

Interview with Jordan Crandall

Rencontres Internationales Madrid 2007

Jordan Crandall's Homefront, his latest video work, is part of the Rencontres Internationales' Madrid exhibition. In Homefront a couple is engaged in a complex pas de deux. They fear and desire each other. They both solicit and block erotic contact. They embody mutually reinforcing mechanisms of pleasure and paranoia.

Jordan Crandall, can you explain, simply, what was your intention upon realizing *Homefront*?

I am interested in the forms of desire and identity that are emerging in our culture of "security-entertainment" -- a culture where security media and entertainment media combine and our fears and pleasures mix.

Your work, in general, and *Homefront*, in particular, lingers on the militarizing process at work in the new technologies and in the new media. It suggests that surveillance, monitoring, and tracking technologies are media of self-reflection and self-awareness, as well as media of control. Do you seek to analyze or denounce a phenomenon in particular? What do you want to say? What are you trying to do?

We are continually trying to court the approval of the Other. Who is this Other? What does it want of us? This to me is the basic question that all of my work addresses. It confronts the nature of action: why we act as we do.

Tell us what issues animate your work and why.

Issues of power are primary, but I am dealing with affects as much as issues. Sensations compete with signs. Intensities compete with meanings. Technologies of control are never one-way: they are also technologies of the self.

Homefront is a very conceptual work. The video is built on three different visual regimes, a televised regime, similar to reality television, a surveillance regime, panoptic, and military gaze. Why did you choose those three regimes? What do they represent? How do you integrate them to your artistic, critical speech?

We do not exist in one media regime at once. Our moment is characterized by potent combinations of media. Reality television, surveillance, and military tracking are the dominant paradigms, but they continually influence one another. Accordingly, our forms of vision enter into new assemblages. Perception itself is combinatory.

Why did you realize *Homefront*? What was the context of realization, of conceptualization?

I have these interests and occupations, and they carry with them their own demands. For example I have an ongoing interest in tracking technologies. They are everywhere. We no longer "see": instead, we track. But I don't just want to theorize about this. I want to mobilize it, tussle with it, embody it. *Homefront* is a wrestling match.

Did changes or evolutions occur during the creative process? If yes, which ones? Why did they occur?

Yes: I became someone else. This is what happens sometimes when you play with fire.

To a certain extent, is your work influenced by the news?

Yes -- particularly concerning military issues and control technologies, but also concerning online media, especially new web applications and cultures of self-exposure.

What are the momentums of your creative process? Is there any constant in it? If yes, which ones?

I live my work. It is my world.