

Candice Breitz  
*Factum*  
opening May 30, pm 7

kaufmann repetto is glad to announce *Factum*, Candice Breitz's third solo show at the gallery.

For the last decade, portraiture has been at the core of Breitz's work. A series of multi-channel video installations have chartered the territory of individual experience as played through the broader web of social identifications and belongings that structure subjectivity.

For this exhibition, Breitz will install *Factum* (2010) in the main space of the gallery. Originally commissioned and produced by The Power Plant in Toronto, this series of eight video installations includes seven dual-channel portraits of identical twins and one tri-channel portrait of a set of triplets. Each of the diptych/triptych installations is presented on a pair/trio of vertically installed plasma displays. Each is a dynamic multiple portrait that explores the processes of reciprocal identification and differentiation. Like Robert Rauschenberg's near-identical paintings *Factum I* and *Factum II* (both 1957), from which the series borrows its title, each interviewee in *Factum* is an imperfect facsimile of their twin: the apparent identity of the siblings is undermined by a host of subtle differences.

To produce *Factum*, Breitz conducted a series of long interviews with pairs of monozygotic twins based in and around Toronto. Each pair chose the location of their interviews (usually the home of one or both of the siblings) and was asked to dress identically for the duration of the interviews. In each case, the siblings were interviewed independently of one another, and were not present to each other's interviews. As they respond to Breitz's questions (the artist's presence is constantly implied throughout the work, although her voice is excluded from each edit), the twins address a broad range of topics. Their personal reflections on family and selfhood, community, memory and significant biographical milestones gradually uncover a complex system of differential relations between each individual and the social matrix in which s/he is embedded.

Via the editing process, Breitz emphasizes those differentiating traits that distinguish each twin, compared to an individual that appears identical to him/her, both in terms of physical features and personal experiences. Once put side by side, the resulting diverging dialogues reveal a profound relativism that contradicts a vision of being as a definite entity, while confirming a process of self-affirmation that goes through reciprocal confrontation. *Factum* ultimately raises questions not only about twinship *per se*, but also about the struggle that each individual must negotiate in defining him or herself as distinct, while facing constant reminders of the relative role of others in the process of self-definition.

The relationship established with the camera, as well as the conversational tone of each work, shifts from double portrait to double portrait, ranging from modest to explicit responses, from contained rational answers to moving emotional engagement. *Factum* runs the gamut from psychoanalytical revelation to confession to biographical narration. Breitz composes and braids multiple streams of consciousness into conversation, cutting and pasting the long interviews so that they extend beyond their content, blurring the boundary between documentary and fiction, challenging easy notions of revelation and falsehood, and revealing the often contradictory and selective nature of memory. Each pair of twins' contrasting views of reality and contradictory narrations of overlapping memories triggers a series of unexpected outcomes – at times humorous, at times dark.

Breitz's single-channel video installation *The Character* (2011) – also installed on a vertically mounted plasma display – will be shown in the smaller gallery space. Fifteen Bombay school children were each asked to watch a Bollywood movie prominently featuring a child character. During the shoot that followed, each child was asked to verbally portray the child character in the movie that s/he had watched. As they evoke fictional children from well-known Bollywood movies, the children offer a range of insights into the role played by 'the child' (as character and spectator) in mainstream Indian cinema. It becomes apparent that their own aspirations, views of the world and attitudes to life are at times closely related to those celebrated on screen. The children discuss their dreams and priorities in relation to those of the fictional children, their philosophies regarding persevering in life against all odds, and the importance of happy endings. The edit avoids specific reference to particular movies or particular characters, instead weaving the fifteen interviews into a composite portrait of 'the child' within the Bollywood imaginary. *The Character* is at the same time a portrait of the culture of aspiration at the heart of mainstream cinema, through which the artist reveals a significant homologation towards the ideal of the individual that, starting from the film industry, pervades the way we experience reality.

Personal and collective identity – both in the *Factum* portraits and in *The Character* – cannot abstract from a universe of psychological, anthropological and social implications that make Candice Breitz's work a multidimensional portrait of the individual and the society that defines her.