

Chris Newman PIA'S FILMS

Pia's films are not this that & the other – they are a single substance. They are not assemblages or put together from the outside. They are the substance of a process, of her having set something in motion, & letting it run its course. They are not old fashioned or modern, & neither do they appear so. Their only style is the result of what she does. They transcend the trinkets of time. Pia's work in no way attempts to cash in on stylistic trends, it is not a style-wank like much of what's around where the so called artists take elements of the look of art to make a style-cocktail as a passport to the art-world. You couldn't even call her work intellectual – it's too basic for that. The films are very basic & totally avoid the high-tech kitsch element of much recent work. They seem to come from the very beginnings of film where people were keen to show what the medium could do – the magic element, the "look – no hands" element. Pia Maria Martin uses the medium of film as a tool, a tool to instil life into her material, her subject. The medium breathes life into the inanimate matter of her subject & allows it to dance. Her material is filmed in order to be animated, it is only filmed that it might be animated & for no other reason. Animated by the medium. The thing is that the animating ability of the medium melds itself with the subject matter, the material, to make itself into the material. Pia's pieces instil the so-called subjective into the so-called objective, so a chair can have a certain degree of expression. What's interesting is that the things in her films stem from the man-made / man-produced/ man- processed; it's interesting that we don't talk about a tree as a thing, but we do talk about a wooden table as a thing, & it is the treated nature, the dead or the synthetic – that interests Ms. Martin, & she tries to give it the life which has been denied it or never had the chance to have: the fish in the film *kalakeittos* can no longer swim, but they can perform a symmetrical dance. Though the life force of the objects of course is a symbolic one, it represents life rather than being life itself, which produces a comic desperate juxtaposition. What's interesting is that the things in her films have no desire to move as a thing, but as a person substitute, or as if governed by an absent ruling human hand. Even the oven-ready chicken in her film *marche au supplice* stitches itself back together with wool in a mimicry of the medical profession. In other words, they are only capable of moving according to the rather limited conventions of the human beings who brought them about - & according to their ideals.

(Chris Newman, 2005, bei der Eröffnung Pia Maria Martin ZUM APPELL!)