



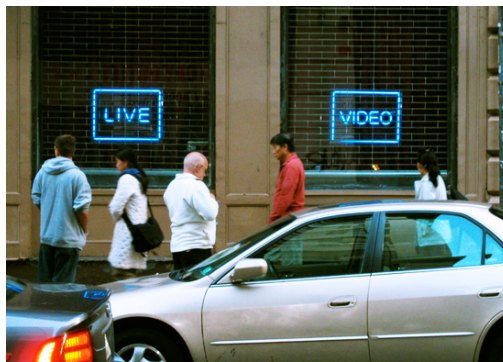
For Immediate Release

October 2008 – New York, NY

New Ways of Viewing from Jan Baracz in *Reality Cinema/Live Video*

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Jan Baracz
Reality Cinema/Live Video
September 27-December 13, 2008

Public Programs:

Thursday, October 16, 2008

6:30-8:30

Special evening performance, with live soundtrack by Patrick Mckeran.

Tuesday, December 2, 2008

6:30-8:30

Special evening performance with live soundtrack.

For his newest project, *Reality Cinema/Live Video*, Jan Baracz has transformed the Art in General storefront gallery into an intimate cinematic screening room. Driven by a desire to draw viewers into an experience that challenges them to view themselves in a new way, Baracz has created a space where live video feeds, culled from several cameras recording the streets outside the gallery, are mixed and projected to create an ongoing "movie."

While the content of the film is the action on the street, a soundtrack mix by Toshio Kajiwara with off-screen dialogue voices of Erika Latta and Eric Dean Scott provides a sonic environment for the ongoing "movie," prompting narrative imagination among the audience, setting off chains of unexpected associations and stories. Special evening "performances" with live soundtracks provided by by Zeljko Mcmullen, Patrick Mckeran, and others will take place throughout the project.

Images: **Left**, interior view of Jan Baracz's, *Reality Cinema/Live Video*, 2008.
Right, exterior view of Jan Baracz's, *Reality Cinema/Live Video*, 2008.

The installation allows for new and unexpected interpretations of the 'normal' occurrences of everyday urban street life. As Baracz states, "I'm interested in the quiet drama of the perceptual shift that occurs when what we look at becomes something very different from its initial appearance. We ask, how could we have seen something else before? Am I a different person from the one who looked at it before? Possibly."

Baracz takes up the conventions of cinema (the spatial arrangement of audience with respect to the screen, for example), and probes the history of its once exclusively collective reception. Employing curiosity and voyeurism, *Reality Cinema/Live Video* tests viewers' tendencies, on the one hand, to see most spaces in the city as sites of commercial and economic exchange, and on the other, to project narrative on any filmed event.

Reality Cinema/Live Video takes on the notion of "reality art" and the street spectacle that often seems to be more attractive than a movie or an art experience. Potential movie scenarios include a few lonely souls in the theater on a rainy day looking out onto a wet, empty street or an exuberant crowd of tourists filling the theater watching construction workers unloading a truck. As in the traditional cinematic experience, the defining moment of this spectacle will be the experience of the shared viewpoint.

About the Artist

Jan Baracz is a New York-based artist working in sculpture, video and photography. A graduate of Bard College's MFA program, and a past participant in the Whitney Museum Independent Study Program in New York, he has exhibited widely in New York and Europe, including a solo presentation at Art Basel's Art Unlimited. He has been the recipient of awards from the Asian Cultural Council, the Edward F. Albee Foundation, Artist's Space, the Kosciuszko Foundation and the Pollock-Krasner Foundation, among others. He has exhibited extensively in the United States and internationally. His work is distinguished by its rigorous but playful exploration of human perception.

Baracz's work tests the minimal conditions of attention necessary for an art experience to separate itself from familiar objects and quotidian experiences. In this vein, in a previous work titled *Thirst* (1999), Baracz filled a single parking space in the then-lively SoHo New York art gallery district with three thousand gallons of water in jugs housed in a massive chain link fence. The work intimates a mysterious official function; *Thirst* is a public works project gone private that amplifies questions of property, containment, and open access to community resources.

In Baracz's *Überkatze* (1996), he sculpted and cast in bronze an edition of six life-size house cats whose expressions encapsulate the species' haughtiest characteristics, features that are nonetheless anthropomorphic projections. In the title's reference to the Nietzschean *übermensch*, or "superman," the cats become emblems of amorality and power; their placement on tall pedestals abets their seemingly arrogant superiority. His 2002 work *Life is Short*, first shown at SculptureCenter in New York and later installed at the art fair in Basel in 2006, is a forty-foot long functional rope swing. The audience, after waiting in what was frequently a long queue, became part of a spectacle of childish glee in which participants' bodies tracked a high-velocity, nearly 80 foot diameter arc in space.

Support

The Art in General New Commissions Program is made possible by The Institute of Museum and Library Services, an independent federal grant-making agency dedicated to creating and sustaining a nation of learners by helping libraries and museums serve their communities; the Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts; the Jerome Foundation; The Greenwall Foundation; and Agnes Gund and Daniel Shapiro. Additional support for Carlos Motta's project was provided by the Puffin Foundation.

General support of Art in General is provided by General Tools LLC; Abraham and Lillian Rosenberg Foundation; Starry Night Fund of Tides Foundation; New York State Council on the Arts, a state agency; Carnegie Corporation of New York; New York City Department of Cultural Affairs; Jerome Foundation; Miller-Sweezy Charitable Trust; Lily Auchincloss Foundation; Bloomberg; Altria Group, Inc.; Cowles Charitable Trust; ConEdison; College Art Association; the NYU Community Fund; Foundation for Contemporary Arts; and by individuals.



About Art in General

Founded in 1981 in Lower Manhattan, Art in General is a nonprofit organization that assists artists with the production and presentation of new work. It changes in response to the needs of artists and engages the public with their work. In 26 years the organization has emerged as one of New York City's leading nonprofits devoted to supporting and stimulating the creation of contemporary art, providing an environment in which artists may exhibit unconventional work and exchange ideas with their peers.

Art in General is located at 79 Walker Street, NYC, one block south of Canal Street between Lafayette and Broadway.

Subway directions: take the 6, A-C-E, N-Q-R-W, or J-M-Z subway to Canal Street.

Gallery hours: Tuesday-Saturday 12-6 pm.

Office hours: Monday-Friday 10am-6pm.