

Conversations

Burger COLLECTION



CONVERSATIONS

Throughout its various projects and endeavors Burger Collection has engaged in conversations with artists, theoreticians, art historians and critics about changing topics related to the exhibition and research project. Through artist talks, interviews featured in catalogues, conversations and seminars Burger Collection has sought a varied discourse about contemporary art and artist practices.

In 2009 to accompany the exhibition *Conflicting Tales: Subjectivity* a catalogue with the same name was published which includes essays by art critics and artists regarding the intricacies and paradoxes of contemporary subjectivity. Numerous artist talks were also held to give further insight into the works exhibited in the show.

In 2011 Burger Collection held a five day seminar that brought together artists, critics and professors to discuss *Showing Without Telling: An Alternative Approach to the Trans-Cultural System of Art?*

From 2012 to 2014 conversations focusing on source materials by artists such as preparatory materials from sketches to newspaper articles, from storyboards to photographs, were documented in booklet form (*Torrent* 2012, 2013, 2014). These featured material from artists' ongoing research archives, unveiling access to their thought processes. The aim was to provide a focused analysis of artistic practices, touching upon the their varied cultural and ideological contexts, and how these influenced their production and reception.

Featured artists, curators, critics and writers in *Torrent*
Muhanned Cader, Philippe Charmes, Enoch Cheung
Hong Sang, Luke Ching Chin Wai, Manuel Cirauqui,
Martha Colburn, Florian Germann, Law Man Lok, Anthony
Leung Po Shan, Robert Lüthi, Nalini Malani, Ng Ka
Chun, Pak Sheung Chuen, David Platzker, Vittorio Santoro,
Robert Storr, Tang Siu Wa, Lam Tung Pang, Annie Wan
Lai Kuen, Lawrence Weiner, Paul Winstanley, Michelle
Wun Ting Wong, Wong Wai Yim, Choi Yan Chi, Francis
Yu Wai Luen, Cally Yu Yeuk Mui

do you think about proportion? I mean just starting from a primal aspect of deciphering how big a picture will be, how small something will be, how readable, how unreadable, but also of course the situation of the spectator moving in space. What are your ideas about that?

NM: Well, I try to work out the scale with drawings. For example by using a simple lamp to try to create a shadow and imitate the space in some sense and to see what would be the scale of that instrument. But the metaphor that I also had was that you have the sign-language which is trying to communicate, and there is a notion aligned here that this instrument can be picked up by a hand, which you see is not in the picture, really, but it is implied that there will be a hand that picks up the instrument to cut up a body. So that feeling of the absence of that hand is very vital to looking at the instrument—this is important. But also it would be a gigantic hand, a big hand that would be trying your fate. So these are things that do play a part: how one puts an object in, and what it is going to do.

DK: Probably most of your works that I have seen exude a vivid sense about the importance of scale. In the 42-part-piece *Linking to the Museum* we [the Burger Collection] showed in Berlin, the image size is always the same, but the imaginary sizes are wildly varied; accordingly in your Documenta piece there is the motif of the "monster", for example, a metaphor for something limitless all of a sudden becoming a mark on the forehead of a human figure. I'm really interested in knowing a little bit more about that kind of play or montage of contrasts in your work.

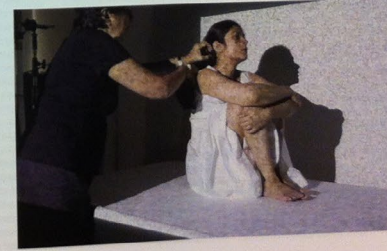
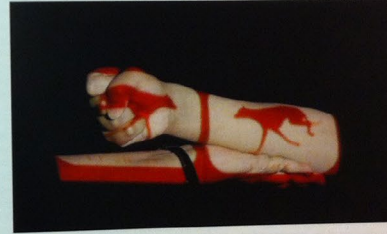
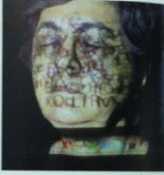
NM: Well, when you look at the monster in the cylinder, in a sense you are not very sure where you are placed, and how large this monster is. In a sense it changes your idea of perspective as it's physical. But the moment you see it on the forehead of the woman it becomes very small—it becomes like a thought, like a thought bubble; and I use a lot of thought bubbles.

DK: Or it becomes an almost Kafkaesque insect-thought.

NM: Yes. Because it is contained within the face, but when you see it solitary in the cylinder it's sort of floating and it's up there so you're not quite sure how to relate to that perspective. And then it goes into other aspects; it also runs with the dogs. The dog is running one way, and the dragon is running the other way, but they almost collide. So you have another layering there.

DK: I think it's fascinating because the critical literature on your work often mentions how the mythic and the everyday collapse or merge in your work. But as we can see, it's not only the motif, but also the physical relation to something that you can contain within your "body space," so to speak; let's just, for a moment, imagine our hands moving forward the way they can, delineating a space in which you can contain a figure, within this space of the everyday so to speak, or individual bodily space, like an extended womb almost. So I'm wondering whether that push is to be found in your work, one towards the space of the everyday—in terms of that bodily space—and whether it is something that you willingly retain in your work while doing larger and larger pieces?

NM: Yes!



Castle Depot Artile Village, Hong Kong



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