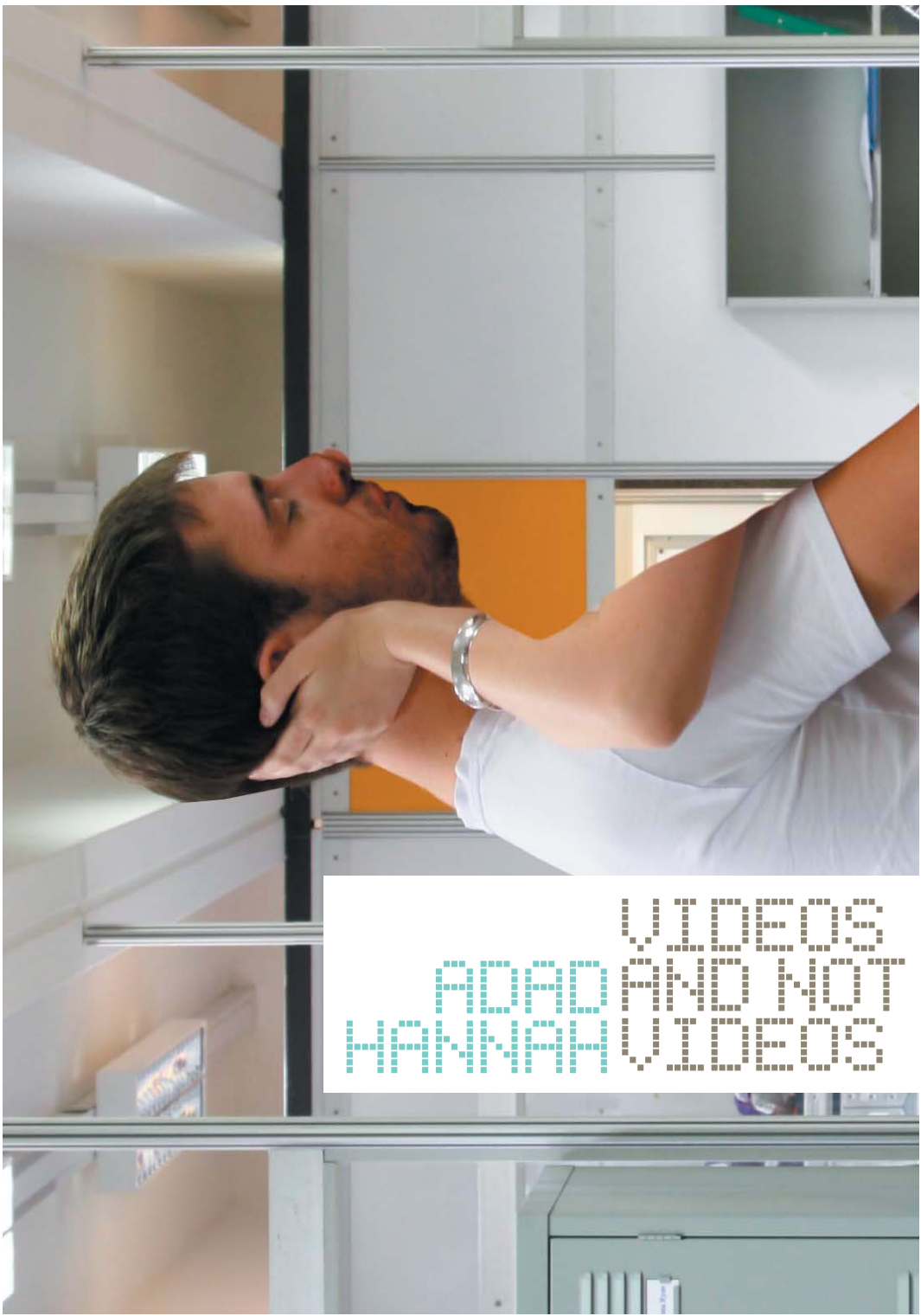


MONASH University
Art & Design

FACULTY GALLERY



VIDEOS
ADAD AND NOT
HANNAN VIDEOS

VIDEOS
ADAD AND NOT
HANNAH VIDEOS

ADAD HANNAH VIDEOS AND NOT VIDEOS

Adad Hannah is best known for a series of silent video projections collectively titled *Stills*.¹ *Stills* are reminiscent of *tableau vivants*, a nineteenth-century theatrical entertainment in which performers/models struck a pose, often derived from classical painting, and held it for extended periods of time as living statues. *Tableaux vivants*, when photographed, become mere tableaux. Photography kills the *vivant*. Life requires presence; presence requires duration.

Moving pictures can be derived from still ones – technologically, film necessarily followed and was dependent on photography – but photography cannot be derived from film without the loss of duration. Film contains photography in a way that photography cannot contain film.

Traditionally, time has been viewed as an endless, divisible continuum. The two dominant metaphors are of moments strung together, like pearls on a string, or the flow of a river, passing inexorably from future to present to past in such a way as to make the present continuously ineffable. In this model, time is external to experience, like a river we step into, separate from our existence and flowing always at the same rate. Phenomenologists discard this transcendent concept of time in favour of a model based on time as immanent, lived, experienced. “We do not live ‘in time,’ as if the latter were some independent, abstract flow external to our being. We ‘live time’; the two terms are inseparable.”²

It is no coincidence that questions of existence and time became central to philosophy contemporaneously with the development of motion pictures; the technology itself poses the questions. What is the difference between photography and film, still and motion pictures? Is film *photography + time* or is it something more? A mechanistic view, one that conceives of time in the traditional sense, would say that, indeed, motion pictures are a series of still images presented sequentially. For André Bazin, influenced by the phenomenologically based philosophy of Bergson and his own somewhat mystical Catholicism, film was *photography + time + x*, *x* being an aspect of time that had remained inadequately conceptualized. Hannah’s *Stills*, moving images that refer to photographic images, also pose this question. For Bazin, this something else, this *x* in the equation, was duration. Duration, for Bazin, was spiritual: it could breathe. Filmic images were in the world, and depicted the world, in a manner fundamentally different from photographic ones.³

In “The Ontology of the Image,” Bazin develops his most famous metaphor for film: the mummy complex. Humans have an unconscious need, according to Bazin, to defeat time. This need is based on the inevitability of death, of course, but not limited to it: the decay of things and the entropy of systems are parallel traumas. Bazin posits Egyptian mummy making as an initial technology of representation against time and death and entropy, a starting point for Western art history. Hence film as “change mummified.” This conceptualization, which places film in a teleological progression of representational technologies against death, supposes that film is derived from photography.⁴ But Hannah’s project is a reversal of this: to extract moving image from the photograph. Not “change mummified” but “stasis zombified.”

Steve Reinke

FAMILY STILLS, 2004



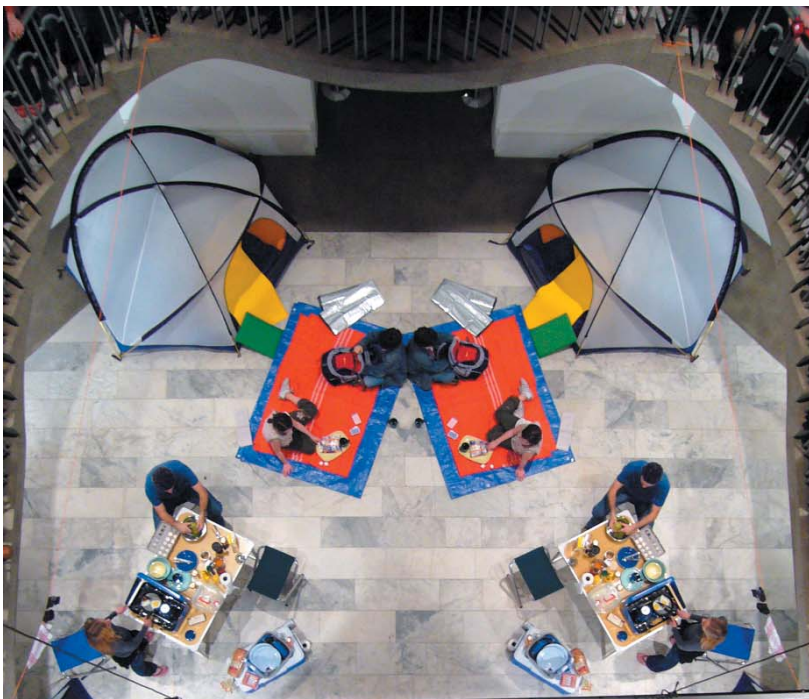
left: Abuji (father), *Family Stills* 2004
below: Cheezies, *Family Stills* 2004











ROOM 112. 2004







Adad Hannah was born in New York in 1971 and was raised in London and Vancouver. Hannah currently lives and works in Montreal, Canada and is represented by Pierre-François Ouellette Art Contemporain, Montréal.

His has most recently exhibited at Canberra Contemporary Art Spaces, 2007; Vancouver Art Gallery, 2007; National Gallery of Canada, 2006; Seoul Metropolitan Museum, 2006; La Casa Encendida, Madrid, 2006; Neuer Berliner Kunstverein, Berlin, 2005; WRO 05 11th International Media Arts Biennale, Poland, 2005; G39, Cardiff, 2005; Viper, Basel, 2004; SeNef Festival/Ilmin Art Museum, Seoul, 2004; Mediakunst Tour, Groningen, Amsterdam, and Nijmegen, 2004 and Artist's Space, New York, 2003. adad-hannah.com.au

Adad Hannah is currently participating in the Visiting Artist Program at the Faculty of Art & Design, Monash University.

Steve Reinke is an artist and writer best known for his work in video. His work is widely collected (MoMA, New York; National Gallery, Ottawa; Centre Pompidou, Paris; etc.) and screened (IFFR Rotterdam, Oberhausen, Sundance, etc.). In 2006 he was awarded the Bell Canada Prize in Video Art. Coach House Books recently published a collection of his scripts, "Everybody Loves Nothing" and he co-edited (with Chris Gehman) "The Sharpest Point: Animation at the End of Cinema." He is associate professor of Art Theory & Practice at Northwestern University. He has a blog at www.fennelplunger.com and an archive of his work at www.myrectumisnotagrave.com.

A version of this essay was included in *Image & Imagination*, edited by Martha Langford for Le Mois de la Photo à Montréal, 2005 McGill-Queen's University Press. www.mqup.mcgill.ca/book.php?bookid=1858

- 1 An earlier version of this essay accompanied the exhibition *Adad Hannah: "Folk" and "Still"* at Gallery TPW in Toronto in 2004. It is available online at www.gallerytpw.ca
- 2 George Steiner, *Martin Heidegger* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1978), 78.
- 3 André Bazin, "The Ontology of the Photographic Image," in his *What Is Cinema?* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1967).
- 4 Philip Rosen, *Change Mummified: Cinema, Historicity, Theory* (Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press, 2001).

Videos and not videos

Adad Hannah
Faculty Gallery, Monash Art & Design
17 May – 27 June 2007

Catalogue design Mary Callahan
Catalogue published by Faculty Gallery,
Art & Design May 2007 edition 400 (?)

ISBN

© 2007 Faculty Gallery, Monash Art & Design,
the artist and authors
Essay © Steve Reinke

The views and opinions expressed in this catalogue are those of the authors. No material whether written or photographic, may be reproduced without the permission of the artist, authors and Faculty Gallery, Monash Art & Design.

Faculty Gallery
Monash Art & Design
900 Dandenong Road
Caulfield East 3145
Victoria, Australia
T: +61 3 9903 2882
E: gallery@artdes.monash.edu.au
www.artdes.monash.edu.au/gallery
Mon - Fri 10am - 5pm, Sat 1 - 5pm

Gallery Director Lisa Byrne
Gallery Director (2007) Angela Brophy

The Faculty Gallery would like to thank the artist,
Pierre-François Ouellette Art Contemporain,
Montreal and Abacus Rent It, Melbourne

LIST OF WORKS

Family stills 2002-04
2 channel digital video projection, DVD
courtesy of the artist and Pierre-François
Ouellette Art Contemporain, Montréal

Internal logic: Camping 2007
set of 5 cibachrome prints
all 50 x 70 cm
documentation of performance at
Vancouver Art Gallery 2007
courtesy of the artist and Pierre-François
Ouellette Art Contemporain, Montréal

Embrace 2007
2 channel digital video projection, DVD and installation
courtesy of the artist and Pierre-François Ouellette Art
Contemporain, Montréal

Room 112 2004
2 channel digital video projection, DVD
courtesy of the artist and Pierre-François Ouellette Art
Contemporain, Montréal