

## **The most powerful image is the figure-eight**

curated by Erik Martinson

We follow the black line of a marker on a white dry erase board as it circles on the one side the D for department (upholders of the law) bisects us (the star in the middle, the trainee) to circle on the other side the C for contact (criminal and public alike). The figure-eight is outlined again and again and we are told that we must disappear to achieve the 'art of representation'. Our subjectivities apparently have no place in law enforcement. We must represent the law to the public, left to right, be its vehicle and mouth piece. Black and white; point blank. Yet, somehow we can't disappear in the middle. Every pass of the marker picks up traces of us and tags either side, it's messier, the way dry erase ink can float on top of that white shiny surface. Each side in turn leaves its imprint on the star in the middle. Shifts in representation are occurring in this way, in this same cycle, and it feels like we aren't in the same one place all the time. We take turns. The way fan culture allows us to re-present sources, to absorb them through fantasy, but to live them out as we chase down guarded cars filled with celebrities du jour. Our voices are connected in their focal points, and go on... Sometimes we can be so easily manipulated it can be hard to understand how it might even happen, or at least, who it would happen to. Spammers are the romantics of our times, robotically Sisyphean to match our flesh version, overcoming us with trans-national transactions. Other times we can feel lost in the images flowing over us, the overwhelming glut of 'difficult to look at' needs to be filed away. If we look closer at these images we can start to see the components separating out into their planes. The visual barriers that we see, the flat physicality of depicted objects, suddenly has a conceptual depth highlighting the inaccessible contextual misery affronting us. There is another glut, our confessionals shared endlessly on YouTube. Who watches? There is always someone. When the body is out of frame and we speak out into the world we are creating a unified narrative, cross-cultural and cross-contextual. We are many authors, we are many viewers, and we are many feelers. We are every part of the figure-eight.

### **This is Living**

Gil Leung, 2011, 4:00, UK

### **Magic for Beginners**

Jesse McLean, 2010, 20:00, USA

### **SPAM: Roosevelt E. Akers**

Cressida Kocienski, 2012, 2:22, UK/Canada

### **A Minimal Difference**

Jean-Paul Kelly, 2012, 5:10, Canada

### **Insideout**

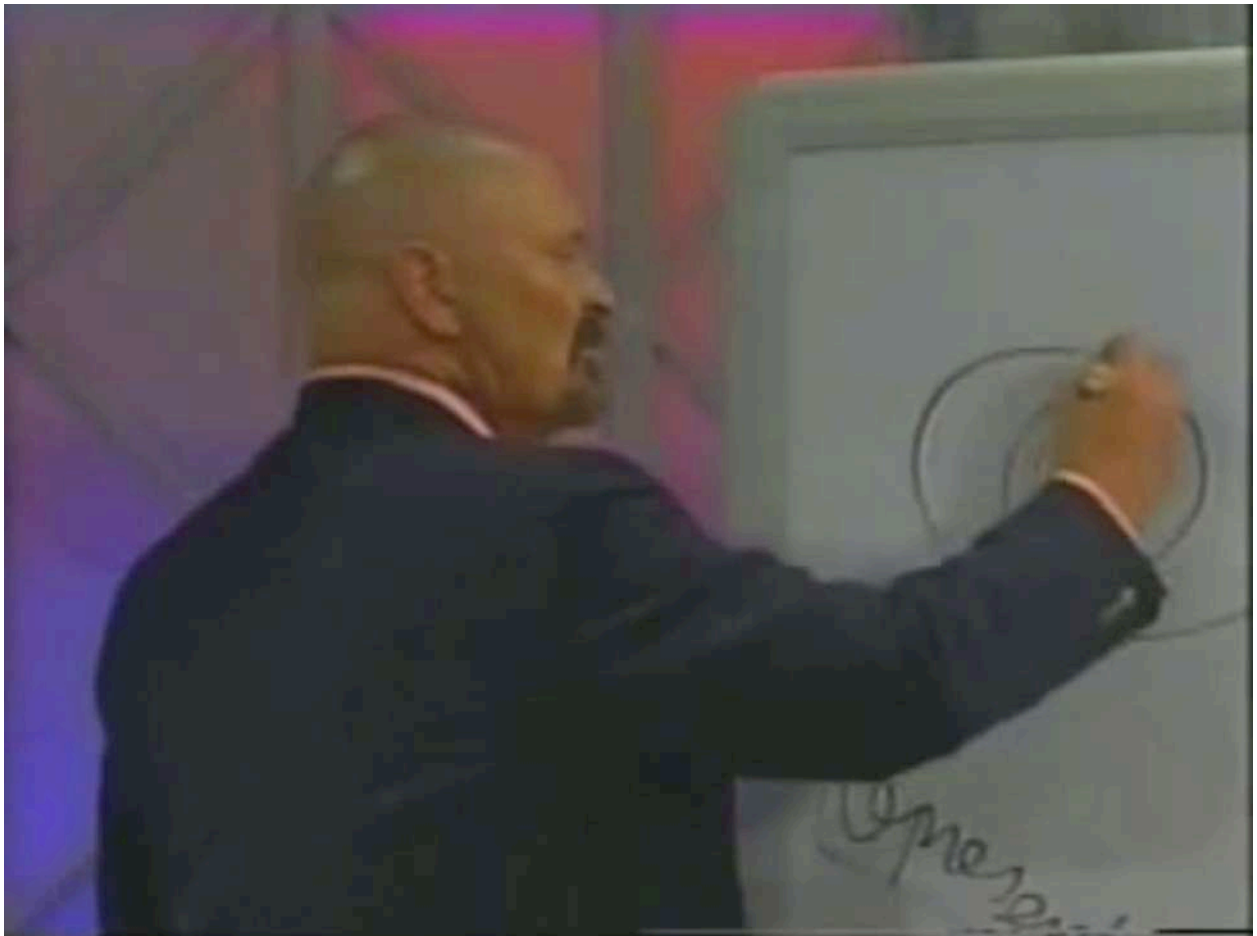
Tonje Alice Madsen, 2010, 25:00, Norway/Germany

## **This is Living**

Gil Leung

2011, 4:00, UK

*This is Living* looks at the issue of representation shifted through discourses on cultural theory, method acting, marriage counseling and policing. Beginning from a power point tutorial on how to show something, the work reflects on the problematic position of the mediator as self-effacing, attempting to disappear in order to better represent another while at the same time necessarily appearing in order to do so. – G. Leung



## **Magic for Beginners**

Jesse McLean  
2010, 20:00, USA

*Magic for Beginners* examines the mythologies found in fan culture, from longing to obsession to psychic connections. The need for such connections (whether real or imaginary) as well as the need for an emotional release that only fantasy can deliver are explored. – J. McLean



## **SPAM: Roosevelt E. Akers**

Cressida Kocienski

2012, 2:22, UK/Canada

Roosevelt E. Akers is a spammer's cumbersome nom de plume, appropriated to generate a micro-fiction as part of a series which considers the form and format of spam in relation to its narrative structures.

Romance scam spam is a trans-national trade in affects, seductions, and humiliating emotional manipulations, which frequently inserts fictions within globally emerging news events to create a shadowy world of man-machine-romance and capital transfer.

This work was commissioned by Shumon Basar, for the Architectural Association in London, UK.

– C. Kocienski



palm fronds danced

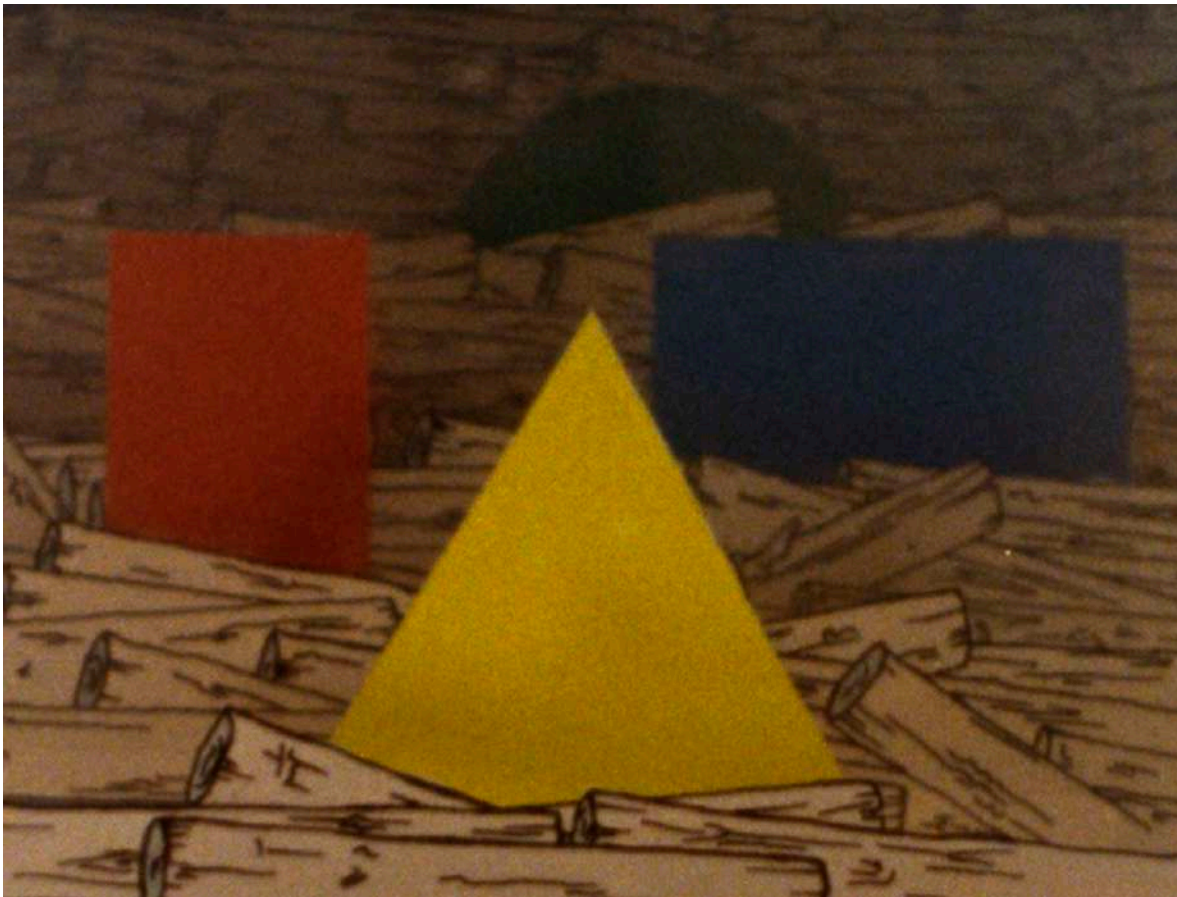
## A Minimal Difference

Jean-Paul Kelly

2012, 5:10, Canada

Referencing pictures from Kelly's ongoing archive of photographs and clippings culled from Google, flickr, and photojournalism, *A Minimal Difference* conflates the material structure of images with the abstraction of a personal experience of seeing. – vtape.org

"*A Minimal Difference* is shot on Super 8 mm film using a multi-plane camera setup, much like early Fleisher Studios or Disney animations. Each scene references receding pictures of visual or physical barriers taken from widely circulated press images (barricades in Bangkok, piled bodies in Haiti, furniture in front of an eviction in Cleveland, destruction in Gaza, etc.) or more metaphoric pictures (a logjam, clouds) - each picture is broken down into visual planes that, when filmed with movement, mimic the perception of optical distance. These layers are further separated by invasive coloured shapes that break the illusion of scene space." – J-P. Kelly



## Insideout

Tonje Alice Madsen

2010, 25:00, Norway/Germany

Constructed from the digital ether of YouTube, the lives of strangers are sutured together. Their compressed confessionals become a narrative that follows the cycle of a day, from dawn, through the day and a very dark night, till dawn again. There are no memorable bodies in frame; it is all in the voice that the self is explored, cameras pointed out and text pointed in. This bodiless exploration of the deeply personal buttresses the unified narrative, forgetting the individual across the shared, dense, pixelated surface of the video image. YouTube is the archive we don't need to remember, just share.

– E. Martinson, notes from *Memorie di uno Smemorato (Memoirs of an Amnesiac)*

