

Heike Baranowsky

In 1995, near the end of her first year in graduate school for photography, Heike Baranowsky created a piece titled *En Face II*, which marked a shift from still photography to video. For this piece, Baranowsky moved about London, shooting through windows into various office buildings. She then took these still images and animated them in the computer. The resulting movement mimics the way one sees as he or she passes by storefront windows. Although digitally rendered, the sense of movement is at first quite believable, but prolonged observation makes it apparent that each window view is a still: the perspective does not change as the windows pass by. After making this work, Baranowsky realized that her interest in motion might make video her medium of choice.



Passage II, 1998

In her newer works, including *Passage II* from 1998 Heike uses video exclusively. *Passage II*, shot out the back of a train, shows the passing railways and landscape. The artist edited an hour of footage down to fifteen seconds and looped two identical videos, one running forward and the other running backward. Consequently, the viewer is positioned at the head and/or rear of the train: on one monitor the tracks appear to move away, while on the other monitor the movement follows the tracks. Stacked and positioned on the floor, the monitors allow the viewer to move freely around the sculptural object. The tracks curve, giving the impression of a never-ending spiral and effectively manipulating the viewer's sense of motion, time, and narrative.

In her projected works, such as her graduate piece entitled *Parallax* from 1999, which is currently on view, Baranowsky alters the gallery space by freeing the image from the monitor and projecting it directly onto the wall. Like *Passage II*, *Parallax* was edited down to fifteen seconds of footage, which was then doubled and looped. The scene and the motion of driving by a forest are familiar. Such a memory feels calm, even serene, yet the video becomes more complex. The foreground moves so rapidly that it is difficult to focus; relief is available only in the depths of the forest. The fifteen-centimeter gap between projections not only mirrors the trees in its narrow verticality, but brings the viewer's eye back to a point of relaxation while drawing attention back again to the forest. It is as if Baranowsky takes a moment and draws it out by slowing and looping short segments of footage; rather than using video to create a narrative sequence, she seems to avoid narrative entirely.

Heike Baranowsky was born in 1966 in Augsburg, Germany. From 1986-95 she studied sculpture and painting in Munich and Berlin respectively. Her works have been exhibited at Kunstverein, Frankfurt; Singapore Art Museum; Raum aktueller Kunst, Vienna; and P.S. 1, New York, among other venues. Baranowsky currently lives and works in Berlin and London.