



MONASH UNIVERSITY MUSEUM OF ART
MEDIA KIT

MUMMA

PERFORMATIVE PHILOSOPHY:
THE FILMS AND WRITINGS OF
CHRIS KRAUS AND SEMIOTEXT(E)

13 OCTOBER - 17 DECEMBER 2011

GUEST CURATOR: LIV BARRETT

 **MONASH** University
Museum of Art

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Chris Kraus
I Love Dick publicity shot 1997
Courtesy the artist



INTRODUCTION

Performative Philosophy: The films and writings of Chris Kraus and Semiotext(e) presents Kraus' work as a film-maker, writer and co-editor of Semiotext(e). The exhibition comprises films, video, books, scripts, posters, prints and production notes. Drawing this rich collection of documents together is an attempt to encompass the poetic force of Kraus' filmmaking and her unique and inventive voice that moves through art, fiction, feminism, politics and the many spheres of cultural production.

In her most recent book *Where Art Belongs*, Kraus argues that the 'art world remains the last frontier for the desire to live differently'. Her activity within this world for nearly three decades includes an experimental film career, culminating with the feature-length *Gravity and Grace*, 1995; an ongoing editorial role at Semiotext(e) and her introduction of the 'Native Agents' fiction series; three novels, with another forthcoming in 2012; and *Video Green*, a seminal book of essays about Los Angeles' art schools and the production of art stars in the late 1990s. She writes the Atlas - LA column for *Art in America* and since 2009, has been a Professor of Writing at European Graduate School (EGS).

Since abandoning the debt and disappointment of her film career, Kraus' work has attracted a large international audience and constant critical acclaim. Her interweaving of radical female subjectivity and analytical critique prompts an argument that Kraus has cultivated a new genre of writing altogether.

In 2011, the *New York Times* described Kraus as 'one of our smartest and most original writers on contemporary art and culture'; and her novel *I Love Dick* was cited by *Frieze* magazine as one of the most important books of the past two decades.

In an introduction to the second edition of *I Love Dick*, Eileen Myles writes, 'Chris' ultimate achievement is philosophical... As if her decades of experience were both a painting and a weapon'.

Kraus finds her way to her subjects via incongruous and illuminating routes. Fiction and autobiography become protean tools in her writing. The fictive world of her novel *Torpor* tempts a biographical reading as her cast of characters includes Nan Goldin, Georges Perec and Felix Guattari, all of whom Kraus has had some kind of personal proximity to. With *Video Green*, a critique of the MFA programs within Los Angeles' art schools deviates to a recounting of Kraus' role as a submissive in relationships she develops with strangers through a phone-sex service.

Through Semiotext(e), Kraus has been fiercely dedicated to the publication of the work of both renowned and nearly-forgotten writers. Semiotext(e)'s abundant catalogue of titles offers a synthesis of cultural and structural politics. Writer Rick Moody described the house-style as a blend of 'wit, charm and menace'. When Sylvère Lotringer started the press in 1974, it was largely credited with introducing French theory to a North American audience.

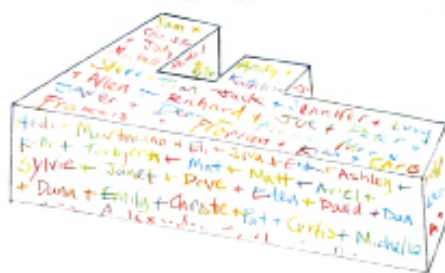
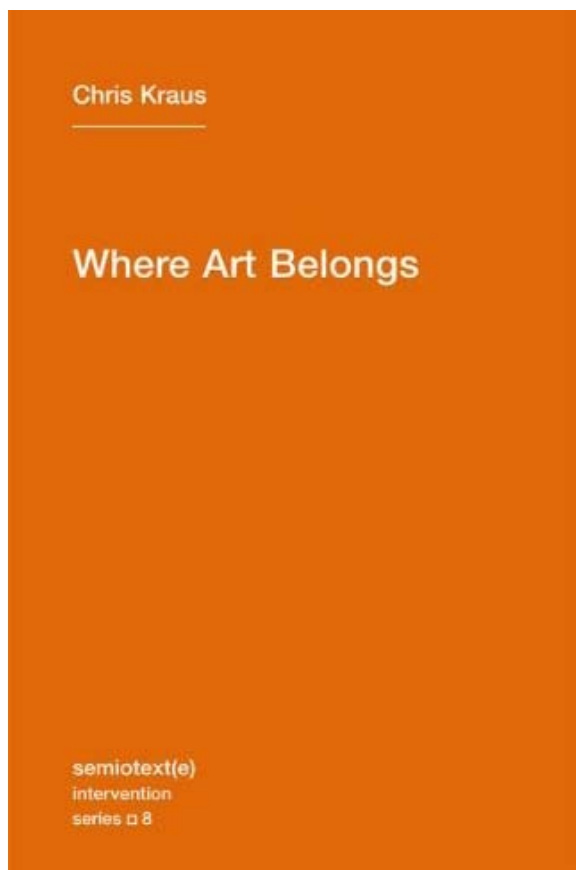
Additional to Kraus' films, *Performative Philosophy* will present a selection of films from authors published by Semiotext(e), including Guy Debord, David Wojnarowicz, David Rattray, Sylvère Lotringer, Penny Arcade, Gary Indiana and Bernadette Corporation. The exhibition locates Kraus as the thread between these artists, writers and philosophers, who she has plaited together to give an account of a prolific history of ideas, images and language.

EXHIBITION DATES

13 October - 17 December 2011

Opening function: Saturday 15 October 2011 3-5pm.

With opening remarks at 4.00pm by Professor Meaghan Morris, Department of Gender and Cultural Studies, University of Sydney, and Chair Professor of Cultural Studies, Lingnan University, Hong Kong.



DELEUZE from A to Z
 Sunday, April 29th
 F as in Friendship
 film Screening organized by
 Semiotext(e)
 at the Mandrake Bar 2692 S La Cienega Blvd L.A. at 8:30pm

ARTIST BIOGRAPHY

Chris Kraus is the author of *Video Green: Los Angeles Art* and *The Triumph of Nothingness* and the novels *Aliens and Anorexia*, *I Love Dick*, and *Torpor*. Kraus is the founding editor of the Semiotext(e) series 'Native Agents'; writes regularly for *Artforum*, and teaches at the European Graduate School. She was 2007 recipient of the Frank Mather Award in Art Criticism, a 2010 Warhol Foundation Arts Writer's grant, and has most recently published a collection of expanded art criticism, *Where Art Belongs*, with a forthcoming novel *Summer Of Hate* due for release.

Chris Kraus will be visiting Melbourne for the exhibition and is available for interviews.

PUBLIC PROGRAMS

Deleuze A-Z event

Thursday 13 October, 8.00-10.00pm
 Buffalo Club, 22 Sutherland Street, Melbourne

Keynote Lecture: Chris Kraus

14 October 2011, 6.00-7.30pm
 Village Roadshow Theatre
 State Library of Victoria

Curator's Talk

Curator Liv Barrett on Chris Kraus
 Saturday 12 November, 12.30-1.30pm
 Monash University Museum of Art, Caulfield Campus

MEDIA

For all media enquiries please contact Rosemary Forde on 03 9905 4360 or rosemary.forde@monash.edu

