

POLITICS OF RESISTANCE AND MUSICAL CULTURES



Charley Case, Friday, June 18 1999, City of London, 2000

Good Vibes is a video and film programme that proposes a genealogy of cultures which have emerged from the different trends in popular music, from the end of the sixties to present day. The programme presents materials that provide a historical reference point for the *Raymond Pettibon* and *Sonic Process* exhibitions being held at the MACBA between February and June 2002.

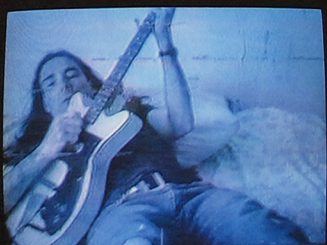
The programme is divided into four sections and includes artworks, documentaries, commercial films and video-clips. The first part (programmes 1 and 2) looks at the context of the genesis of rock as a paradigmatic form and ritual among contemporary popular music genres and some of its precursors in the sixties, with the decline of the "flower generation" in the wake of the May '68 uprisings and the first crises of the Welfare State. The second part (programmes 3, 4, 5 and 6) documents some of the fundamental trends of the seventies, such as punk, glam, funk and the disco culture. The third part (programmes 7, 8 and 9) kicks off with the launch of commercial music television in the early eighties, with the video-clip as its emblematic form, and focuses on the dominance of consumer culture throughout this decade, as well as the resistance to it. Finally, the fourth part (programmes 10, 11, 12 and 13) examines the phenomena of the last decade, particularly the club and dance cultures. It also observes the swaying between commercial culture and the new forms of protest and public expression, which have emerged in a globalised cultural context set by digital technologies and the redefinition of subjectivity arising from new theories and social movements.

COUNTER-HEGEMONIC STYLES

The appearance of youth subcultures is a characteristic phenomenon of the Cold War. Subcultures such as these are formed as symbolic, community-related obligations within the system of the late-capitalist industrial culture. Organised in categories of class, gender and age, they are expressed in the creation of different styles, which are hybrid combinations based on the images and the material culture available to such subcultures. They attempt to build identities capable of providing a relative autonomy within a social order fragmented by differences in class, generation and work.

These styles maintain a constant tension in regard to the capacity for absorption of commercial culture, which, in itself, is able to produce counter-hegemonic styles. Punk is a case in point in that it is a specific mixture of avant-garde approaches, commercial strategies and the transgression of the working class in the context of a portion of British youth whose access to the consumer markets was restrained. Today, it is impossible to define the border between subculture as a means of resistance and consumer culture as a provider of pleasure and, at the same time, a means of hegemony. This presents a challenge to the traditional categories of high and low culture.

Hence, subcultures play a fundamental role in shaping contemporary social identities. The social practices which have arisen in these areas (such as some initially transgressive forms of realising sexuality and gender identities, certain uses of the body associated with drug consumption, or the adoption of forms of make-up and clothes which transgress traditional models of social identity) have led to the systematic questioning of the mechanisms for the social construction of subjectivity and identity. These practices show their ideological roots and lay the foundations for the construction of more plural practices and theorisations, in which multiple minorities can assume forms of auto-representation and public expression. Thus, they can extend their spaces of freedom and develop mechanisms of subjectification which undermine the different structures of social subordination.



Raymond Pettibon, *Sir Dione*, 1989

VIDEO AND FILM PROGRAMME 25 FEBRUARY - 17 JUNE 2002

Screenings in the MACBA auditorium
Monday at 7:00 pm
See programme at the back for details
Admission free
Limited number of seats

Video library and reference area
in the hall of the Museum, until 1 July.
Free admission
Screening hours:
11 am to 7:30 pm daily
10 am to 8 pm Saturday
10 am to 3 pm Sundays and holidays
Closed Tuesdays

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ROCK AND REVOLUTION

Rock My Religion offers a provocative thesis on the relationship between religion and rock in contemporary culture. Dan Graham assembles a story beginning with the Shakers, who practised self-denial and engaged in dance rituals in a state of trance. Graham uses this religious revival as a starting point in order to analyse the emergence of rock as a religion among teenage consumers in the suburban environments of the fifties, placing the ideological and sexual context of rock in Cold-War America. He focuses on the music and philosophy of Patti Smith, who formulated the idea that rock is a religion. This complex audio-visual collage is a convincing theoretical essay on the ideological codes and historical conditions which fuel the cultural phenomenon of rock.

CRYSTAL BALLS, MAKE-UP AND OTHER BELCHES:

NO WAVE, PUNK, GLAM...

Drawings with text by Raymond Pettibon have enjoyed great popularity in the punk circles of San Francisco Bay to such an extent that many have been featured on the record sleeves, posters and flyers of several bands (even in videos, as is the case of Sonic Youth). In 1988, the artist started working with video and produced a number of home-made films. They all show his fascination with North-American counter-culture at the end of the sixties: the Manson family, the kidnapping of Patti Hearst by the S.L.A., the underground and the beginning of the punk movement. This is the central plot of *Sir Drone*, in which the musician Mike Watts (leader of Minutemen) and the artist Mike Kelley play two teenagers trying to set up a punk band in the seventies. The video addresses the ethical and aesthetic issues they have to deal with as two youths growing up in the punk era.

At the beginning of the seventies, the glam movement, which originated in London, managed to change the dialectic of sexual identity. Compared to the idyllic, pastoral style of the flower generation, glam was characterised by the humour and kitsch excesses of its symbols. In a similar way to other musical cultures of the seventies, glam rock stood out due to its radical position with regard to identity. The performances and costumes were directly associated with sexual ambiguity and individual non-conformism. Make-up, lycra and nail painting became an act of affirmation and celebration of a popular culture which, at the same time it was questioning the ideological conditions of sexual identities, adopted new forms of behaviour which broke the prevailing taboos. Subjectivity and the body appeared as something unfinished and malleable, the raw material for a social and aesthetic construction in which pleasure, sex and drugs played a fundamental role. *Velvet Goldmine* tells the story of the rise and fall of a glam rock star. The film is set in eighties London, but as a future seen from seventies London, and produced in the New York of the nineties. It embraces many genres. First of all, it is a love story and a musical; it is also a suspense film and a comedy, but, above all, it is a documentary about the culture of the moment. The film identifies closely with the spirit of glam rock, specifically the idea that reality and art are indistinguishable.

...FUNK AND DISCO

The slogan of the early seventies, "whites can't dance" is the central theme of *Funk Lessons*, a video documenting several performances by Adrian Piper. The African-American artist teaches an audience of white middle-class students some of the basic movements of funk and explains their historical meaning and the role they played in popular African-American culture. Piper seeks to question the social identity of her audience by giving them access to a means of communication (funk) that was inaccessible to whites at the end of the seventies, and to reduce the hostility and lack of understanding which characterises interracial relations in North-American society.

(*Tell Me Why*) *The Epistemology of Disco* looks at the role of disco in forming the gay male identity. This work challenges the concept of the nightclub as a simple space for entertainment and presents it as a cultural space, emerging from the public expression of homoerotic sexuality. The video combines semiotic analyses, excerpts from gay films and disco classics celebrating sexual desire as the historical and political basis for the gay liberation movement that emerged in the sixties, and protests by AIDS activists. The dance floor is also the main social space and setting for the video *Drugs 'R' Us* "You can't call yourself a home nowadays unless you take drugs", a provocative and anonymous comment which provokes the debate about the use of drugs and the style of nightlife

MUSIC TELEVISION AND CONSUMER CULTURE

MTV started broadcasting on August 1, 1981. Since then, its main commercial objective has been to create an audience of young consumers. Its strategies, which back then were little known in television advertising, have had a decisive impact and are full of aesthetic achievements. The channel provided the economic and cultural context which converted the video-clip into a new art form.

This part of the programme examines three aspects of the successes and failures of the video-clip as an audio-visual format. The first is MTV itself, and it therefore presents the bases and creative lines of the new hegemonic paradigm of television. The second is the rebellion of independent labels against the uniformity of the corporate formula through works from the alternative music scene, characterised by counter-culture and anti-commercial anti-aesthetics of resistance. These videos raise questions of local identity, which distinguishes independent music from global pop. The third angle looks at a number of artists working on the fringes of the music industry and features works geared to encourage social intervention and political activism. It shifts the aspects and strategies of commercial television to other spheres, mixing these elements with others from the artistic avant-garde, guerrilla TV or other forms of response.

HIP-HOP: "GLOCAL" CULTURE

Art Jones, an activist of the group Net Channel Zero, has made various videos that reflect on the aspects of hip-hop culture while condemning the latent racism implicit in media accusations, which state that rap music is a vehicle that promotes racial hatred and violence. The first of these is an experimental mini-documentary which asks the question: "What is hip hop?" *Media Assassin* focuses on the news coverage of the African-American music scene in mass-circulation magazines and, at the same time, seeks to define the new musical forms that emerged at the end of the eighties. The video centres on the testimonies of Harry Allen, a former music journalist on the *Village Voice* and currently the PR man for the group Public Enemy. The artist uses images distorted through interference as a metaphor for media distortion of information and a montage that uses the rhythm of rap music as a means of questioning the language and form of the commercial media. *Hip Hop SP* by Francisco Cesa shows the young followers of this cultural movement in the streets of São Paulo. The video portrays a rereading of the history of the Brazilian black community through music, dance and graffiti. *The Darker Side of Black* investigates "gangsta chic", violence, nihilism and the racial position through which a faction of rap culture has managed to dominate the image of black popular culture. The video offers different views on the subject, from extremist groups, such as Bujar Banton (whose hit *Boom Bye Bye* incited people to shoot gays), fans, teachers and civil rights activists. Isaac Julien offers a new viewpoint which sheds light on questions of class, marketing, the colonialist legacy, the fundamentalist faith and fears about the concept of masculinity.

RESISTANCES

Sonic Outlaws, by the independent film-maker Craig Baldwin, uses a varied, disparate and frenzied mixture of interviews and images characteristic of his films. This documentary discusses the activities of the new media pirates who explore the entire available spectrum of these forms of expanding electronic DIY, along with all the questions about freedom and legality such an activity raises. The film-maker widens the debate in order to include other *underground* figures such as the artist John Oswald and the work of music video appropriation of the group Emergency Broadcast Network. He places his work on a cultural axis which goes from Dada and photomontage, to *hackers*, and cultural activists. *Sonic Outlaws*, halfway between a secret subcultural story and a manifesto for political agitation, is a triumph of "low-definition" aesthetics which highlights graphically the near impossibility of controlling the flow of information in the digital age.

Friday, June 18 1989, City of London by Charley Case is a black and white Super 8 film which documents a street party organised by the group Reclaim the Streets, renowned for this kind of activity that reclaims the subversive potential of the carnival and techno raves in the occupation of public spaces with aims of political intervention.

CLUB CULTURES

Long Weekend-XTC, by Rotraut Page, recreates the routine habits of certain types of regular young clubbers. The video consists of a large number of images edited at a frenetic pace and occupies a weekend he spent with a rave; forty-eight hours clubbing. Clubs start to become fashionable, and the chameleonic and opportunistic Madonna knows how to exploit this in her video *Deeper*. *A Smashing Night Out*, by the impresario Matthew Glanville, is an ideal manifesto on nightlife portrayed in a very special way, more specifically in a celebration of the art of going out dancing. This can also be seen in *Dancing in Peckham*, which features an unusual performance by Gillian Wearing in the middle of a shopping centre. The video shows the artist dancing, focusing entirely on herself and being completely unaware of what is happening around her. The scene is reminiscent of experiences at the peak of the hours clubs. In *Buzz-Club* cineasta Dijkstra presents video-portraits of young techno and house fans at a Liverpool nightclub and manages to capture an image of young club culture without seeking to idealise or stereotype it. The video is very different to *My Song* in which Carles Congost parodies the colourful, hedonistic aesthetics of the club in a home-made video clip assembled from excerpts of previous works. Joan Morey adopts this rhetoric as well, in *STP presents Superfornia*, a road-movie style document which illustrates the frivolous nature of the projects made under this label. María Ruido's video *Ethics of Care* shares this same complicity from a critical angle, analysing the superficial nature of this type of youth culture. Similarly, in *Love Care* Leticia Nanji immerses us in her version of the Madrid house scene. Photography and music are combined in a video which pays tribute to the club culture, nightlife and electronic music at the end of the nineties.

SCREENINGS

MACBA Auditorium

PROGRAMME 1: THE END OF THE ILLUSION (AND POP) 25 FEBRUARY

Scorpia Rising (Kenneth Anger, 1964, 28")
Subterranean Homesick Blues (D.A. Pennebaker, 1965, 3")
All My Life (Bruce Baillie, 1966, 3")
Exploding Plastic Inevitable (Ronald Nameth, 1966, 8")
Breakaway (Bruce Conner, 1966, 5")
Boys Electronics (Nam June Paik & Jud Yalkut, 1966-1969, 3")
Tomorrow Never Knows (Eric Siegel, 1968, 3", 10")
Yippies (Youth International Party, 1968, 10")

PROGRAMME 2: ROCK AND REVOLUTION 4 MARCH

A Spy (Hester Reave Does The Doors) (Suzie Silver, 1992, 4")
Rock My Religion (Dan Graham, 1982-1984, 55/27")
20 (Tony Cokes, 2001, 6")

PROGRAMME 3: NO WAVE 11 MARCH

Sir Drone (Raymond Pettibon, 1989, 56")

PROGRAMME 4: PUNK, BETWEEN SUBVERSION AND FASHION 18 MARCH

The Filth and the Fury (Julian Temple, 1999, 90")

PROGRAMME 5: KINGS / QUEENS OF GLAM 15 APRIL

Velvet Goldmine (Todd Haynes, 1999, 126")

PROGRAMME 6: FUNK, DISCO (GAYS) AND DRUGS 22 APRIL

Funk Lessons (Adrian Piper, 1983, 20")
Tell Me Why *The Epistemology of Disco* (John Di Stefano, 1991, 30")
What I Did Last Summer (Charles Atlas, 1991, 12")
Drugs 'R' Us (Tony Gregory, 1994, 24")

PROGRAMME 7: THIS IS MTV 29 APRIL

Video Killed the Radio Star (Russell Mulcahy, 1979, 3")
Boys Keep Swimming (David Bowie & David Mallet, 1979, 3'18")
Ashes to Ashes (David Bowie & David Mallet, 1981, 3'38")
Shock the Monkey (Brian Grant, 1982, 4")
Thriller (John Landis, 1983, 15")
Rend and Georgette Magritte With Their Dog After the War (Joan Logue, 1984, 3'42")
Hey Agnès (John Warhol, 1984, 5")
Embrujada (José Luis Lozano, 1984, 3")
The Wild Boys (Russell Mulcahy, 1984, 3")
Money For Nothing (Steve Barron, 1985, 3")
Hyperactive (Daniel Kleinman, 1985, 3")
Girl from Ipanema Goes to Greenland (Paul Tassie, 1986, 3'55")
Why Can't Be You? (Tim Pope, 1987, 3'22")
Imagine (Zbigniew Rybczynski, 1987, 4'20")
Sign O' The Times (Robert, 1987, 3")
Summer-Love (Carole Ann Klonardes & B-52s, 1989, 30")
Nothing Compares to You (John Maybury, 1990, 3")
I Got You Under My Skin (Jean-Baptiste Mondino, 1990, 3")
Lullaby (Tim Pope, 1990, 4'07")
Vogue (David Fincher, 1990, 4'50")

PROGRAMME 8: BETWEEN CONSUMERISM AND THE AVANT-GARDE 6 MAY

Eloise (The Residents, 1975, 2'05")
Secret Agent Man (Gerald V. Casale, 1976, 4'50")
Mongoloid (Bruce Connor, 1977, 4")
Hello Skinny (The Residents & Graeme Whiffler, 1980, 4")
Boys for Swinging Larvae (Graeme Whiffler, 1981, 5'40")
Beautiful World (Gerald V. Casale & Chuck Statler, 1981, 3'30")
Love Without Anger (Gerald V. Casale, 1981, 2'45")
Once in a Lifetime (Gerald V. Casale & Toni Basil, 1981, 4'20")
America is Waiting (Bruce Connor, 1982, 3'30")
La estatua del jardín botánico (Sergi Capelias, 1983, 3")
Road to Nowhere (David Byrne & Stephen Johnson, 1983, 4'10")
Close to the Edit (Zbigniew Rybczynski, 1984, 4'10")
The Perfect Kiss (Jonathan Demme, 1986, 10'15")
Death Valley '69 (Richard Kern & Judith Barry, 1986, 5'21")
The Dunes in Dead (Derek Jarman, 1986, 4'30")
Infected (Peter Christopheron, 1986, 5")
There's a Light That Never Goes Out (Derek Jarman, 1986, 5'47")
Bizarre Love Triangle (Robert Longo, 1987, 3'50")
Tony Tonic Dursler, 1990, 6'17")
Losing My Religion (Tarsem, 1991, 3")
German Song (Sadie Benning, 1996, 6")
And She Was (Jim Blashfield, 1985, 4'24")

PROGRAMME 9: CRITICAL IMAGES 20 MAY

Fire/Hendrix (Bara Birnbaum, 1982, 3'13")
Perfect Leader (Max Almy, 1983, 4'11")
Go for It, Mike (Mike Smith, 1984, 4'40")
Blue Monday / War Machine (Duvet Brothers, 1984, 4")
Luck Smith (Gustaf Hämos, 1987, 5'55")
Free Society (Paul Garrin, 1988, 3'22")
Talk About the Passion (Jem Cohen, 1988, 4")
Rheman / Just Hold Still (Jem Cohen & Jan Machaye, 1989, 5'30")
The Feeling of Power: 6769 (Robert Beck, 1990, 9")
The World of God (Gasy Glassman & Oza Marika Borofsky, 1991, 3'55")
Noutams (Tom Kalin, 1993, 5")
Utopia (Max Almy, 1994, 5")
No Hell Out... or I want 2b th ultimate commodity / machine (Malcolm XPT.2) (X-PRZ, 1995, 5'37")
Aerobicide (Sadie Benning & Kathleen Hanna, 1998, 4")
A Song from the Cultural Revolution (Les LeVeque, 1998, 5")
Ad Vice (Tony Cokes, 1999, 5'36")

PROGRAMME 10: HIP HOP: "GLOCAL" CULTURE 27 MAY

Media Assassin (Art Jones, 1990, 5")
Hip Hop SP (Francisco Cesar, 1990, 11")
Anthem (Marlon Riggs, 1991, 9")
Rock Me Gung Hey (Shelton Ito, 1992, 5")
Respect is Due (Cyrille Philip, 1992, 10")
The Darker Side of Black (Isaac Julien, 1993, 55")
Guns and Poses (Remix) (X-PRZ, 1995-1997, 12")

PROGRAMME 11: GRUNGE 3 JUNE

Hype! (Doug Pratt, 1996, 1h 23')

PROGRAMME 12: RESISTANCES 10 JUNE

Sonic Outlaws (Craig Baldwin, 1995, 1h 27")
Friday, June 18 1989, City of London (Charley Case, 2000, 5")

PROGRAMME 13: CLUB CULTURES 17 JUNE

Absurd John Maybury, 1990, 5")
Long Weekend-XTC (Rotraut Page, 1992, 2'30")
Deeper (Madonna, 1993, 4")
Dancing in Peckham (Gillian Wearing, 1994, 10")
A Smashing Night Out (Matthew Glanville, 1994, 9'13")
Buzz-Club (Rineke Dijkstra, 1995, 20")
My Song (Carles Congost, 1997, 3")
STP presents Superfornia (Joan Morey, 1998, 4'30")
Ethics of Care (María Ruido, 1999, 7")
Mrs. Peanut Visits New York (Charles Atlas, 1999, 6'05")
Berlin Club Video (WMF, 15, December, 1999) (Rechenzentrum, 2000, 10")
I Love Cars (Lamia Nanji, 2000, 6")

The videos will be shown in their original language version without subtitles.

The programme may be subject to last-minute changes.

VIDEO LIBRARY AND REFERENCE AREA

In addition to the screenings in the auditorium, all of the films and videos included in the programme can be viewed on demand and are complemented by audio-visual and bibliographic materials. These materials will be available in the halls of the Museum until 1 July.