

**Extremities:  
deconstruction, contamination and sharing of video in Brazil  
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One of the most striking characteristics of video in the contemporary world concerns its intense mixture in sensory space, capable of transforming it into a central problem of the visual arts. Video has always lived a proliferation of expressions and impurity of form. As a hybrid medium, it has the capacity to transform and influence the most varied artistic manifestations. The extremities of video speak of its semiotic infiltrations into the various fields of the contemporary aesthetic. In this sense, one could say that video has redefined artistic practices in recent decades.

This present selection of works originated from the research project entitled *Extremidades do Vídeo* (conducted under the orientation of Arlindo Machado, PUC-SP, 2004). Its aim is to examine the limitrophic circumstances of the action of video, its expanded space in digital culture and its nature as a medium in which different modes of representation converge. Based on the observation of video in Brazil from the end of the 1960s to the present day, the research results in a critical analysis associated with a database that reflects in mobile form this notion of extremities and maps approximately 100 creators and 2,500 titles of electronic art in Brazil. In order to consider examples and trace the profile of these aesthetic undertakings, this text offers a brief cross-section of works and video-makers.

As a way of analysing the *displacements* and hybrid movements of video, the idea behind *extremities* is to observe the more extreme, decentralized outposts of video. In this process, poetics generated in distinct fields interconnect in relation to videographic language in accordance with a *syntax of video at the extremities*, or a video in its limitrophic procedures of self-annunciation. In this context there are three extreme points of video: deconstruction, contamination and sharing.

Video at the extremities is video that potentizes, gives birth to multiple artistic practices. It is, therefore, video not necessarily translated purely in its indiciality of time and space, but as video that shares with differentiated strategies – beyond the synchronization of electronic images and sound – the direction of a more complex and less pure iconography, one circumscribed as a third party, as a mediatic thought.

**The deconstruction of video**

The deconstruction of video is about expressive gestures that harbour the conscious intent to disassemble videographic language, disassemble some form of mediatic context or image. At first, deconstructive concepts evoke the negation of the medium itself, followed by the need to expand its creative limits. Like a counter-metalinguistic wave, this extremity deals with video as it questions, appropriates and recycles itself by using pre-existing elements within its own code to construct boundary discourses. In this case, one can see, for example, video's deconstruction of television (as in *A Situação* by **Geraldo Anhaia Mello**, a video-performance in which he makes a meta-critique of the discourses transmitted by TV anchormen during the military dictatorship in Brazil), its deconstruction of the traditional documentary (as in *Caipira in - Local Groove*, by **Roberto Sandoval**, **Tadeu Jungle** and **Walter Silveira**, a first person anti-documentary that makes strange with its theme more than it recognizes it), the processes of appropriation of image archives and the cannibalistic recycling among such mediums as cinema and video (as in *Europa em Cinco Minutos* by **Eder Santos**, a work that discusses the (de)banalisation of the image in the contemporary world) and the deconstruction of the so called "documental recordings" (like *Veracruz*, by **Rosangela Rennó**, in which she uses an iconoclastic tactic to discuss the objectivity/subjectivity of these recordings, as well as the question of the imaginary and memory in the realm of techno-visual culture). In its deconstructive forms, video gives ground to insubordinate manifestations at the core of symbolic audiovisual production. This is about getting to know the videographic medium in some of its most contentious and subversive conducts of the contemporary imagetic.

### **The contamination of video**

The deconstruction of video deals with expressive gestures that contain a conscious intention to disassemble videographic language, to disassemble a given mediatic context or image. Deconstructive concepts initially evoke a negation of the medium itself, followed by the need to expand its creative limits. Like a counter-metalinguistic wave, this extremity speaks of a video that questions itself, that self-appropriates and recycles itself.

The *contamination of video* is a moment in which video potentizes through its dialogue with other languages. In this type of conceptual clash one can see the general circuit of means of expression being contaminated by the signic conglomerate that represents video. In this sense, the creative strategies start off from a problematic stemming from the videographic context and associate with other communicational processes. This is the case with dialogues between video and performance, between video and theatre and between video, music and television.

### **The sharing of video**

Video arrives to us in a form already transmuted by communication networks, through actions that utterly accentuate the decentralization of its language and which often make it share the logic of telematic networks, databases, archives and virtual environments produced on-line. This extremity of video concerns its presence in the circuit of networks and interactive contexts, where video ceases to present itself as a particular element of aesthetic apprehension and melds, in a collaborative way, with other discursive strategies. This third extremity relates to video in the characteristics it shares with the contexts of new media. In these circumstances video constitutes itself as a de-territorialized and nomadic field. In this sense, one can observe artistic actions in which the videographic medium shares such environments as slow scan television, as presented in *Explicit Grafitti* by **Artur Matuck**; interactive hypermedia formats (such as the CD-ROM entitled *Valetes em Slow Motion*, by **Kiko Goifman**) and digital TV; websites that link web cams and their images produced and distributed in multipoint; the aesthetic of play found in the mathematical contexts of virtual reality and videogames (as in *Desertesejo* by **Gilberto Prado**); the micro-narratives laid out in blogs; as well as in the on-line management of web-based audiovisual databases (such as *Web Paisagem 0* by **Giselle Beiguelman, Marcus Bastos** and **Rafael Marchetti**), and in the dynamics of non-linear navigation on DVDs (as in *O Tempo Não Reconciliado* by **Lucas Bambozzi**).