *enthral*ling the viewer without *addressing* him or her at all.

In this conception, pictures of individuals and groups absorbed in their own activities and distractions succeed where theatrical images employing all the painterly pyrotechnics of the day fail. For Diderot, Chardin's pictures of a boy carefully constructing a house of cards, or nervously blowing a bubble through a pipe, are always going to be superior to the Rococo bombast of Boucher's spectacular scenes of erotic promise and costumed masquerade. There is, without doubt, a tangible sense that "the cold bath of purity replaces the heady hothouse languor"⁶ which we don't want to underestimate, but at the same time we don't want to reduce these aesthetic rivals to a choice between moderation and indulgence. It is essentially a question of competing pleasures, not of the competition between pleasure and un-pleasure. Diderot makes the point that drama is, despite everything, more pleasurable than theatre because of its capacity to enthrall and absorb the viewer. Above all, according to Diderot, drama has the capacity to hold us, to fix us to the spot. And it does this due to its own inherent dramatic content, not through the tricks of theatrical technique.

Diderot does not propose that theatrical techniques have no affect, only that their accomplishments are shallow. His schema is an explicit argument for a hierarchy of forms of cultural address and their corresponding forms of attention by the audience or beholder. At one time Diderot would have been criticised for setting up a regime of taste, but taste needn't come into it. Accusations of anti-intellectualism or populism follow the same contours. This is where the philistine lives. The safe option, of course, is to signal with every fibre of your art and your personality that you are cultured, well read, alert, not easily tempted by shallow pleasures, etc., etc. This is the art of the good student and there is plenty of it around receiving praise, payment and prestige. It not only leaves cultural and social division in place; it lives off that division, profiting from it, and depending on it for her or his distinction. There is, therefore, a kind of imperative to do the opposite of the safe option in order to challenge or overcome the hierarchies and splits of cultural division. But the risk of being regarded as a philistine is real and has economic as well as other costs. Who in their right mind, then, would

be mongrel enough to smirk, to laugh out loud, to join in, to get right in there amongst the cultural blood and guts?

Video Purified of Art

There has been a discernible shift of tone in the last few years, which has endeavoured to escape the comforts of ironic distance or a secure, theory-bound critical armature. In video there have been several notable examples of artists working in the medium who have avoided the portentousness and righteousness of abstention. Bruce Nauman's work has a good claim as any on this shift of tone. He is an unlikely candidate, rooted so deeply as he is in the established history of video as art. Nauman is a great favourite and inspiration of the new generation of artists including those who use video in line with the tradition of video art. In fact, he had supplied some prominent video artists with their conceptual daily bread. Nevertheless, there remains a palpable sense of the mongrel in Nauman's work. Nauman might be one of the most important artists around, so it might come as a surprise, then, to discover that there are strong traces of the philistine in Nauman's work. His reputation should not prevent us from noticing that his work does not trade on the distinction of art from popular culture and everyday life.

The reputation of a certain branch of young art following the yBa splash was that it had inverted the values of cultural responsibility and artistic quality. Indeed, we can revive Peter Wollen's list of the seven sins of cinema and the seven virtues of Godard to animate the conflict. The inversion would go like this: pleasure is good, un-pleasure is bad; identification good, estrangement bad; transparency good, foregrounding bad; closure good, aperture bad; single-diegesis good, multiple diegesis bad; and narrative transitivity good, narrative intransitivity bad. In the case of Nauman, though, we find neither the adherence to the rules of critical decorum nor their abandonment. Rather, Nauman's work seems to scoff at the divisions. In place of the opposition between sins and virtues, Nauman delivers the goods: fiction good, reality good; identification good, estrangement good; transparency good, foregrounding good; and so on and so forth. Or better still: reality/fiction opposition bad; identification/estrangement opposition bad; etc etc.

Nauman's work, from his use of neon signs to his videos of clowns or simple everyday acts like walking in a straight line, has always cut across the established boundary separating art from popular culture and everyday life. This fact needs to be underlined if Nauman's recurrent challenges to the borders of art are to be recognised rather than suppressed in the judgment of his work. Nauman's early work does show all the signs of what has become video art's hallmarks, it is true, but Nauman never allowed these pedigree features to crowd out more unorthodox, mongrel elements. Using minimalist-inspired systems and reducing the role of the camera to a minimum, Nauman would typically act out performances for the camera that conform to the strictures of video art but that pointed elsewhere. His 'Fountain', for instance, is uninflected, straight-faced and dry, but it is neither tedious nor glum. Spurting water from his mouth, it is as if the artist is using the decorum of video production as a point of comic departure. Nauman, in fact, never confines himself to the territory of art and is, in this sense, in a constant state of mutiny with the concept and boundaries of art. Rather than feeling at home in art's isolation, with 'pleasure purified of pleasure' and so on, Nauman constantly infects art with its others (popular cultural forms, everyday activities, non-art idioms). Art infected by non-art is by the same token art not confined to art. It is art liberated from art's limitations, or, in the case of the video art, video purified of art.

In another seminal early video work, Nauman recorded himself walking along a line on the floor. Not a particularly enthralling or amusing proposition, of course, and therefore the sort of unspectacular plan that gives the video in-crowd goose-bumps. In other hands, this piece would have remained dull and predictable, but Nauman stretches the tolerance of the instruction to incor-

porate movements that are far more bodily than the original idea suggests. He swings his arse to and fro in a camp exaggeration of the body's natural gait, thrusting himself one way then the other with the drama of a catwalk superstar or the bathos of a drunk walking the line. Either way, this is a walk that more than goes through the motions. It is, perhaps, an embodied version of a Sol LeWitt wall drawing in which lines are coordinated with the assumption that accidents will happen; only, in Nauman, the deviations from the norm are very comic indeed.

More recent work brings out the themes implied by Nauman's involvement in the tension between seriousness and the comic. A series of videos depicting clowns makes comedy the content as well as the form of the work. In one, the clown has one word to say, and he says it over and over. Again, this sort of repetition is rife in video art, but with Nauman it does not add up to the demolition of character and identification; the result is not the deconstruction of filmic vocabulary but the development of affect through the slimmest of means. The word is "no" and the video undulates with the various inflections of the word and its contexts. We snigger as the clown seems to be chastising a child, wagging his finger and saying, "no, no, no, no, no". Then, the power relations are reversed and the clown seems to be pleading for his life and almost in tears while begging an off-camera assailant, "no, no, nooooo!". Your relationship to the video mutates over time, partly through the effect of the internal loop, but mostly through the personality of the character.

Some of Nauman's early videos were all act and no acting (and he plucked comic effect out of that very situation), but his later works turn on the acting because they hold our attention through the play of identification and estrangement. A good example of this is the video in which a clown walks through a door. In typical clownish slapstick, pushing the door open has the effect of tipping a bucket onto the clown's head. Cut to the partially open door and enter the clown who pushes open the door so that a bucket falls once again. The clown never learns. Or, maybe, what we are seeing here is a clown learning how to perform the joke. It is a fact of life for a clown that the joke that we see once, or once in a while, is his daily routine. Our entertainment is his workaday tedium.

If the video initially makes us laugh, it goes on (and on) to take that laughter away from us. This is because we become familiar with the joke and turn our attention, instead, to the clown himself. That is to say, we become estranged from the comedy and attached to the comic, and our identification with the clown may even cause our estrangement from the clowning. As such, this makes McQueen's badly retold Buster Keaton gag seem superficial in its effect and simplistic in its understanding of how to achieve it. Nauman's clown isn't glum it is drained. Repetition is married to variation in typical post-minimalist fashion but with the twist that each can be treated as diegetically or psychologically significant. At its most banal: professional clowns must repeat these actions in order to earn a living. More profoundly, though, perhaps the clown's stubborn return to the inevitable indignity stops being funny because it is too close to the pathological patterns we live out despite our best knowledge of their harm. It's not just the clown that never learns.

Notes

1. Matthew Higgs, *Art Monthly*, Dec 1999/Jan 2000, p.12.
2. Teve McQueen in an interview with Patricia Bickers, *Art Monthly*, Dec 96/Jan 97, p.5.
3. Thomas Crow, *Painters and Public Life in Eighteenth Century Paris*, Yale 1985 page 104.
4. Michael Fried, *Absorption and Theatricality: Painting and Beholder in the Age of Diderot*, University of California Press, 1980, p.ix
5. *Ibid*, p.78.
6. Michael Levey, *From Rococo to Revolution*, Thames and Hudson, 1977