Revolution of Everyday Life
In networked society where we are each a spectacle for ourselves and others and live within recordings and the perpetual now, can ever more recording become an antidote, a homeopath to the spectacle to itself. Or will we simply exhume and exhaust ourselves in recording.

What happens when you turn the camera on and speak to it, perform for it, let it observe you? When you use it as a way to say things about yourself. In Revolution of Everyday Life (2011), the question is how do we come to know ourselves and how to live in the world. I got to a certain point with Revolution where I could sense to know the actors intimately and more so, to have them reveal themselves to me, to themselves, to the work, intimately, I’d have to ask them to record themselves alone, privately. When I brought this up with them I was surprised how keen they were to do this. So week to week I gave out several flip cameras and asked them to make recordings of themselves, there were specific instructions that came from performance and video art of allowing them to be simply a body in space, for them to have no fear of the mundane, to just be. Which is not easy.
Revolution of Everyday Life

2011

Raimonda Skeryte on the set

3-screen installation
It is this larger sense of cinema and how it has evolved that we look to find in our cinema.

HITJes - You had a group whose ideology revolves around constant self-criticism and reflection. Please see this video of Jonathan Meese.
Now alone we do certain things that heal us.
Yet we need each other to push at ourselves, know and question ourselves,
to enact our fears and desires. And this was the second part of the film.

Cinema is no longer monumental. Despite the best efforts of Hollywood, making
a film no longer demands millions of dollars, booms, grips, lights, and cameras.
We don’t need theaters. We don’t need studios. All we need is a mobile phone.
Cinema has become everyday.

Marc Lafia has taken to making films that embrace the everyday cinema
machine. He has an idea; puts together a cast (he has started working with the
same actors); and films on the streets of New York with digital cameras. In his
latest, The Revolution of Everyday Life, he gives HD Flip video cameras to the cast
and has them film themselves alone.

For Lafia, this process is not an inexpensive way to make a so-called indie film
with its quirky characters and narratives of redemption. This is not mumblecore.
Nor is it The Blair Witch Project or Mean Streets. For Lafia, the everyday tools of
cinema breed an emergent cinema, a cinema of the event, in which the very act of
recording creates something new.

The camera in this digital age—and in the hands of Lafia—is not a means of
mediating an encounter. On the contrary, the camera forges the encounter. The
camera here is not as much a recording device per se as it is what Burroughs and
Gysin call the Third Mind—an active perceptive engine that functions between and
amongst all participants, that thrives in the very event of seeing and being seen.

Throughout The Revolution of Everyday Life, we encounter scenes—or, better,
we encounter encounters—that have only come into being because the came ra
was present. We see sense emerging. We see faces and people and love and
the social emerge not just in front of the camera but with the camera. In the
exquisite scenes of the women alone recording themselves—scenes that are
private, exhuming, creative, peculiar—we come to understand that the camera
is a presence, a kind of face that grasps and inspires. The recording event—
which, in this digital world, is a playback event, as well—does not just record: it
creates events.

The Revolution of Everyday Life reckons the very nature, the possibility, of this
cinematic event. Look at the achingly gorgeous scene of Lizzie alone with her
camera, filming herself in the mirror. There is a breathtaking intimacy here, an
intimacy that would be impossible without the camera, that could never happen
without the act of recording. The film then cuts to Tjasa standing on the street, a
dildo strapped to her skirt, haranguing passers by.

The film seems, then, to move from the private to the public. But this distinction
is false. After all, the so-called private scene of Lizzie is not just a recording but
a broadcasting, her room and tears and body on display. In fact, rather than
reifying a public-private dichotomy, The Revolution of Everyday Life works to erase
it. The boundary that would keep our private and public worlds distinct has been
superseded by the pervasive cinema engine.
The distinction the film draws is not between public and private but between demanding to be seen and allowing oneself to be seen. On the one hand, there’s Tjasa who imagines herself a radical fomenting change through situationist performances. Tjasa demands to be seen, screeching into the camera just as she screeches at others, to no one and everyone. Meanwhile, Lizzie, her lover, avoids the spotlight but finds a much more intimate relationship with the camera and with being seen. In a gesture of infinite generosity, she allows herself to be seen.

This is not simply a dichotomy of real events vs. recorded events, the street vs. the bedroom the public vs. the private. Both events are recorded; both events are image, are cinema. No, in these two modes we get postures of standing towards perception, postures of being seen. We get an ethics (mercifully bereft of judgment).

But Revolution of Everyday Life is not about the cinema event. It is a cinema event. The process of making the film and the film are so thoroughly intertwined it is often difficult to distinguish one from the other. But not through reflexivity—we don’t see booms entering the frame. Rather, we encounter a film in the process of making itself, characters in the process of making themselves to a point where we’re not even sure if they are characters. They exist in a state of person-becoming, character-becoming, actor-becoming just as the film flourishes in the space of cinema-becoming. Events are at once real and not, recorded and live simultaneously.

Revolution of Everyday Life hence breaks down the rigid lines that separate creation from playback, writing from reading, and finally subject from object. The pervasive cinema engine, the everyday cinema engine, not only rewrites cinema: it rewrites the private and the social, the very manner in which we present and are presented to the world.

In the contemporary world of pervasive cinema, we present ourselves as something to be seen, something always already seen, always already being seen. And yet we do so without evacuating our individuality. We are turned inside out, splayed, but not eviscerated. On the contrary, we are multiplied, extended, disseminated, and proliferated.

And this, alas, foments the revolution of everyday life. The title is taken from the English translation of Raoul Vaneigem’s great situationist treatise by the same title. The revolution, then, is not Tjasa’s ranting against capitalism. Nor is it her all-too-familiar spectacles of S&M. The revolution of everyday life is the proliferation of cinema within and through the everyday.

If we live in a society of the spectacle, this everyday cinema decenters image production, proliferates centers, shatters the hegemony of the corporation’s will to quantity and uniformity. This pervasiveness of cinema—this ability to create, distribute, and screen on demand—fundamentally shifts flows of communication, introducing radical new possibilities of constituting the social. Images no longer solely flow downhill or in a straight linear line. They are no longer solely created by vast corporations and streamed into our houses. Images now flow every which way—up, down, sideways, diagonally—disrupting the painful banality of narrative, character and cliché.
As cinema takes up the everyday, it infuses life and is in turn infused. Engaging this everyday cinema engine, Lafia gives us a living cinema, a live cinema, a cinema that is always (and already) in the process of making itself, a cinema replete with affect, with the impossible complexity of the human: a cinema that is revolutionary.


Watching *The Baader Meinhof Complex* last night, the film captures really well the winds of change that spread across US and Europe in the late 60’s, young, sexy liberated people making a change by taking action at all cause, fight fire with fire. What happened today two generation after, we vote in Facebook how much we are against the american occupation in Iraq, Israel, Ahmadinejad and all the other evil forces that are behind the destruction of progress, but, how exactly that helps? the man on the street become smaller and smaller, we went back to the time in history when giants ruled the land, China, America, Europe, Iran, they are all giants, people do not want to take action because it is obvious they are going to lose. It is not an argument between ideologies, perspectives, way of seeing the world, we now don’t want to hold any certain ideology because they all failed, it is all transparent now, humans are destructive creatures. Going to the revolution of everyday life, the film tries to offer an alternative to the problem of the impotency we all in: to go back and become animals, monkeys, lions, swans, start again, recapture the moments of real existence. two woman love, fuck, hate, beat, shout, cry with no social context, why? to make sense of it all, shameless creatures who can’t handle it all anymore, this is their protest, this is what maybe we all should do, but we probably not unless we are true to our self or just crazy.

(Lior Rosenfeld, May 13, 2010)