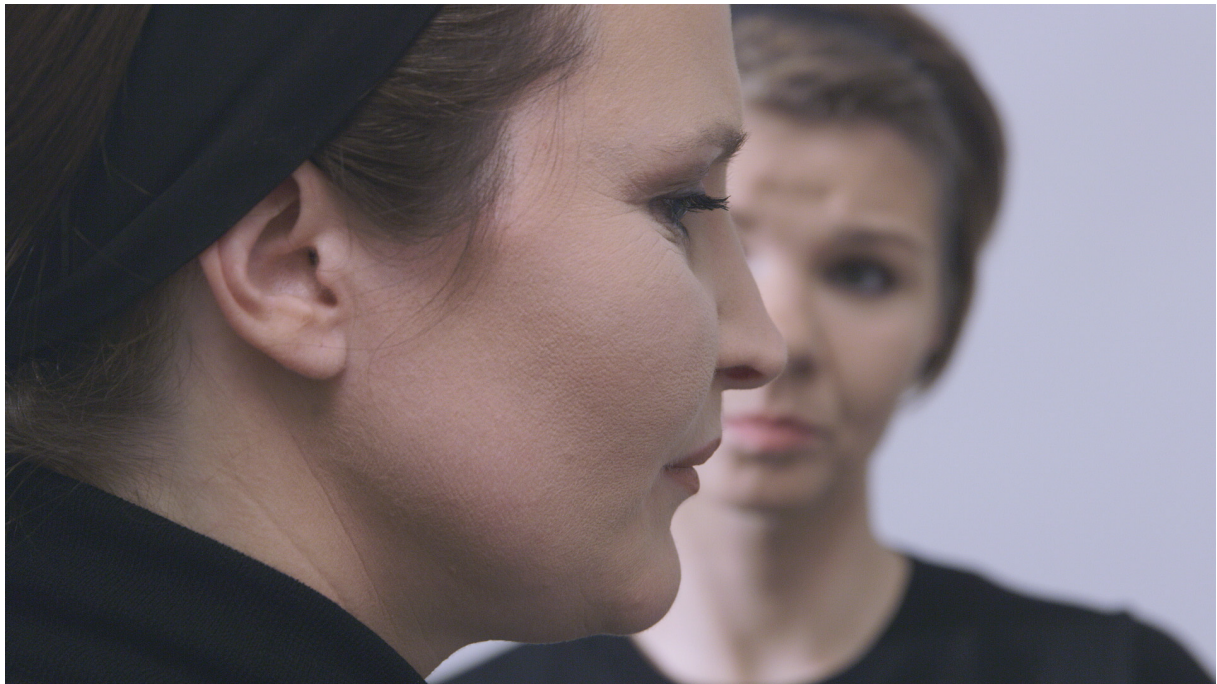


## ***Transferred Memories, Embodied Documents***

(Ana Hoffner, 2014, video installation, HD Video, 15'. Camera: Judith Benedikt)



“Transferred memories, embodied documents” focuses on the confrontation with images of atrocities and those who face them. It emphasizes the affective reaction of the viewer in front of images of atrocities in order to create a different way of dealing with the affective reactions the images evoke. The video starts with a complex description of the video report on camp Omarska, made in 1992 by the ITN journalists Penny Marshall and Ian Williams. It stays very close to practices used by newspapers and the TV, which grabbed an image from the video footage and made it into an “iconic photograph” for the Bosnian war. The pictures of Fikret Alić and other prisoners behind a fence topped with barbwire became the headline for many newspapers that reported on the Bosnian War, juxtaposed with images of emaciated men behind barbwire made around the end of the Holocaust.

The video installation “Transferred memories, embodied documents” begins with a shot of a dark silhouette, shown from the back facing a projection of a text. Only some parts of this text are legible; the projection does not allow the viewer to read whole sentences. One word is placed very centrally – Omarska. The figure in front of the projection stands still then moves only slowly to one side, as if she would first read the text and then move away from it.

The video continues with two voices stumbling on a text. Words like “barb wire,” “camera move,” and “naked bodies” appear with no contextual, or referential frame offered to help identifying them. One voice seems to be describing an image; fragments

of speech, indicating that this description is not an easy one, interrupt long periods of silence. A second voice stumbles over words about facial and bodily expressions, such as “shoulders moving” or “eyes twitching,” interrupting the description with a sort of comment. The text continues showing the same close-up as before, this time the face belongs to a performer who is in conversation with someone outside the frame, someone only present through his/her voice. The viewer is placed in a position between the two, but mainly challenged to open his/her own imaginations about those given fragments of speech.

In the next shot the same figure is shown, a close-up of her face. She is clearly observing something outside of the frame, something not visible to us, yet apparently facing the viewer almost directly and frontally. Her eyes move slowly, indicating that she is reading a text, which might be the earlier text (referring to the camp Omarska) yet her lips do not move and there is no sound. One is excluded from this reading situation. All one might get to know is that something in this text evokes a strong emotional reaction in the woman. The figure is close to tears and a cut interrupts the continuation of her emotional reaction.

“Transferred memories, embodied documents” creates a queer relation between two performers who deal with images of atrocities together. They both describe their view of these images and listen to each other’s descriptions of their reactions, thereby gaining recognition for their affective responses in front of the images. However they do not depend either on an identification with the bodies shown in the footage nor on an identification with each other.

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