

Navigation

- ▣

announcements
- ▣

audio
- ▣

podcasts
- ▣

projects
- ▣

reviews
- ▣

video
- ▣

thing.blogs
- ▣

rdom
- ▣

murphy
- ▣

gh
- ▣

dludin
- ▣

arfus
- ▣

links
- ▣

bbs.thing.net
- ▣

dks.thing.net
- ▣

Art Dirt Redux
- ▣

V2V
- ▣

Newsgrist
- ▣

ambienttv.net

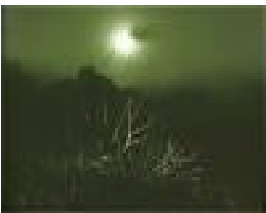
Nin Brudermann Investigates (with Arfus Greenwood)

Submitted by [murphy](#) on Tue, 2005-05-31 23:21. [reviews](#) | [visual](#)

We met early afternoon at her Williamsburg loft, overlooking the East River. I had promised to show Nin how to transform her recipe for crepes into pancakes. We proceeded by way of exact measure. The results were questionable. The space between Kent Avenue and the river was remarkably quiet, punctuated by the occasional call of a seagull. We ate crepe-cakes and chatted.

I first met Nin in 1996 while working at P.S.1, where she was the artist-in-residence representing Austria. Her demeanour remains the same today--an intellect offered gently, a sexy and detached certainty, and a post-war flirtatiousness, somewhere between Monica Viti and Hanna Schygulla.

I became interested in this interview when Nin and I ran into each other again at a party that the artist Marco Boggio Sella was throwing in honour of his gallerist John Connolly. A conversation, just prior, with Wolfgang Staehle, who was speaking about the sublime, prompted me to think that an interview was in order. And so, somehow over the falderal specific to a great Banquet Years party, I was able to learn more details about Nin's *N.A.S.D. Projekt Fledermaus*--a nocturnal expedition through the abandoned U.S. Naval Ammunition Support Detachment bunkers on the island of Vieques.



'La Reina de la Noche'
Nin Brudermann 2004
Inkjet Print 44"x64"
From 'N.A.S.D. Projekt Fledermaus', 2004 (mixed media installation)



'03SEP25UTC00AUR' (detail)
Nin Brudermann 2003
Digital c-print 67"x82"
From 'The Book of the Thousand and One Balloon', 2002-ongoing (video and sound installation; book)

AG: With *Projekt Fledermaus*, you employ not only methods of scientific investigation but participate specifically with the scientific community. *The Book of the Thousand and One Balloon*,, from which the former project

User login

Username:

Password:

Log in

Create new account

Request new password

sponsors

thing.editions
Works by:
Christoph Draeger
Peter Fend
Noritoshi Hirakawa
Simone Huelser
Joerg Lohse
Caspar Stracke
Beat Streuli

thing.net

Recent blog posts

- Elizabeth Neel Strung Up
- b.a.n.g lab - alpha launch
- Iran Resorts To Jamming To Keep Voters On-Message
- Eno
- "Billowy Drowse" by Margarida Garcia and Barry Weisblat
- "Across-Offshoot" by Keiko Uenishi (o.blaat)
- Barbara Kruger and William Gibson On Information at Tate Britain
- PIX: Time Landscape
- The Future of Media Activism
- C5 GPS Media Player

more

developed, also employs scientists. The result seems to be a story that, although poetic and narrative, becomes almost an academic investigation, a kind of documentary.

(Nin's early morning hair partially obscures her eyes. With a slight gesture of the hand, she brushes back a few tendrils and looks at me outright.)

NB: Yes, but, what is really interesting about a story? A story is basically a very lucky cluster of events. Things come together in a certain succession that tell something; a plot erupts, and that's interesting. The stories that I am telling find me. These strange things happen. I can't help it. I am part of it. But documentarians tend to exclude themselves. That's not my goal. I am part of the story. I am involved in how it all happens. Not in the sense of writing fiction, where there is a narratorial voice that can be overt, covert or absent. This can still exist in the telling, but I am recording this mesh of coincidences, or things falling together, and me being there in these moments is very much a part of it. And in the telling, I do not even impose the paradigm of objectivity.

AG: But in these projects, the camera is used in several different surveillance techniques and the information is gathered rather scientifically.

(I looked around to see if there were cameras present.)

NB: And I am playing with that. 'Is it true or is it not true?' So, yes, yes, I'm using documentary methods, but I am making something sweeter out of it. I interlude further in *Fledermaus*, where from the bunkers I collected seeds that were macerated, spat out by the bats, and then planted them in pedestals. And so now the growing plants are like evidence.

AG: Evidence? I was wondering how you would categorize these plants within the greater project. At first I was thinking they were something like souvenirs from a travelogue, but that is a kind of novelty, no? Which is probably it exactly. After all, a novelty is a novel object, an object that conjures the elements of, or signifies, a new story.

NB: In that case, it is a plant and it lives on. The story will continue to live on in the lawyer's home.

(I am not certain which perversity caused Nin to smile so diminutively--the lawyer now in the story, the image of the lawyer as a bat, or perhaps, the lawyer's home as a displaced ammunitions bunker--but she smiles nonetheless.)

NB: I am thinking of the word 'evidence,' here. A seed, a clump of hair, a video still, a photograph of an event is evidence.

AG: I suppose everything is a kind of evidence of something. Certainly even words.

(There was a strange sound. She looked around but nothing was there.)

NB: Perhaps, even words. And let's say, within these words there are novelties. And the novelties that I select are evidence of the story of which I was a part. Remember what I told you, on this bench at the party, about this bubble that lights up? It is all connected to novelty. The idea of how things interlude and how moments are born, so to say, is underlying all my work. That things are complex and interconnected we know, it's a Romantic idea. Things consist of an ever larger number of ever smaller pieces. But how novelty emerges from a dynamic system is new. Momentums now have their own dimensions, like an official playground for surprises. So on the expedition ship, where I imprisoned myself for my balloon project, was this bubble scientist, researching the prismatic moment when a bubble lights up in different colours. They call it sonoluminescence--the emission of light by bubbles excited by sound. They play a tone of sound, directed at a bubble, and let's say, Tone A

causes the bubble to turn red and then Tone B causes green. Tone A is always red and Tone B is always green, but when they sound Tone C, each time, the bubble will be a randomly different colour. C is in a chaotic dimension emitting surprises. C is evolutionary-revolutionary, and one day it might make a fantastic, new colour. This is what makes for a story, these fantastic, new moments that occur in the common patterns that exist around us. Like a 'scar' to the ordinary. In fact, novel moments like to group around existing scars, around attractors, as they call it. You know, strange things keep happening once they have found their channel.

AG: And in these instances, you are the channel. So, in a way, your installations and works document the results of the C Tone through methods of storytelling. You are a storyteller.

(An eyebrow is raised--in careful consideration or coquettish acquiescence.)

AG: I don't want to go into the new works too specifically, since you are in the process of completing them, but in these you employ more elements of the traditional narrative--if not only as a platform to subvert it. Is this how the work is evolving?

NB: Beyond the evolution of personal or intellectual properties, certain stories simply require a different telling, different structures, different devices, a different form. The camera is in a different place.



'The Three Swans'
Nin Brudermann 2005
Inkjet Print, framed 35"x41"
From 'The Swan', 2005 (13 min DVD w/sound)

AG: I am a bit of a student of narratology, so I will not bore you with my analysis of your homodiegetic narrative with its achronic structure, blah, blah. What really interests me is the embedded narrative, the narrative within the narrative that you have developed in the new piece, *Baby Vogerl*. It is a rich textual experience--the voice of the witness, speaking in German, the subtitles in English fading in-and-out, and the greater narrator (witnessing the witness), in a subtitle-subtext below that. All of which begins to sound rather complex, but with it you create this kind of central consciousness that has great clarity and authenticity, furthered by the installation, where you bring the viewer into the event.

NB: A Discours, rather than a Histoire; the Besprochene Welt as opposed to the Erzählte Welt. The viewer is present to the extent that they can be...within the story, and then fully immersed in the greater story, which is, in fact, the telling of the story.

(Nin moves to her computer station, where a tangle of wires interconnect multiple keyboards, mixers and flat screens. At a distance, I can see her opening and closing windows, where sound and light levels are being charted.)

AG: Hmm. You are playing with similar ideas as the post-war textual writers, like Spoerri's *Topography*, but in the installations you are taking it

in an entirely new direction by applying openly to the experience of the viewer. What do you want the viewer-reader to come away with?

(And with a grand light in her eyes...)

NB: Well, there are fantastic stories out there, true stories, some vast, some intimate and strangely dramatic, they are, and in some measure secret. Those stories unfold amidst the real world in front of my window, and further out there where there is yet another world to be discovered--and more than one, as Meister Nietzsche already told us. So, I embark my viewers on a trip to a niche world that occasionally opens up almost like a day dream, (or in German) a *Maerchen*--a rumour tale. I don't know if there is an English equivalent, but I hope each story possesses something *komisch*--a strangeness that makes you pause and smile.

And, indeed, within each of Nin Brudermann's work is this *komisch*. Perhaps, it is even something that you glean from her as a person. We continued to chat into the day--tangents of the narrative, the bubble, evidence and non-evidence. And here and there, we touched upon what she imagined for the future.

The Book of the Thousand and One Balloon is an ongoing project. Throughout the year, she will travel to more station-sites, and continue to compose the video installation and actual book. And other works, such as *The Swan* and *Baby Vogerl* will premier. But when I pressed her upon her thoughts for new projects, she led me into another room, pointed to a low chest of drawers and stated, 'This is evidence and I am currently investigating.' Apparently, there will be a detective story, whose documents and other ephemera are already 'interconnecting.' Very much like a detective, she seemed reticent to say very much about it--almost as though anyone of us (perhaps, I, myself) might be insinuated in the mystery. Again, I looked around for the camera.

It was time to stop my antiquated microcassette recorder. As the door of the building closed behind me, I became almost concerned about outcome of the remnants of crepe-cake that remained on my plate on the table of Nin Brudermann.

Brudermann's N.A.S.D. Projekt Fledermaus was presented at Priska C. Juschka Fine Arts, NY, Jan. 21-March 21, 2005. The Swan will be presented in 'BROOKLinVIDEO', Futura Projekt, Prague, opening May 27, 2005.

THE THING, INC is a 501 (c) (3) non-profit organization supported by The Nathan Cummings Foundation, The Rockefeller Foundation, The New York Foundation for the Arts, The National Endowment for the Arts, and The Warhol Foundation. Donations are tax deductible to the extent of the law.

post.thing.net is a lean, mean media machine.