BETWEEN IMAGE AND REMEMBRANCE

Between Image
and Remembrance:
The Psychic Residences
of *Body Missing*

BY DOT TUER

Mayfly, Mayfly,
Fly away.
Your father is in the War,
Your mother is in Pomerania.
Pomerania is burnt down.
Mayfly, Mayfly.

– German nursery rhyme, circa 1618,
from the *Body Missing* video

After a few hours' sleep, the father had
a dream that his child was standing
beside his bed, caught him by the arm
and whispered to him reproachfully:
"Father, don't you see I'm burning?"

– Sigmund Freud,
The Interpretation of Dreams, 1901

If to remember is to provide the
disembodied wound with a psychic
residence, then to remember other
people's memories is to be wounded
by their wounds. More precisely,
to let traces of other people's struggles,
passions, pasts, resonate within
one's own past and present and
destabilize them.

– Kaja Silverman,
Threshold of the Visible, 1996

Trail of Fragments

In early March 2003, as rumours of weapons of mass destruc-
tion masqueraded as military intelligence and the American
invasion of Iraq grew imminent, Canadian artist Vera Frenkel
was installing her photo-video-web–based work, *Body Missing*,
in the Freud Museum in London, England. On March 17, the
president of the United States, George W. Bush, declared war.
The British prime minister, Tony Blair, followed suit. While

missiles rained down on Baghdad and a million Londoners
took to the streets in protest, Frenkel's exhibition opened.

During the inaugural reception, the museum felt like
a sanctuary from the tumult of the exterior world. Located in
the leafy suburb of Hampstead at 20 Maresfield Gardens, it is
the house where Sigmund Freud and his family lived after
fleeing Vienna following the annexation of Austria by Nazi
Germany in 1938. Freud died in the house in 1939. Anna Freud,
his daughter, lived there until her death in 1982. In 1986, the
house was converted to a museum. The rooms that are open
to the public are preserved as the family had used them. Freud's
study, furnished with the couch, desk, Persian rugs, library
and collection of antiquities he had brought from Austria, gave
the impression that it had been undisturbed for decades. Except,
that is, for the subtle intervention of Frenkel's *Body Missing*,
which conjured the psychic residue of the war that had exiled
Freud from his beloved Vienna.

Conceived as a site-specific installation, *Body Missing*
was first mounted in the Offenes Kulturhaus (now the OK
Centrum für Gegenwartskunst) in Linz, Austria, in 1994. It was
subsequently shown in France, Germany, Scandinavia, Canada,
Japan, the United States and Poland before being exhibited at
the Freud Museum in England. Most recently, it returned to
Linz in spring 2008 as part of a large thematic exhibition enti-
tled *Tiefenrausch: Strom des Vergessens* (Force of Forgotten
Memories) and was shown at the Museum für angewandte
Kunst (MAK) in Vienna in 2008–09. The Linz exhibition, which
featured artworks about the loss of memory, both private and
public, was held in a restored network of World War II tunnels
located under the city's Botanical Gardens.

Body Missing is composed of a six-part video played
on discrete monitors, large montage photographs, and photo-
transparencies housed in rectangular light boxes that resemble
packing crates. These elements are placed throughout the gallery
or museum. The illuminated images and the photographic
montages are derived from stills captured from the video. The
six parts of the video – entitled "Reconciliation with the Dead,"
"Recalling the Benign World of Things," "Trail of Fragments,"
"The Apparatus of Marking Absence," "Athena's Polished
Shield" and "The Process of Redemptive Naming Begins" – are
narrative collages. They piece together archival lists, trial tran-
scripts, old photographs, architectural blueprints and conversa-
tions overheard in a café, all of which allude to the existence
of artworks stolen by Hitler and stored in salt mines near Linz
at Alt Aussee during World War II. This vast collection of art-
works, some of which were discovered to be missing at the end
of the war, was destined for Hitler's personal Führermuseum,
which was to be built in his hometown of Linz once the Third
Reich had triumphed.

In 1995, Frenkel produced a website extension of the
Body Missing installation,¹ for which she incorporated into
her investigation of Nazi art theft references to another work,
…from the Transit Bar. First exhibited at Documenta IX in
Kassel, Germany, in 1992, and an ongoing installation,

…from the Transit Bar is a functioning piano bar built inside
a gallery or museum space. The walls that contain the bar are
slightly skewed, with apertures that open onto still-life tableaux
of suitcases, raincoats and fake palm trees. At the bar, the
artist serves drinks that are for sale. In her absence, a profes-
sional bartender attends to customers. At the piano, a lounge
musician plays a medley of tunes; in his or her absence, the
piano, a Disklavier, plays itself. Video monitors placed on the
bar, the piano, the tables and in the walls show orchestrated
sequences of immigrants speaking about their experiences living
in Canada. Mirroring the elusiveness of memory, their stories
are fragmented through montage editing and by the substitution
of Yiddish and Polish voice-overs (with subtitles, in alternating
French, German and English) for the original voices.

In the *Body Missing* website, documentation of the
Transit Bar becomes a core component of the site's architec-
ture. The virtual bar contains hypertext links to stories told to
the bartender about the artworks missing from the salt mines,
excerpts of the immigrant testimonies, and archival material
from the *Body Missing* videos. The website is constructed
according to the original 1930s floor plan of the Offenes Kultur-
haus, where *Body Missing* was first exhibited as an installation.
The virtual evocation of the Kulturhaus, which had served as
a Wehrmacht prison during World War II, situates the Transit
Bar on the ground floor. Other areas identified on the floor
plan – such as the loading dock, the Great Hall, the garage
and the metal shop – provide links to web pages designed by
other artists, who were invited by Frenkel to mount their own
inquiries concerning the missing artworks.

In 2000, Frenkel produced six large photo-murals that
incorporated elements from the website and documentation of
the in situ exhibitions of *Body Missing* and *…from the Transit
Bar*. In subsequent installations of *Body Missing*, these murals,
placed near each of the video stations, became an integral part
of the work.

For the Freud Museum, Frenkel integrated the virtual
architecture of the website and the physical elements of the
installation into the domestic architecture of the house. The
video monitors, photographic montages and light boxes were
placed in the entrance foyer, the dining room, the mezzanine
at the top of the stairs, Freud's bedroom, and in Anna and
Sigmund Freud's studies. A data projector in Freud's bedroom
provided viewers with access to the website.

By enfolding the material and virtual dimensions of
Body Missing into the Freud Museum installation, Frenkel pro-
vided two distinct contexts for the reception of the work. The
website connected viewers to an online archive in which the
compiling and narrating of evidence became part of an ever-
expanding and shifting horizon of databases on the Internet.
The site-specificity of the installation turned this evidence
back on itself, linking its meaning to the regressive intimacy of
transference. In the Freud museum, the psychic residue of war
conjured by *Body Missing* had found a place of belonging, in
which stories of lost artworks and lost homelands resonated

Left
Vera Frenkel
Body Missing
Installation view in Linz,
Austria, 2008
1994–present

Above
Vera Frenkel
"Reconciliation with
the Dead" (top)
"Trail of Fragments" (bottom)
from *Body Missing*
Photo-murals from the
video-photo-web installation
2000

with repetitions and repressed memories that lie at the heart of psychoanalysis. But whereas Freud's talking cure gave voice to individual trauma, Frenkel's missing artworks called forth the collective trauma of the Holocaust.

While nominally about the provenance and where-abouts of missing artworks, the fragmentary evidence of *Body Missing* evokes a series of sinister associations. In Hitler's com-pulsion to collect art also lay a compulsion to hate. His master plan for the Führermuseum shadowed the master plan for the annihilation of Jewish culture. The conversations overheard in the Transit Bar about numbered trucks packed with artworks pulling into the salt mines stir the imaginary of crowded trains reaching the final destination of the camps. Unlike the missing artworks, however, the bodies of those who perished in the camps cannot be recovered. There are no graves to visit or death certificates to archive. What remains are traces of loss: the testimonies of camp survivors, the memories of friends and relatives who hid or escaped from the Nazis, photographs and letters hidden before the deportations, trial records of war criminals, sites where synagogues once stood and cemeteries where ancestors were buried. In *Body Missing*, the fragmen-tary evidence of missing artworks stands in for these traces of loss, constructing a scenario of disavowal and recognition of this loss that gently probes the liminality of history in warding off oblivion.

The French theorist Michel Certeau has argued that the coherence of history depends on making "the dead the objec-tive figure of exchange among the living."[2] In other words, historians compile evidence rather than memory, narrate the archive rather than mourn the dead. As an artist, Frenkel recon-figures the terms of this exchange. Compiling evidence in order to construct memory, and narrating the archive in order to mourn the dead, she draws the viewer into a conceptual frame-work of remembrance that dismantles history's coherence. There is no moment of narrative closure – of completeness – in *Body Missing*. Rather, Frenkel gives form to the apprehension of loss through the fragments of evidence of missing artworks.

By embedding these fragments of evidence in the lan-guage of photomontage and collage, Frenkel also conjures the psychic residue of another war, the Great War, which haunts an avant-garde language of art and politics. What underlies the visual strategies of *Body Missing* is the legacy of an early modern aesthetic of representing war, one in which the avant-garde's vision of historical rupture and fragmentation collided with the carnage of the trenches. In the context of this schism between the imaginary and the real, Frenkel's allusions to missing bodies and investigation of missing artworks can be seen to extend back in time from the collective trauma of the Holocaust to the reconfiguration of pictorial experimentation, cinematic realism and neo-classicism before the rise of fascism. To situate the significance of *Body Missing* as an aesthetic intervention within this historical trajectory of the avant-garde, what follows is a brief synthesis of the issues of representation that emerged from World War I.

The Apparatus of Marking Absence

In the year that Hitler became chancellor of Germany, a visual indictment of his fascist rise to power appeared in the form of John Heartfield's photomontage artwork, *A Pan-German, 2 November 1933*. Juxtaposing an image of the prominent Nazi Julius Steicher with a Stuttgart police photograph of a murdered victim of Nazi violence, Heartfield constructed a sinis-ter contrast between the victim's body, flattened and abstracted into a cadaver of blood, and the upright figure of the Nazi officer, his boots firmly planted on the corpse.[3] Produced four years before the *Entartete Kunst* (Degenerate Art) exhibition was opened to great fanfare by the Nazi regime, Heartfield's image of brute force stamping out evidence of political opposition presaged Hitler's call to stamp out modernism's "monstrous offspring of insanity, impudence, ineptitude, and sheer degen-eracy"[4] and Goebbel's vision of art as "heroic and hard as steel and romantic, sentimental, and factual, natural with great pathos."[5] Under the Nazi regime, F.T. Marinetti's Futurist decla-ration of 1909 that "we will glorify war – the only true hygiene of the world"[6] – to tear down the museums and explode a tired classicism, had come full circle. By the time of *Entartete Kunst* in 1937, the avant-garde's rupture with the past had dissolved into what the German critic Ernst Bloch described as a "tragic repetition of atavistic psychic and social structures"[7] embodied in the rise of fascism.

Twenty years before John Heartfield utilized the tech-niques of montage to warn of the monstrous spectre arising from a collapse of the future into the past, its victims had already materialized in the soldiers of the Western Front, described by Colonel G.W.G. Hughes after the first gas attack at Ypres as "exhausted, gasping, frothing yellow mucus from their mouths."[8] The Great War, heralded by the avant-garde as the final cataclysmic rupture with a moribund history, had revealed an unimaginable chasm between a world in motion, hurtling toward an unknowable future, and the stasis of trench warfare, with its gassed bodies writhing in agony. To the soldiers who fought in the trenches, writes historian Modris Eksteins in *Rites of Spring*, the war "was an experience of something that was, in its implications, completely new,"[9] and "so monumental in significance, like an unknowable, indefinable godhead, that words and ideas were useless."[10]

Such newness, argues historian Kenneth Silver, did not inspire a corresponding search by the avant-garde for a language of art that would reflect its monumental significance. Instead, as the experiences of the soldiers in the trenches became more and more abstract, artists based in Paris, such as Pablo Picasso, led the way to the return of classicism as a normative function for art.[11] The visual composition of the war may very well have been, as Gertrude Stein suggested, a Cubist one, in which "the composition was not a composition in which there was a man at the centre surrounded by a lot of other men but a com-position that had neither a beginning or an end,"[12] but the Parisian avant-garde chose to align itself instead with the French propagandists, who declared Cubism a sign of weakness and

self-indulgence, and affirmed the war as a resuscitation of the magnificent values of antiquity.[13]

While the Parisian avant-garde was turning to a clas-sical past for inspiration, D.W. Griffith, the American director of the cinematic tour-de-force *Birth of a Nation* (1915), arrived at the Western Front in 1917 to produce a propaganda film for the Allies. Renowned for his innovative use of a mobile camera, in *Birth of a Nation*, to recreate panoramic battle scenes of the Civil War, Griffith expressed extreme disappointment with the reality of the front lines.[14] "To the naked eye," writes French theorist Paul Virilio, "the vast new battlefield seemed to be composed of nothing – no more trees or vegetation, no more water or even earth, no hand-to-hand encounters, no visible trace of the unity of homicide and suicide."[15] Instead, he argues, the battlefield embodied Apollinaire's sense of a "blind, non-directional desire"[16] in which the soldiers, con-stantly in the enemy's line of fire but never able to see the enemy, experienced an uncanny sensation of being "derealized or dematerialized."[17] In response to the absence of bodies from "the infinite fragmentation of a mined landscape,"[18] Griffith moved his crew to England, where he filmed his battle scenes on the Salisbury Plain before returning to America to finish shooting on a California ranch.[19] Restaging the war as cinematic illusion, Griffith made visible the missing bodies and spectacle of combat by transforming the abstraction of the war into a documen-table reality, thus pointing to the role that cinema would play in imaging the phantasmagorical war machine of fascism.

In the Dadaist movement that emerged in neutral Switzerland, the fractured landscape and derealized experience of trench warfare found a different form of representation. Rather than mask the abstraction of war through cinematic illusion or through a return to naturalism, the Dadaists played out its incomprehensibility through the deconstruction of lan-guage and the radical montage of images. As had the soldiers in the trenches, the Dadaist artist Hugo Ball discovered that "the world showed itself to be a blind juxtaposition and oppos-ing of uncontrollable forces. Man lost his divine countenance, became matter, chance, an aggregate.... A world of abstract demons swallowed the individual utterance, ... robbed single things of their names ... psychology became chatter."[20]

While Dada's disavowal of meaning outside of the incomprehensibility of the war upheld the rupture with a mori-bund history envisioned by the Futurist avant-garde, for those critics and artists of Paris who had championed classicism, the signing of the Armistice of 1918 brought with it a further val-orisation of the past as an anchor for social cohesion.[21] The past, wrote the French art critic Jean-Louis Vaudoyer in 1919, is "no longer an enemy to be demolished or disdained but, on the con-trary, it is an auxiliary, an ally, a discreet inspiration, with proven and living virtues."[22] In 1921, Gino Severini, a central figure in the Futurist movement, wrote his own artistic epitaph, declaring that in the avant-garde's search for originality, "with only fan-tasy and caprice as a basis, little was achieved, in general, but singularity,"[23] and he set his sights on the horizon of Mussolini's
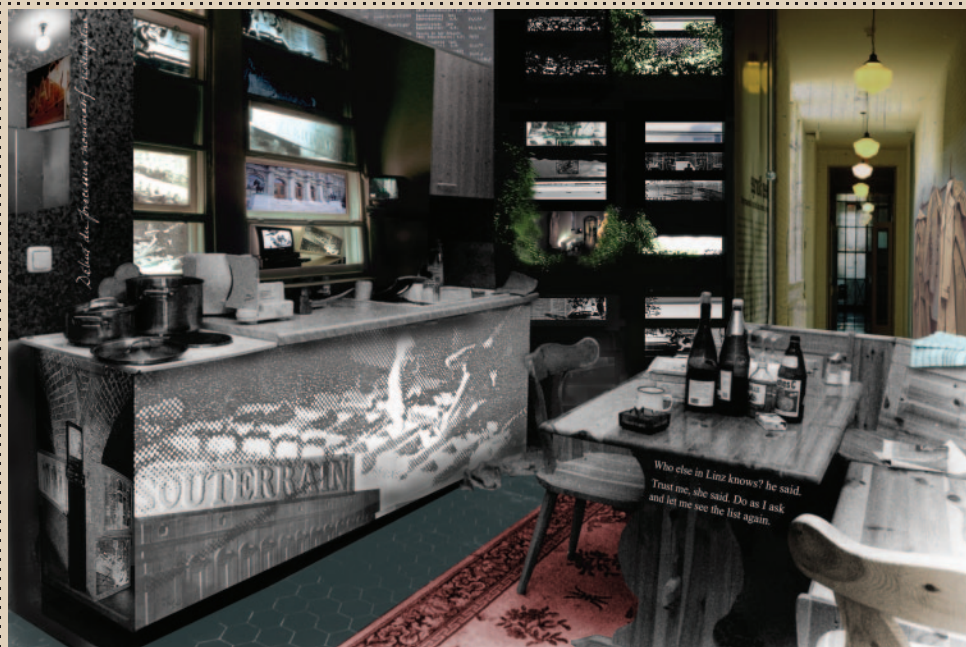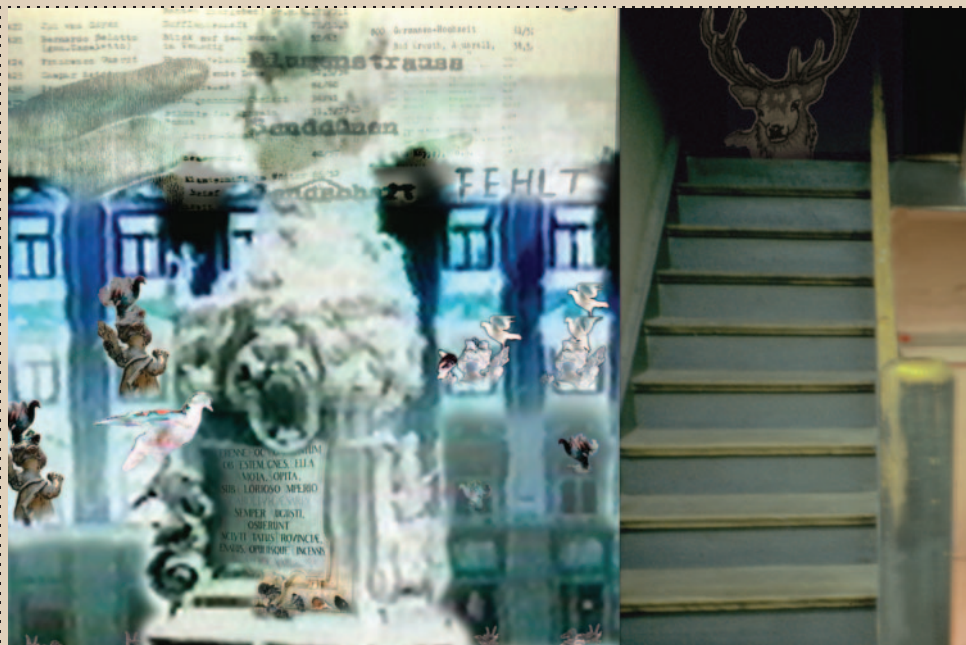
fascism. With the retreat of artists from a vision of the future to a totalitarian wholeness anchored in the past, what was excised from the historical continuum was the singular experience of those who had survived the barbarity of the trenches.

In 1929, Erich Maria Remarque published *All Quiet on the Western Front*, a fictional homage to an unknown soldier, which narrated this singular experience as a descent into a mythic vortex of individual despair and futility. Selling more than two million copies in its first year, the book captured the public imagination and pointed to the degree that the psychic residue of the war still haunted Europe.[24] While antithetical to the post-war vision of purification and social cohesion, Remarque's restaging of the war as traumatic memory also excised the barbarity of the trenches from a historical continuum. But in his book's refusal to redeem a collective ethos from the past, the savagery of the war became unforgettable and the singularity of experience a permanent condition of modernity.

From this tension between the individualized experience of trauma and the disavowal of its historical specificity, Surrealism emerged as the heir apparent to Dada. In Surrealism, Freud's unconscious became a site of traumatic memory and of social cohesion, described by art historian Jacqueline Chénieux-Gendron as "machinery for integration … and negating."[25] Whereas Dada had constructed "a transgressive montage of social materials (i.e., of high-art and mass-cultural forms) located in the world,"[26] the Surrealists, argues art historian Hal Foster, turned to "a disruptive montage of conducive psychic signifiers,"[27] in which the "*heimlich* things of the nineteenth century returned as the *unheimlich*[28] in the twentieth century."[29] In this compulsion to repeat the past in the form of uncanny images, Surrealism integrated the violence and destruction underlying fascism while negating its external manifestation as a totalitarian will to power.

In *Body Missing*, echoes of Dada's radical montage and a Surrealist play with the *unheimlich* emerge in Frenkel's juxtapositions of archival evidence and incomplete stories about missing artworks. What distinguishes Frenkel from her modernist predecessors, however, is her quest to give to the singular experience of trauma a collective context. Through her video collages, she addresses the spectral quality of cinematic illusion by providing the dematerialized bodies of war with a conceptual framework of absence rather than a documentary presence. Dismantling the coherence of history into fragmentary images of loss, she becomes a guardian against the narrative consolation of classicism. In so doing, she confronts rather than disavows what Ernst Bloch identified as "the tragic repetition of atavistic and social structures" embedded in fascism. As such, *Body Missing* is foremost an ethical meditation on the relationship of war to image and remembrance, one that asserts the role of art in giving to history social relevance and to memory political significance.

Reconciliation with the Dead
As America prepared to invade Iraq and Frenkel was installing

Body Missing in London, Roman Polanski's film *The Pianist* premiered in Toronto. At the time, I was preparing a paper on Frenkel's work for a conference being held at the Institute of Contemporary Art (ICA) in conjunction with her exhibition at the Freud Museum.[30] On a Sunday afternoon, I took a break from writing and went to see the film. The theatre was full and the only available seats were in the front row. I took one, reluctantly, as it was only feet away from an enormous surround-sound screen. For two hours I was held captive by a cinematic spectacle of genocide that I found frightening, brutalizing and numbing. Based on the autobiography of Wladyslaw Szpilman, a famous pianist who wrote about his internment in and survival of the Warsaw ghetto, the film restaged, with archival precision, the building of the ghetto, the deportation to the camps and annihilation of its residents, the uprising of its few remaining inhabitants, the destruction of the ghetto and, finally, of the city.

Not everyone, it turned out, experienced the film as I had. An acquaintance told me that friends of hers had disliked it. They complained that nothing happened in the film and, bored, left halfway through it. I could no more comprehend their perception of the film as boring than I could the impending American invasion of Iraq. How could anyone claim "nothing happened" in a film about one of the most horrific slaughters of the Second World War?

It was then that I began to think about Frenkel's *Body Missing* in relationship to Polanski's film. The website version of *Body Missing* features Transit Bar video clips of immigrants to Canada who earned a living by playing piano in cafés, as did Szpilman in the Warsaw ghetto. Both Frenkel and Polanski are concerned with representing the trauma of remembering the Holocaust, Polanski deploying cinematic realism and Frenkel allegorical montage. So I decided to begin my talk with an archival image of the Warsaw ghetto and a discussion of Polanski's film as a way to introduce a historical context for *Body Missing*.

To find this archival image, I went to the University of Toronto library. This was not the first time I had found myself searching the library in response to one of Frenkel's works. Years ago, when writing about Frenkel's *Her Room in Paris* – a video installation about the little-known but brilliant novelist Cornelia Lumsden, who, in exile between the two world wars in Paris, wrote a novel, *The Alleged Grace of Fat People*, and then disappeared – I had wanted to find traces of her writings.[31] Even though I knew that Cornelia Lumsden was a fictional character of the artist's imagining, I felt that if I looked hard and long enough, I would discover one of Lumsden's novels tucked behind a row of books, its spine broken from secret readings by others like myself. Instead, I spent this day poring over compilations of *Life* magazines and photographic documentation of the war, only to discover that the archival evidence to which I had access was not the graphic reconstruction of Polanski's cinematic panorama, but a highly censored version of Allied history.

Confronted with this unsettling void of representation, I thought about the first Gulf War – with its virtual simulacra of precision bombings and its absence of bodies strewn across the desert landscape – and realized that official imaging of war always elides victims from the historical record. Seeking an alternative source, I began to look through monographs on photographers such as Margaret Bourke-White, Robert Capa and George Rodger, whom I knew had taken images during the war. I finally located a few photographs that Robert Capa had taken in Warsaw in 1948, the most famous of which is his image of the destroyed Warsaw ghetto with only a church left standing.[32] While several of his photographs of the city streets resembled Polanski's cinematic recreation of bombed-out buildings, they did not constitute the archival bank of images I was sure Polanski had drawn from. Nevertheless, I settled on a Capa image of Berlin, 1945, in which a fallen classical statue lies in front of a bombed-out cathedral, as it resonated with the theme of Frenkel's missing art works.[33]

A few days later, I was visiting Toronto photographer David Hlynsky and I told him about my futile quest to locate archival images of wartime Warsaw. Surprisingly, he replied that perhaps he had what I was looking for. He took me up to his study, where hundreds of books of photographs lined the shelves, and pulled from his collection on Poland, from where his grandparents had immigrated to Canada, an anonymous compilation of documentary images taken in Warsaw from 1940 to 1945. Published in Poland in the early 1980s, the book contained images of every scene in Polanski's film: the building of the bridge over the tramcar tracks at the entrance of the ghetto; the café where Szpilman played the piano; the square where the Germans gathered together the remaining survivors of the ghetto to await transportation to the concentration camps; the resisters flinging themselves out of the windows of buildings that the Germans had firebombed; and then page upon page upon page of Warsaw, razed and in ruins.[34] Perhaps the most jarring thing about this conclusion to my search for images, which began in the vast holdings of the university library and ended in a friend's personal archive, was where Hlynsky had found the book of photographs, sequestered in the back of a small second-hand bookstore in the formerly Jewish area of Krakow.

Looking at the images that night, I had the same uneasy feeling I had experienced several days earlier, when my search in the library had turned from archival evidence to the monographs of individual photographers, whose canonization as artists had rescued their documents from oblivion. What did it signify to take the remembrances of one man, Szpilman, first published as a memoir, and then recomposed into cinema, and represent it through these documentary stills? Why, after such a prolonged search, was I suddenly reluctant to use the images of the Warsaw ghetto for my talk on *Body Missing*? Was I any closer to finding a history of missing bodies and of genocide? Or had my reconnaissance mission resulted in an archival endgame where, in Certeau's words:
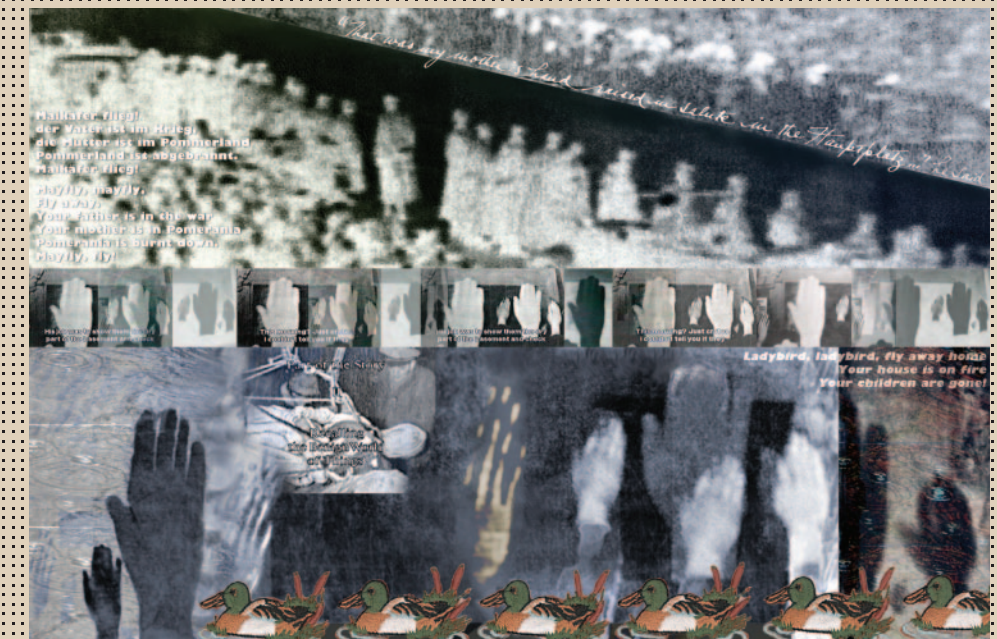
Left
Vera Frenkel
Body Missing
Installation view in Linz,
Austria, 2008
1994–present

Above
Vera Frenkel
"Recalling the Benign World
of Things" (top)
"The Apparatus of Marking
Absence" (bottom)
from *Body Missing*
Photo-murals from the
video-photo-web installation
2000

Such is history. A play of life and death is sought in the calm telling of a tale, in the resurgence and denial of the origin, the unfolding of a dead past and result of a present practice. It reiterates, under another rule, the myths built upon a murder of an originary death and fashions out of language the forever-remnant trace of a beginning that is as impossible to recover as to forget.[35]

The talk that I presented a week later did not provide answers to my questions. Rather, it insisted on their importance for an understanding of how Frenkel's artwork becomes a reflection of the politics and ethics of representing war, in which the tensions between abstraction and realism, radical montage and cinematic spectacle found their apotheosis in a death struggle laid bare in the killing fields of the First World War and in the systematic genocide enacted upon the social fabric of Europe under the Nazi regime. If, as Eksteins argues, the twentieth century has been an anti-historical one "in part because historians have failed to adapt to the sentiments of their century but even more so because this century has been one of disintegration rather than integration,"[36] then Body Missing can be understood as a quest to find a language for art through which this history of disintegration can be told.

During World War II, artworks went missing through confiscation by the Nazis, looting by the Russians, being smuggled to Switzerland or out of Europe, perishing in the firebombing of Dresden or in the razing of Warsaw to rubble. In Body Missing, Frenkel locates a function for their absence, one that honours Kaja Silverman's call to let the "traces of other people's struggles, passions, pasts resonate within one's own past and present, and destabilize them."[37] At the core of Vera Frenkel's work is a site of transference between image and remembrance, one that unsettles our investments in making "the dead the objective figure of exchange among the living."[38]

The Process of Redemptive Naming Begins
When I first began thinking about Body Missing in relation to Frenkel's exhibition at the Freud Museum in March 2003, the external context of the Gulf War intruding on my interpretation deepened my appreciation of the work's historical significance, not because it directly addresses the horrors of war, but precisely because it offers spaces and gaps in which to mourn the victims of war, past and present. As I finish this text, in which the ideas presented in that talk have coalesced, the invasion of Iraq has been incorporated into the *realpolitik* of a global landscape. The lack of representation that war engenders – notwithstanding the Abu Ghraib photographs of American torture – has been elided by the promise of databases and social networks to fill this void with information. With this external context now intruding upon the text, the website extension of Body Missing takes on an additional resonance, linking the mutating databanks and data-phantoms of the Internet to missing artworks and missing bodies.

New media theorist Lev Manovich argues that, in computation, the world is reduced to algorithms, which determine how interfaces transform linear narrative into hypertext and archives into databases.[39] According to the Britannica website, from which Manovich takes his definition of the database, the archive is a repository of historical records that are deemed significant, while the database is a collection of information that is organized for rapid search and retrieval. In thinking about the Body Missing website in relation to the functionality of the database, I decided to google the terms "archive and memory." Aristotle's *On Memory and Reminiscence* was the first item identified, followed by Memory improved by stem cell transplantation (MARS institute); Blueheart Archive entertainment and information site; Welcome to MemoryArchive, the encyclopedia of memories. Everyone has a Story. Make Yours History; TechSheep, memory usage in Firefox and Gecko; Finding Memory Leaks, The Empty Way Programming. What was markedly absent from this list was any reference to history.

As a website embedded in the Internet's vast warehouse of information, Body Missing's investigation of missing artworks makes visible this absence of history. Through the creation of a recombinant virtual space in which web pages house partial stories and fragmentary evidence, Frenkel re-imagines the database as an incomplete archive rather than as a handmaiden to information. Disturbing rather than reproducing the algorithms for the quick retrieval of data, she reconstitutes history's presence as a rhizome ebb and flow of testimony and hypertext ellipses of memory. Certeau posits that, without a past, a society has no possibility for transformation and change; to his assertion I want to add that, without art, the past lacks interpretation.[40] Through the Body Missing website, Frenkel offers an interpretation of a past that is in danger of oblivion. In so doing, she holds out the promise of historical reflection rather than the algorithmic organization of information to shape society's potential for transformation and change.

The intertitles are taken from four of the six titles of the Body Missing videos and rearranged to represent the thematic of each section of the text. The titles were originally drawn from Gertrud Koch, "Not Yet Accepted Anywhere: Exile, Memory and Image in Kracauer's Conception of History"(*New German Critique* 54 [Fall 1991]: 95–109), and were used by Frenkel with permission of the author.

Notes

1 See <www.yorku.ca/BodyMissing>.
2 Michel Certeau, "Making History: Problems of Method and Problems of Meaning," *The Writing of History*, trans. Tom Conley (New York: Columbia University Press, 1980): 46.
3 The source information for John Heartfield's photomontage was obtained from Hugh Honour and John Fleming, *The Visual Arts: A History* (New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1991): 685.
4 Cited in Stephanie Barron, *Degenerate Art: The Fate of the Avant-Garde in Nazi Germany* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1991): 44.
5 Ibid.: 174.
6 F.T. Marinetti, "The Foundation and Manifesto of Futurism," in *Theories of Modern Art*, ed. Herschel B. Chipp (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1968): 286.
7 Cited in Hal Foster, *Compulsive Beauty* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1993): 188.
8 Cited in Modris Eksteins, *Rites of Spring: The Great War and the Birth of the Modern Age* (Toronto: Lester & Orpen Dennys, 1989): 206.
9 Ibid.: 155.
10 Ibid.: 174.
11 For an analysis of the role of the Parisian avant-garde in revitalizing classicism and naturalism in response to World War I, see Kenneth Silver, *Esprit de Corps: The Art of the Parisian Avant-Garde and the First World War, 1914–1925* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989). Silver argues that Picasso was the central figure in the avant-garde's embrace of a normative function for art. He notes that Picasso was "the first, strongest, and most prolific practitioner of the wartime revival of traditional craftsmanship, [and] he was equally the best and most unabashed neo-classicist after the war." (Silver: 271)
12 Cited in Marjorie Perloff, *The Futurist Moment: Avant-Garde, Avant Guerre, and the Language of Rupture* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986): 74.
13 Silver draws upon art historical references and a wealth of archival detail to demonstrate that wartime propagandists, the general public and the avant-garde were united in embracing a normative realism.
14 Paul Virilio attributes these sentiments to Griffith in *Cinema and War* (New York: Verso, 1989): 15. The importance of Griffith's use of a mobile camera in revolutionizing cinema is described in Basil Wright, *The Long View: An International History of Cinema* (Frogmore, UK: Paladin, 1976): 28.
15 Virilio, *Cinema and War*: 14.
16 Ibid.: 14.
17 Ibid.: 15.
18 Ibid.: 70.
19 Ibid.: 15.
20 Hugo Ball, *Flight Out of Time*, cited in Anna Balakian, "A Triptych of Modernism," in *Modernism: Challenges and Perspectives*, ed. Monique Chefdor et al. (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1986): 112.
21 Silver, *Esprit de Corps*: 227–36.
22 Cited in Silver, *Esprit de Corps*: 235.
23 Cited in Silver, *Esprit de Corps*: 265.
24 Distribution figures are taken from Eksteins, *Rites of Spring*: 276.
25 Jacqueline Chénieux-Gendron, *Surrealism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1990): 5.
26 Hal Foster, *Compulsive Beauty*: 81.
27 Ibid.: 81.
28 In "The Uncanny" (1919), Freud poses an opposition between that which is *heimlich* – a word that conveys the double entendre of being familial, familiar and intimate, and of being secret, concealed and private – and that which is *unheimlich* – the estranged, the unfamiliar and the unconcealed of the uncanny. See Sigmund Freud, *Art and Literature*, vol. 14 (London: Penguin Books, 1990): 341–47.
29 Foster, *Compulsive Beauty*: 127. Foster takes up Walter Benjamin's observation that the Surrealists "were the first to perceive the revolutionary energies that appear in the 'outmoded,' the first iron constructions, the first factory buildings, the earliest photos, objects that have begun to be extinct," to argue that the Surrealists uncovered the relics of the nineteenth century for "purposes of resistance [to commodity capitalism] through re-enchantment." (Foster: 166). See also Walter Benjamin, "Surrealism: The Last Snapshot of the Intelligentsia," *One Way Street* (London: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1978): 229.
30 The conference, entitled *Body Missing: From Theft to Virtuality: Considerations of the Meaning of Absence*, was organized by art historian Griselda Pollock for Centre CATH at the University of Leeds. It was held from March 21–22, 2003, at the Institute of Contemporary Art (ICA) in London.
31 Dot Tuer, "Threads of Memory and Exile: Vera Frenkel's Art of Artifice," *Mining the Media Archive* (Toronto: YYZ Books, 2005): 35–41.
32 Robert Capa was only able to take a few photographs of Warsaw in 1948 before his film was confiscated by the Eastern Bloc authorities. Several of these photographs, including the one of the Warsaw ghetto, are published in *Robert Capa* (New York: Phaidon Press, 2001): 488–89. Capa had gone to Warsaw after travelling in the Soviet Union and Israel during 1947–48.
33 The image of Berlin, 1945, is reproduced in *Robert Capa*: 127. Capa photographed the war extensively while travelling with Allied forces from 1943 to 1945, during which time many of his photographs were published in *Life* magazine.
34 The book is untitled. It lists no author, editor or publisher, only the date of publication as 1981.
35 Certeau, "Making History": 47.
36 Eksteins, *Rites of Spring*: 291.
37 Kaja Silverman, *Threshold of the Visible* (New York: Routledge, 1996): 189.
38 Certeau, "Making History": 46.
39 Lev Manovich, *The Language of New Media* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2001): 218.
40 Certeau, "Making History": 19–49.

« Entre image et souvenir :
les résidences psychiques de *Body Missing* »

Dot Tuer explore les stratégies esthétiques et les contextes de réception de l'œuvre multimédia de Vera Frenkel, *Body Missing*. Son essai se divise en quatre sections. La première propose un survol de l'évolution de *Body Missing*, depuis sa première incarnation en tant qu'œuvre in situ à Linz en Autriche jusqu'à son installation au Freud Museum à Londres. La deuxième section se penche sur les résonances entre les stratégies esthétiques utilisées par Frenkel et les représentations de la guerre offertes par l'avant-garde au cours du XXe siècle. La troisième section établit un parallèle entre *Body Missing*, le film de Roman Polanski intitulé *Le pianiste* et les images d'archive. La quatrième examine comment cette œuvre recadre l'histoire à partir des bases de données qui prolifèrent sur Internet. Chaque section est animée par une prise en considération de la manière dont l'œuvre de Frenkel s'avère une méditation éthique sur les intersections entre image, souvenir, traumatisme et histoire.