

San Francisco Cinematheque presents

ReCalibrate: Michelle Dizon's Video Works

Michelle Dizon In Person

Presented in Association with the Center for Asian American Media and Artists' Television Access

Sunday, April 9, 2006 — Yerba Buena Center for the Arts — 7:30 pm

San Francisco Cinematheque is honored to present an evening of work by experimental video artist Michelle Dizon who joins us from Los Angeles for her first solo screening. Working with home movies shot in California and the Philippines, low-end video, numerous found images from the web and other films, and carefully culled and original texts, Dizon articulates a compelling political and aesthetic vision that constantly questions the status quo of language, images, and the power embedded in them. In our current context of globalization and war, pieces such as *Calibrate*; *Département des Arts de l'Islam*; *We, the Undersigned*, *Girls of Hiroshima*; and her newest piece, *The Great Wall* compel us to re-think representational and political practices. We also screen earlier, more intimate, works including *My Child*, *Anak* and *A Family Sick*. (Irina Leimbacher)

Département des Arts de l'Islam, Salle 1, Objets d'Irak (2004.); Mini-DV, Web Images, 3 minutes

This piece examines how the discourse of 'culture' was mobilized during the ransack of the Iraqi National Museum. During this period, international attention shifted to the question of culture and specifically how such a term was to be defined given the loss and destruction of the objects toward which history was said to refer. The title refers to the setting on which the video opens, an empty museum display in the Islamic Art section of the Louvre. Juxtaposed on top of this display are *Images of War*, a daily internet slideshow sponsored by the New York Times. The utter anachrony of contemporary photojournalism at the site of the display urges its spectators to contend with the Orientalist fabrications of a conception of 'culture' limited to the domain of archaic objects.

Calibrate (2003); Mini-DV, Web Images, 5 minutes,

Calibrate asks how screen practices such as calibration might be thought alongside technologies of race and gender. Made with images gleaned from the internet, *Calibrate* severs images from the meanings to which they had been bound and offers discrepancy as the means through which both sound and image unravel. The work insists that the identity between images that calibration seeks to ensure is complicit with the way raced and gendered bodies are imaged through a predetermined screen.

My Child, Anak (2001) Mini-DV, VHS-C, and Super- 8, 27 minutes

My Child, Anak foregrounds the work translation between languages, cultures, and selfhoods. Interviews with a group of children in the Philippines are set against a series of dialogues in the United States between the artist as a two-year old girl, and her mother as she teaches her how to speak. Between such refrains of "the child" stand the legacy of colonialism, the residue of ethnography, and the ever-present question of a local and global politics of representation.

A Family Sick (2002); Mini-DV, 8 minutes

The video approaches mental illness through artist's own family. Boy, the artist's cousin, was diagnosed with schizophrenia at the age of twenty and immigrated to the United States to join his family in 2002. The video interviews Boy's family and follows Boy to an appointment with a state administered psychiatrist. The strictly psychopharmaceutical care provided through the state's mental health care system is set against interviews with family who are a loss for what further steps might be taken. At the center of the work stand Boy's own attempts to bring his condition into discourse.

We, the Undersigned, Girls of Hiroshima (2005); Found Footage, 16 minutes

This collage essay reflects on aesthetics and politics, bringing together the writings of Gerhard Richter, Mahmoud Darwish, Jean-Luc Godard, images of the Israeli invasion of Beirut, and letters from the girls of Hiroshima to Claude Eatherly, the man who dropped the atomic bomb.

The Great Wall (2006); Super-8, Mini-DV

Just completed, Dizon's newest piece considers the fortification of national borders and the specters left in the wake of international immigration policies.

all tapes and individual descriptions of pieces provided by the artist

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