



BILL VIOLA, FOUR HANDS, 2001 (BLACK-AND-WHITE VIDEO POLYPTYCH ON FOUR LCD FLAT PANELS MOUNTED ON SHELF)

IDENTITY AND MODERNITY

by Josep Lluís Mateo

At the present time of globalization, the identity-modernity dialectic reappears, though in a different way to how it was addressed in our recent past.

On the one hand we have the defence of the specific, the local, of landscapes that are perhaps not so diverse but, like the climate, permanently variable; sometimes remote cultures and histories that continue and develop. Places, materials, hands and heads that work with them, physical and sensible experiences of space and forms.

Then we have a version of the modern as a synonym of abstraction, of the generic, of global products defined by internal logics, cast from outer space onto the surface of the earth, decorated to render them more palatable, generically too, by different versions of what was once called iconic architecture.

The articles published here set out to operate against this idea, by asserting either a voice that is specific, different and close at hand, or a phenomenological and not just abstract approach to the project and the work. In today's context of globalization, more and more are treading the paths that combine the active logics of change and the intelligence of modernity in dialectic with local logics that are dense, strong, and not necessarily picturesque.

Constructing a global culture that is at once fragmented and collective.