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Bodies without Bodies. Queer Desire as Method

Translated by Dream Coordination Office (Lisa Rosenblatt and Charlotte Eckler)

not-showing

In 1991 Felix Gonzalez-Torres began exhibiting a series of works made up of arrangements of small, detailed objects, namely hard candies (fig. 1-4).[1] What meets the eye aren't sugary lumps of an often indiscriminate yellowish color, but instead, the wrappers. In one work he uses a brand of candy that comes wrapped in silver cellophane. Large numbers of these wrapped candies laid out on the floor create a vast, reflecting rectangle with a metallic shimmer. The name of the piece is ›*Untitled*‹ *(Placebo – Landscape – for Roni)* (fig. 1). In another work, the candies are wrapped in various brightly colored bits of cellophane and piled up in the corner as a colorful mound. This work is named ›*Untitled*‹ *(Ross)* (fig. 2). These works offer no direct political positioning, they refrain from a concrete reference to the events of daily politics, and likewise, make no clear break with the museum as a bourgeois institution. They forego any signs that might make them recognizable at first glance as an artistic practice contextualized by debates on sexual identity and origins. Contrary to queer photographic works by Catherine Opie, Del LaGrace Volcano, or Sarah Lucas, to cite but a few examples, there are no visible bodies that challenge or rework dual-gendered and heterosexual norms, viewing regimes, or conventions of depiction. The work doesn't take up a particular regulating body discourse on sexual or gender politics and reproduce it by means of text, sound, or illustration. To gather building blocks for queer theory, I became involved with the question of what it is that actually allows this installation to be identified as *queer*. What queer politics does it practice and what queer-

theoretical considerations are suitable for grasping these artistic-political strategies?

I understand these works by Gonzalez-Torres as a »representation of bodies without bodies« (see Spector 2007: 139ff)[2] and would like to pursue the theory that they represent queerly embodied subjectivities without undertaking the attempt to depict them visually. The staged spaces represent the desire for diverse, plural, not clearly demarcated affiliations or ›belongings‹ beyond the ideals of a two-gender system, heterosexuality, and being an artist and U.S. American. However, they refrain from explicitly showing bodies that are meant to represent a deviation from or non-fulfillment of the norm.

the collapse of syntax

The candy installation ›*Untitled*‹ *(Ross)* has an ideal weight stated as 175 pounds. According to information provided by the catalogue and museum staff, this corresponds with the body weight of the person named in the title of the work. The name is a reference to Gonzalez-Torres's life partner, Ross Laycock, who died of AIDS in 1991, the year the work was created. There is, indeed, a body represented, although it is done so only by means of a linguistic sign, the title, which is added to the visual sign, the pile of colorful hard candies.

In order to clarify which form of representation is offered here and which denied, I would like to call forth the art historical context that frames Gonzalez-Torres's work.[3] First, a classical work from so-called Conceptual art of the 1960s, *One or three Chairs* by Joseph Kosuth (1965). This work shows three portrayals of the same object: the chair as object, a photograph of the same chair, and a linguistic portrayal in the form of an enlarged dictionary entry for the word chair (in English). Should the work be sold or loaned, it would comprise simply an enlargement of the dictionary entry and written instructions to select a chair as object and take a photo of it. The work can, accordingly, be distributed and used also beyond the art market (see Buchmann 2007: 37). The aim is to evade artistic gesture and style, and any possible value they might create, which is further reinforced by the stark refusal of every deviation from the meaning ›chair.‹ The three signs refer to one another and can also replace one another. According to this concept, language can enter in place of an object or a picture resting on the same social convention.

Like other works by Gonzalez-Torres, ›*Untlitled*‹ *(Ross)* takes up particular strategies from Conceptual art. Quite similar to works by Kosuth, for this piece there is simply a certificate with instructions from the artist on which objects to buy for the installation and how to then install the work

(see also Föll 2007: 105). Since a title is chosen that adds an obviously crucial meaning, »(Ross),« here, too, visuality and object are not thought of as separate from language. However, different than with Kosuth, the linguistic and visual signs are in no way modes of depiction that could replace one another. The candies do not bring to mind memories of *Ross* and *Ross* does not make us think of candies. The weight of the candies, which refers to the weight of a body, cannot be recognized by appearances: no visual sign is employed that refers to an individual body or produces a similarity to a living or deceased person. In addition, there is an entire series of similar works by Gonzalez-Torres—piles or rectangular fields of candies in bright colors or in silver cellophane—that all have different titles. ›*Untitled*‹ *(Lover Boys)*, 1990 (fig. 3), ›*Untitled*‹ *(Welcome Back Heroes)*, 1991, and ›*Untitled*‹ *(Public Opinion)*, 1991 (fig. 4) all make concrete socio-historical references, but the connection between the names and the candy objects remains arbitrary and it is this arbitrariness that is highlighted. Rather than using tautological multiplication to prevent other meanings from being added to the visual signs, like Kosuth did, exhibited here is that a variety of meanings can most definitely be applied to the sign ›candies.‹ And these meanings can be applied in a way that abandons conventional language use. The series of diverse works, per se, produces a reference to the process of assigning meaning as a social practice—an indicative gesture, which is further emphasized by the prefix ›untitled‹ added to the name of all of the works. The convention that the title of a work—as with Kosuth's *One or three Chairs*—doubles or explains the presented visual sign, is broken with.

The candies do not show Ross Laycock's body or face. His body, and also every other body that might have the first name ›Ross‹ remains invisible in the work. By foregoing any visualization of Ross, gay men, or HIV/AIDS patients, the work does not allow one to take a voyeuristic position toward it and ask, for example, if a person named Ross's body showed traces of illness, if he seemed full of despair or relaxed, or if he was an attractive, loving partner to the artist. Instead, a different topography is drafted: the space that the work ›*Untitled*‹ *(Ross)* creates can be seen as a heterotopy, as a site at which the syntax, which Michel Foucault claims »causes words and things … to ›hold together‹« (Foucault 1970: xviii), is shattered. At issue is a visualization process which, by establishing visibility, allows a collapse in the meaning conventions in the relationship between the visible and the words. My theory is that staging a collapsing syntax in this installation enables representation and production of subjectivities that add up to more than the performative repetition of social norms. At the same time that meaning is bestowed, meaning conventions are withdrawn. Stuart Hall defines this type of process as »articulation,« as a re-articulation of diverse

elements, which is possible because these elements do not possess any necessary connection, or »belonging« as Elspeth Probyn puts it (Hall in Grossberg 1986: 53, Probyn 1996: 5). Such a process allows for thinking and practicing social change.

no palm trees

I am interested in what it is that enables Gonzalez-Torres's work to be understood as a representation of queer subjectivities although these are not visually represented in his work, or perhaps precisely because they are not.

The withdrawal of meaning conventions leads at first to his own remarks, such as those made in interviews, to be granted special weight and become part of the work. For example, Gonzalez-Torres states in a commonly quoted conversation that he doesn't fit in the role of a token. He thereby takes a critical stance toward the offer of acting as representative of a marginalized group to generate esteem within the art world, a role that includes the unspoken condition (often supported by granting or withholding resources) of representing this group by means of one's work. »We have an assigned role that's very specific, very limited. As in a glass vitrine, ›we‹ – the ›other‹ – have to accomplish ritual, exotic performances to satisfy the needs of the majority.... Who is going to define my culture? It's not just Borges and García Marquez, but also Getrude Stein and Freud and Guy Debord – they are all part of my formation« (Gonzalez-Torres 1993, from Muñoz 1999: 165f). Queer theorist José Esteban Muñoz comments on Gonzalez-Torres's strategy of not explicitly taking up identity in his work: »By refusing to simply *invoke* identity, and instead to *connote* it, he is refusing to participate in a particular representational economy« (ibid.). What does it mean to not »invoke« identity, but instead, to »connote« it? Muñoz explains this with reference to the opaque character of a work by Gonzalez-Torres: one must ask »What is that?« in order to understand it. A rational understanding or direct knowledge that can be derived from what is shown or said is thereby displaced. Yet this type of opacity is characteristic for a number of so-called avant-garde works, which means that it does not clarify why the work is considered a representation of *queer* subjectivities. My thoughts are: since meaning conventions are revoked, *specificities*—conceptual representations of art, AIDS, or homosexuality—are replaced by the possibility to connect with singular narrations and biographies. Whereas the formal design produces a connection to knowledge about the work of Conceptual art and Minimal art and experience with these art works, the citing of the name Ross refers beholders who are informed about Gonzalez-Torres to emotional ties, loss, and death of a partner by

AIDS, gay friendship, love, and sex. In order to further pursue the way in which these connections function, I would like to insert the concept of fantasy.

sharing fantasies

Teresa de Lauretis uses the concept of fantasy to develop a concept of social change that does justice to the power of public images and fantasies, but at the same time, makes it possible to change these (Lauretis 1994). In this, she relies on the fact that both public as well as individually meaningful images, and conscious as well as unconscious processes flow into the scenarios of fantasies, which include ideas and images as well as daydreams and nocturnal dreams, whose complex, possibly contradictory repertoire delivers material for re-stagings (ibid.: 75). Here, I would like to once again refer to a historical conceptual work: Vito Acconci's 1972 video *Undertone*. In the video we see center stage another everyday object, a table, filmed for thirty minutes with a still camera; the table top ends at the lower edge of the screen so that the beholder's view rests on the table top, whereas the view under the table is curtly refused. We see the protagonist—the artist himself—at the back edge of the table on a chair. He moves his arms under the table and speaks. Since all of the actions that the video relates take place under the table, beyond the beholder's field of vision, the table—as the title *Undertone* also points out—is merely provocation for a fantasized happening, which similar to the acting body that is referred to, is represented exclusively by the protagonist's words: »I want to believe. There is a girl under the table.« Whereas the protagonist continually states the name of the central visible object of the video, the ›table,‹ at the same time, he describes sexual acts that someone under the table carries out with or on him. The fantasized scene elucidates to what extent a table is not simply a table. The two involved/fantasized characters take different positions with relation to the table, to one another, and to the beholder. One could interpret this scene as an »interpellation« (Althusser 1971: 174), in which social positions are meted out that quote and also produce hierarchically organized heterosexual practices. The protagonist, who does not exactly quote a pose of ideal heterosexual masculinity with his long hair, slight physique, soft voice, and slightly bowed position, fantasizes himself in the social position of a man who profits from a woman's sexual services. After he gives an account of the scene, the protagonist takes his arms out from under the table and addresses the beholders: »I need to know you are there facing me.... Listening to me... Forcing me to keep talking to you.« The fantasies thus apparently rely on the ability to share them with the beholders: the beholders listen to, and are likewise part of

the fantasy. A scene of interpellation arises that assigns also the beholders a place—that of voyeurs caught off guard in front of the keyhole, aware of their role and duly ashamed—although the voyeuristic gaze of the described *object*, the woman under the table, is denied.

Elsewhere I have suggested crossing the interpellation and its clear arrangements depicted by Louis Althusser—the police officer calls to the subject »Hey, you there!« and the subject turns back—with Lauretis's concept of fantasy and comprehending it as a *sexual scene* whose characters and their syntax can be rearranged through the work of fantasy. In this way, interpellation is understood as a social practice involving several participants, which permits the reworking or multiplying of social positions (Lorenz 2007: 48). Beholders of *›Untitled‹ (Ross)* would correspondingly be part of a sexual scene that they likewise view from outside—as beholders. According to Lauretis, the public images and narrations form and structure the psychic life of the subject in such a way that the psyche is not understood as an individual apparatus, but rather, as a social apparatus that is found precisely at the border of the individual and social, the public and private. Meanings are reproduced, but also conferred in new ways in this particular, singular combination and contextualization of the pictures. In the second part of his work, Acconci mumbles the same words. In this case, however, »I want to believe there is a girl…« is replaced by the notion of him carrying out the sexual acts himself, so that the voyeuristic scene unwinds simply between him and the viewers.

Two years later, the artist Susan Mogul produced a reenactment of *Undertone*. Her video *Take off* (1974, 10 min.) is an exact reconstruction of the arrangement from Acconci's video. She repeats the words: »There is no woman under the table, there is no man under the table. There is only my vibrator under the table.…« The sexual fantasy formulated in Acconci's video is hereby revealed as one that is not shared in the same way by everyone. The double negation »no woman,« »no man,« generates, first of all, the idea that either a woman or a man would be considered for a sexual interaction with the woman protagonist. The vibrator enables, in addition, the evocation of a third sexual fantasy for which neither a man nor a woman are necessary. The protagonist/artist pulls the vibrator from under the table, explains where she got it, how it works, and how many batteries it takes. This exposes the fantasy as a fabricated product of social and collective practices that include, for example, sharing a vibrator among women friends and debates within the women's movement about sexuality outside of heterosexual relations. It is the product of material inventions that enable these practices. Mogul's video shows that the fantasies linked to the table differ from public, hetero-normative fantasies, can »take off« from these, and in this way generate other subjectivities. Although in both videos the table is addressed as a table, different images can link up with it.

They are singular images that address a story of its use or project a possible use. Nonetheless, these images, as singular images, maintain connections to a history of power, gender hierarchy, and heteronormativity. As Kaja Silverman claims, experiences, conscious or unconscious images, allow a »productive« linking of objects with narratives that are not generated or limited by social norms (Silverman 1996: 180-185). The way of handling the vibrator presented by Mogul additionally points out that the social effectiveness of fantasies rests on beholders becoming accomplices, that is, that there is a common history of criticism of hetero-normative assumptions or a shared chuckle at the implicit sexism in Acconci's video.

Now to return to the work by Gonzalez-Torres. Here, an arbitrary connection is produced between various signs and a momentary consensus with the beholders about this connection, allowing the candy object, which does not permit an isolated understanding of itself as representative of queer experience, to be linked with a unique, singular queer story through the activity of the fantasy. Thus, »connoting« an identity, rather than »evoking« one—José Muñoz's description of Gonzalez-Torres's work—would accordingly be the activity of productive fantasies, which allows, in defiance of social conventions, connecting signs with various and possibly also contradictory aesthetic, emotional, and affective meanings and with a history of other practices. This history of other practices, for its part, belongs to a collective queer history and the social contexts, forms of resistance, and emotional states that are connected with this narrative.

A *take off* of this kind becomes even clearer when the installation by Gonzalez-Torres is viewed as a direct reworking of famous avant-garde art works. For example, ›*Untitled*‹ *(Go-Go Dancing Platform)* from 1991, a gray cube that is furnished with a row of light bulbs on the top outer edge, makes reference to the gray cube by Robert Morris from the 1960s. ›*Untitled*‹ *(Placebo)*, the rectangular field of candies wrapped in silver cellophane, takes up the heavy metal sculptures by Carl André, also from the 1960s. One could say that these works ›pass‹ as progenies of Minimal art. They are made of materials that, from a distance, resemble steel, but also allow other connotations and can be used in different ways. They can, namely, be eaten, sucked, or taken home. Rather than liberating the material from all social gesture, as Carl André intended for his own sculptures (see Gonzalez-Torres 2006: 74), the placing together of objects and titles links the material with social discourses and practices, such as the so-called AIDS crisis or gay sex. The identity that is connoted produces a type of pieced-together, collective subjectivity that is composed of various singular images, experiences, and impressions, rather than invoking a category or a specificity on which there is a social consensus, and which sets and confines the picture of the Other.[4]

outside belongings

Elspeth Probyn identified this type of subjectivity as »outside belongings« in her eponymous book (Probyn 1996). Her reflections are directed against a concept of identity that sets difference as an absolute. At the same time, she stresses the significance of »belongings,« regardless of whether someone finds themselves outside of them, or if the »belongings« are located outside—an ambiguity that Probyn does not resolve. »Outside belongings« is used in the plural: there are always different belongings that are desired, but cannot be had. Possible instead are movements that approach these belongings or distance themselves from them. In this way, in listing the cultural references that he draws from, Gonzalez-Torres points out particular artists from Latino culture, queer culture, as well as the avant-garde art tradition who have all been part of his experiences, his picture production, and his thinking. The visualizations that he produces are social in that they continue with certain other visualizations, compete or break with them. They are thereby a constitutive part of *crossing* through[5] various social positions and the necessary reworking of the interpellations associated with them. As Probyn shows, we do not live belongings as »specificities,« which she conceives as generalized social categories, but as »singularities« (Probyn 1996: 9). Gonzalez-Torres thus refers to Jorge Luis Borges and Gabriel García Marquez rather than *Latino culture*, to Gertrude Stein rather than *queer culture*. The concept of »outside belongings« thus enables depersonalizing identity without taking away a desire for the significance and effectiveness of belonging. A desire that can be seen, as Probyn says, on the street, at queer conferences, in feminist magazines, or, one could add, in exhibition spaces (ibid.: 25). According to Probyn, *queer* is a method of »making strange of belonging« (ibid.: 68).

queer space sex as method

Since beholders, candy objects, and »outside belongings« are part of a topography, I'm interested in the role that the relationship between space and desire plays in the way that ›*Untitled*‹ *(Ross)* represents queer subjectivities.

Linda Hentschel brought the category of sexuality into the visual space and conceived the relationship of beholders to a space/image as analogous to sexual practices (Hentschel 2001). She identifies the visual desire that is tied to a system of representation provocatively as *raumsex*[6] to emphasize the productivity of visual settings with regard to social concepts of sexuality and gender (ibid.: 34ff). Hentschel concentrates, however, on one system of representation that is identified as ›Western‹ by its organization on the

central perspective, according to which, she writes, a beholder positioned as a man, experiences the spatial setting in pictures of a woman's body (ibid.: 12ff). The interaction between the beholder, his body, and the pictorial space runs accordingly along the lines of the sexual technique of penetration, which can easily be spelled out using the example of Acconci's *Undertone*. But what would result from viewing a work—for example, an installation by Gonzalez-Torres and the interaction that it invites—under the aspect of a queer *raumsex*? It would mean, first of all, understanding this visual, spatially organized setting as one that enables productively intervening in the relationship between sexuality and sociability.

As Probyn says, and also Judith Butler and Teresa de Lauretis, sexuality is a medium that creates connections occurring between individuals/subjects and the social realm. It is a mode of self representation and reflection, so that standing before the work, beholders reflect on their own social positioning in the world and experience it as maneuverable. At the same time, as Butler states, sexuality is also the mode that erodes the subject's autonomy and puts us at the mercy of others, makes us dependent on others. Butler subsumed this fundamental dependency under the term »precariousnesses« (Butler 2004: 23) and depicted it as a body's »public dimension« (ibid.: 21). As sexual beings, we are vulnerable through our needs, power, deceit, compulsion, and fantasies; according to Butler, we project desires and these are projected onto us. »Sexuality is not simply an attribute one has or a disposition or patterned set of inclinations. It is a mode of being disposed toward others, including in the mode of fantasy, and sometimes only in the mode of fantasy. If we are outside of ourselves as sexual beings, given over from the start, crafted in part through primary relations of dependency and attachment, then it would seem that our being beside ourselves, outside ourselves, is there as a function of sexuality itself« (ibid.: 33). If sexuality and sexual desire do not »belong to us,« do not define our identity, but on the contrary, even indicate that what comprises us exists outside of us, a visualization of sexuality and desire is thereby always also a practice of precarizing subjectivity.[7] A subjectivity arises that is defined through the fact that it has connections with others, which occur, to no small degree, through the activity of fantasy. Desire becomes queer, says Probyn, in the way that it creates or dissolves connections between pictures, situations, and affects. It is desire that allows movement and interest to arise at all. A specific »surface« forms from each of the connections, one that is structured along rhizomatic interlacings of various vectors of desire and precisely not by the monolithic arrangement of the central perspective.

The manner in which ›*Untitled*‹ *(Ross)* creates or refuses visibility enables a sexual scene to develop here in which elements are arranged *closer* or *further away*. It is therefore not bodies that are represented, but *bodies in space*, a maneuverable topography into which also beholders insert

themselves. The work of Gonzalez-Torres further promotes this sort of inquisitive connection, as the beholders of ›*Untitled*‹ *(Ross)* and of other candy works are expressly advised to eat the candies and thereby reduce the (body) weight of the work—through to the threat of its disappearance. For those who are informed about the weight of the work and what it means, eating the candies implies a disappearance of the dying body. Yet since the certificate calls for an »endless supply,« the work will be constantly replenished. Various reviewers have made the connection between sucking the hard candies and (gay) oral sex. It can be concluded that more than the sense of sight is involved in the perception of this work. Beholders find themselves in the situation of a randomly composed group involved in diverse belongings and presentations of sex, connecting—while sucking individually, but also collectively—with a work composed of small pieces, which is presented as a gay body, and which links this activity as well as their visual impressions of the work with images that they know and have experienced.

As mentioned, Probyn identifies queer desire as »method.«[8] Correspondingly, desire that is not re-territorialized in a hetero-normative way would be a special way here for linking or not linking the sign of Ross and hard candies with other signs and images. Perhaps the link with candies that are sold at a store would be dissolved, whereas the bright colors of ›*Untitled*‹ *(Ross)* or the mirroring surfaces of ›*Untitled*‹ *(Placebo)* would be associated with a bar scene, with Andy Warhol's silver Mylar pillow-shaped balloons (*Silver Clouds,* 1966), a demo, camp aesthetics, or the artificial seeming AZT pills of the art group General Idea (*One Day of AZT*, 1991). What is hereby produced is a mode of subjectification, of connecting, that is not organized individually, but rather, socially and in plural. In the way that Lauretis argues that Chantal Akerman's Film *Jeanne Dielman* (F/BE 1976) addresses beholders as »women« or as »feminists,« it is possible to say here that the installation addresses beholders as *queer.*[9] The belongings that are produced arise in the process of connecting, they are possessed by neither the work, the artist, or the individual who views the work. Nonetheless, they are not independent of the desire for belonging that is brought to the work.

›*Untitled*‹ *(Ross)* does *not* confront the audience of a mainstream exhibition space with depictions not commonly seen in the space, depictions of *other* bodies, but instead, enters the economy of representation by foregoing precisely such depictions. Using the methods of desire, it decenters the audience from a position of knowing and the understanding gaze. In this scene, a collapsing syntax is replaced by a ›film,‹ a sequence of fantasy images that the beholders/participants are involved in and likewise see from outside. The installation activates the desire for belonging, the desire to create connections, and it constitutes a group of beholders that it addresses as queer.

Notes

1 A different version of this text was published as »No palm trees! Repräsentationen von Körpern ohne Körper.« In: *FKW//Zeitschrift für Geschlechterforschung und visuelle Kultur*, 45, June 2008, 26-40.

2 A further example of representations of bodies without bodies would be *›Untitled‹ (1991)* by Gonzalez-Torres, an outside advertising board that displays a photo of an unmade bed. Visible is the imprint of two bodies that have obviously been lying here. Another work (likewise 1991), shows two clocks hanging next to one another, reading nearly the same time. It is called: *›Untitled‹ (Perfect Lovers)*. A photograph that shows a close up of flowers from above is called *›Untitled‹ (Alice B. Toklas' and Getrude Stein's Grave, Paris)*. Also necessary to mention are his portraits, text-based works in which he links dates that are significant to a person with socially or politically important events. Certain works by Henrik Olesen, Zoe Leonard, and Collier Schorr can, in this sense, also be identified as representations of bodies without bodies.

3 The formal parallels between the work by Felix Gonzalez-Torres and certain avant-garde art works are continually pointed out (see for example, Spector 2007: 16 and Föll 2006: 106).

4 Muñoz (1999: 170) states that the works by Gonzalez-Torres enable a »structure of feeling« that is shared rather than an evidence of understanding. This, he writes, does not produce any identity group, but rather, produces an incision through certain Latino and queer communities.

5 The term *Durchquerung* or crossing in English has been chosen to identify that the precarization of social positions allows, on the one hand, a gain in freedom, which is fought for by feminist, lesbian-gay, and anti-racist movements among others. On the other hand, the term is associated with the elaborate and, in part violent demand of continually crossing these positions (see Lorenz/Kuster 2007). Women of color repeatedly formulate something similar, which is expressed, for example, in Gloria Anzaldúa's figure of the Mestiza (Anzaldúa 1999: 100), a figure between cultures for whom the indissoluble meeting of different voices generates an ambivalence and leads to a psychic restlessness.

6 Literally »space sex.«

7 In terms of artistic works, this can be seen exemplarily in the wave of scandals surrounding the sexually explicit photographs by Robert Mapplethorpe, whereby the »culture wars of the arts« were co-founded in the U.S. in the 1990s. Mapplethorpe's works became one of the central instruments of right-wing cultural politics in the early 1990s. State funding of the retrospective *Robert Mapplethorpe: The Perfect Moment* by the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) was taken as the occasion for entirely discrediting Mapplethorpe's work and hurling homophobic attacks at it, in order to stylize it as a prime example of the right's idea of »obscene art.«

8 See »a method of doing things, of getting places« (Probyn 2006: 41).

9 De Lauretis argues that Akerman's film defines all possibilities of identification (character, image, camera) as female or feminist (Lauretis 1987: 133).

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