

Vera Frenkel: A Narrative of Absence and Return

Kurz nach der Angelobung der neuen Regierung in Österreich unter Beteiligung von Haider's FPÖ im Februar 2000 reflektiert die kanadische Künstlerin Vera Frenkel, die derzeit eine Ausstellung ihrer Video-Installation »Body Missing« im Sigmund Freud-Museum in Wien vorbereitet (Eröffnung Mai 2001) über die Frage, »was es bedeutet, zu diesem Zeitpunkt in Österreich eine Ausstellung zu machen und insbesondere »Body Missing« zu zeigen.« (Es handelt sich um eine Sechs-Kanal Video-Installation mit einer zugehörigen Webseite <http://www.Yorku.ca/BodyMissing>, die anlässlich der Ausstellung im Freud-Museum gerade erweitert wird. Die Arbeit setzt sich u.a. mit dem Kunstraub der Nationalsozialisten auseinander).

In tagebuchähnlicher Form beschreibt sie, was sie als strategischen Coup Haider betrachtet: die Effekte seines geplanten Besuchs im Holocaust Memorial Center in Montréal im Februar dieses Jahres. »Haider braucht nicht nach Kanada zu kommen, um etwas über den Holocaust zu lernen, er kann das in seinem eigenen Hinterhof tun« (Moshe Ronen, Präsident des Canadian Jewish Congress).

Dieses Zitat liefert den Übergang zum Genius loci des Freud-Museums Berggasse 19, eine von seinen Bewohnern, Freud und seiner Familie, verlassene Wohnung und psychoanalytische Praxis, wo die Berichte von Exilierungen und vom Holocaust einen angemessenen Ort finden. Die (re)konstruierte Erinnerung an die Tage vor

A few days after the inauguration of the present Austrian government with the participation of Joerg Haider's FPÖ, the Canadian artist Vera Frenkel, while preparing an exhibition of her video-installation *Body Missing* for the Sigmund Freud-Museum in Vienna (opening in May 2001), reflects on the question »what does it mean to make an exhibition, and particularly to show *Body Missing*, in Austria now.« The *Body Missing* project is a six-channel video installation, with a related website at <http://www.Yorku.ca/BodyMissing> – now in process of further development à propos the Freud Museum exhibition – which deals beside other topics with the art loot of the National Socialists.

In the form of a diary Frenkel describes what she considers a strategic act of Haider, the effects of a planned visit to the Holocaust Memorial Centre in Montréal in February 2000. »Mr. Haider does not need to come to Canada to learn about the Holocaust, he can learn in his own backyard.« (Moshe Ronen, President of the Canadian Jewish Congress).

This quote leads to the Genius loci of the Freud-Museum at Berggasse 19, home and psychoanalytic consulting rooms abandoned by its inhabitants Freud and his family, where commentaries on exile and the Holocaust find an appropriate place.

The (re)constructed remembrance of the days preceding Freud's forced exile in 1938 mingle with memories of Vera Frenkel's own immigration. Her parents together with

[VORLÄUFIGE ÜBERSETZUNG UNBEARBEITET]
Court après l'Angelobung du nouveau gouvernement en Autriche sous la participation de Haider's FPÖ en février 2000 réfléchit l'artiste canadienne Vera Frenkel, l'actuellement une exposition de sa/leur installation " de vidéo *body Missing* " dans le Sigmund musée de Freud à Vienne prépare, inauguration mai 2001, sur la question, " qu'il il signifie que faire ce moment d'une exposition en Autriche et montrer surtout " le *body Missing* ". Il s'agit d'une six canal vidéo installation avec un Webseite affilié [http://](http://www.Yorku.ca/BodyMissing)

[/www.Yorku.ca/BodyMissing](http://www.Yorku.ca/BodyMissing) qu'est élargi exactement lors l'exposition dans le musée de Freud. Le travail se préoccupe entre autres du vol d'art des nationaux-socialistes.

Dans la forme journal intime*-pareille, elle décrit ce qu'elle considère comme le coup stratégique Haider's: les effets de sa visite projetée dans l'holocauste mémorial Center dans Montréal en le février de cette année." Haider n'a pas besoin de venir au Canada pour apprendre quelque chose sur l'holocauste qu'il peut le faire " dans sa propre arrière-cour, Moshe Ronen, président du Canadian Jewish Congress.

Cette citation fournit loci le passage au génie la Freud musée montagne allée 19, un de ses habitants, Freud et sa famille, appartement abandonné et pratique psychanalytique, où les rapports d'Exilierungen et de l'holocauste un lieu adéquat trouve. Ceci, souvenir re)konstruierte

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Freuds Aufbruch zu einem erzwungenen Exil 1938 vermischen sich mit Erinnerungen an die eigene Emigration Vera Frenkels. Ihre Eltern wanderten mit dem kleinen Mädchen aus Bratislava zuerst nach England und schließlich nach Kanada aus.

In einem Erinnerungsbogen der eigenen Bildungsgeschichte taucht die Vermutung einer Verwandtschaft zwischen psychoanalytischen und künstlerischen Verfahren auf. In diese anekdotische Erzählung wird nun eine weitere eingeführt, die des Body-Missing-Projekts, in dem die Pläne Hitlers für das Führermuseum in Linz, die Rivalität zu Wien (wo er an der Kunstakademie abgelehnt worden war), der Kunstraub, der zunächst mit der Beraubung jüdischer Bürger begann, die Auslagerung in eine Salzmine bei Bad Aussee, der Verlust von Bildern (und Menschen) thematisiert werden. Die Installation der Videoarbeit ist eine Wiederkehr der Erzählung des verdrängten nationalsozialistischen Unrechts, die in das Haus eines seiner Opfer getragen wird, Anlass für die emphatische Erinnerung an Freud und seine Familie, zugleich aber auch ein Gruß aus der Distanz einer Respektsbezeugung.

Der Text wurde für das Bulletin des Sigmund Freud-Museums in Wien geschrieben und erscheint in der nächsten Ausgabe Herbst 2000. Wir danken Vera Frenkel, dem Sigmund Freud Museum, der Direktorin Inge Scholtz-Strasser und der Herausgeberin Katharina Murschetz für die Erlaubnis der Veröffentlichung. Weitere Texte zum Video-Projekt und der Website (<http://www.yorku.ca/BodyMissing>) von Vera Frenkel, Irit Rogoff und Sigrid Schade erscheinen in: G. Fliedl, S. Schade, M. Sturm (Hg.): Kunst als Beute. Zur symbolischen Zirkulation von Kulturobjekten, Wien Herbst 2000.

the infant left Bratislava first for England and then Canada.

Within the narrative of her own formative years the assumption of related proceedings in art and psychoanalysis arise. Into this narrative another one enters: the story of the Body Missing project which focuses on Hitler's plans for the »Führermuseum«, the rivalry between Linz and Vienna (where he had been rejected by the academy), the art loot which began with the robbing of Jewish citizens, the storage in a salt mine at Alt Aussee and the loss of art works (and of human beings.)

Installing the video work is a return to and disclosure of the narrative of the suppressed criminality of the National socialists being reinstalled in a house of one of its victims, as an occasion for emphatic commemoration of Freud and his family and at the same time for paying respect.

The text introduced here was written for the Bulletin of the Sigmund Freud Museum in Vienna and will be published in the next issue in fall 2000. We thank Vera Frenkel, the Sigmund Freud Museum, the director Inge Scholtz-Strasser and the editor Katharina Murschetz for permission to publish the full text. Further texts on the video-project and the website (<http://www.yorku.ca/BodyMissing>) by Vera Frenkel, Irit Rogoff and Sigrid Schade will be published in: G. Fliedl, S. Schade, M. Sturm (Ed.): Kunst als Beute. Zur symbolischen Zirkulation von Kulturobjekten, Wien fall 2000.

les jours devant le départ de Freud à un exil forcé 1938 mêle s'avec les souvenirs à la propre émigration Vera Frenkels. Ses/leurs/vos parents ont émigré d'abord avec la petite fille de Bratislava en Angleterre et finalement au Canada.

Dans un arc de souvenir de la propre histoire d'éducation, la supposition d'une parenté émerge entre méthodes psychanalytiques et artistiques. Dans ce récit anecdotique, un plus vaste est introduit maintenant, qu'à le Body-Missing-Projekts, dans que les plans de Hitler pour le musée de guide à Linz, la rivalité à Vienne, où il avait été refusé à l'académie d'art, le vol d'art, qui a commencé avant tout avec la spoliation de citoyens juifs, le déplacement dans une mine de sel au bain Aussee, la perte d'images (et gens), thematisiert devient. L'installation du travail de vidéo est un retour du récit du tort national-socialiste et évincé, que dans la maison un ses victimes est porté, Anlass pour le souvenir emphatique à Freud et sa famille, en même temps mais aussi un salut de la distance d'une attestation de respect.

Le texte a été écrit pour le bulletin du Sigmund musée de Freud à Vienne et paraît l'automne 2000 dans la dépense prochaine. Nous remercions à Vera Frenkel, que Sigmund Freud musée, la directrice Inge Scholtz-Strasser et l'éditrice Katharina Murschetz pour la permission de la publication.

Les textes plus vastes au projet de vidéo et le site de Web (<http://www.yorku.ca/BodyMissing>) de Vera Frenkel, Irit Rogoff

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wenn irgendetwas möglich bitte
den deutschen Abstract um
mindestens drei Zeilen kürzen

M.
mme

Vera Frenkel: A Narrative of Absence and Return

February 17th, 2000

This morning in Toronto, thinking what it means to show a work like *Body Missing* in Austria now, I hear on the radio that Joerg Haider is en route to my city.

It is perhaps not surprising that Mr. Haider has chosen Canada as the first step on what his colleague, Peter Sichrovsky, an FPÖ member of the European Parliament, described yesterday in Montréal as »part of an image-improvement campaign.« Canada offers such a noble backdrop: Our mythic natural resources; the legendary uprightness and innocence of the Canadian character, provide a splendid canvas for a whitewash.

The effort has failed, of course, Canadians being far more subtle, worldly and familiar with sin than our noble-savage reputation would suggest. From the official statement of the Department of Foreign Affairs in Ottawa, to the signs and banners of student demonstrators in front of his Montréal hotel, Mr. Haider's ideas were termed repugnant and unwelcome.

Despite or because of the myths, Canada is also a well-known centre for neo-Nazi activities. Though the attempts are rarely successful, our freedom-of-expression laws have been invoked again and again to excuse systematic dissemination of hate-lies, and the production of hate-literature or Nazi paraphernalia that is shipped all over the world. While these activities are carried out by and are of interest to only a minuscule fraction of the population, someone of Mr. H.'s reported views arriving in Canada would not be lonely for long.

But as happens with other politicians whose chameleon conduct suggests a curious kind of need, H. wants more. H. wants, his associates would have us believe, the approval of the Montréal Jewish community through the redemptive imprimatur of a visit to the Montréal Holocaust Memorial Centre. In this transparent attempt at revisionist theatre, H. would win either way: Triumphant over his putative victims if he enters the Holocaust Centre and gets the guided tour, or, if he is denied access to the sacred ground, strategically martyred as a »victim of rejection« by those he has denigrated.

»Mr. Haider does not need to come to Canada to learn about the Holocaust,« says Moshe Ronen, President of the Canadian Jewish Congress, »He can learn in his own back yard.«

And it is true that when expedient political gestures are on the menu, *Vienna* itself is ripe enough with potential photo opportunities. Where spectacle is all, morality dissolves. All that is required is a smiling Haider cut-out doll, propped up in front of every honorable social, political, or cultural gathering place or event, basking in its aura. Regarding this fondness for public spectacle, there is a private antidote. Each one of H.'s self-aggrandizing attempts can be countered with certain words spoken by

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Sigmund Freud in the days preceding his forced exile from Austria; the quiet expressions of someone whose home for 72 years had been Vienna, before being banished from H.'s »own back yard«. Instantly the relative weights of the ridiculous and the sublime reveal themselves; the calculated but transparent rhetoric of H. pierced through by the testimony of a great fellow-citizen of an earlier generation.

Yet, where madness has once reigned, deep channels remain in place, prepared for its return. Over the last few days, the appeals from Austrian friends asking not to be abandoned raise again the question, what does it mean to make an exhibition, and particularly to show *Body Missing*, in Austria now?

Because of its history and the memories it cherishes and embodies, the Sigmund Freud Museum is one place in Vienna where inter-generational testimonies converge, bear witness and carry warnings; and where a fellow exile can consider presenting a work addressing the art-collecting fever of the Third Reich. The Sigmund Freud Museum, site in 1938 of Freud's departure into an exile forced on him and his family by programmatic hatred, stands as a reminder of what was lost then and of what is at risk now and perhaps always.

February 28th, 2000

Note before leaving for Pearson Airport: H. resigns as head of his party. Has higher ambitions. But even Svengali failed, in the end, to make Trilby sing ...

Berggasse 19th

Can a dwelling have a special power? It depends who you are, where it is and what happened there.

The latter is unknowable. Regarding Berggasse 19, even the witnesses, if they were alive, could not really know what happened there. We have the photos of the consulting room, the detailed accounts by Freud himself, elaborated or contradicted by others; a floorplan: together, an intricate mesh of the personal and the professional, the political and the psychoanalytical, moving through time, through and past us.

That these densely-filled spaces are visually compelling is self-evident through the images that exist. What remains elusive is the tone of voice with which Sigmund Freud said good night to Martha, Minna, the children; how he made decisions regarding his household; how he greeted a late-evening guest. The study, the voices, the coming and going of patients, the view from the bedroom window, the footfalls on the stairs ...

We are part of the complex net of ideas and memories generated here, forming how we perceive the world. Difficult to stand aside and see clearly what happened, but so fascinating is the prospect, that we try.

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Descant

Born thirty kilometers from Vienna, in Bratislava, and returning now to make a work in the Museum that encompasses the consulting rooms and apartment of Sigmund Freud, the place from which he and his family were forced to flee, I find myself reliving the exile to England of my own parents. About the age that my grandparents would have been, the figures of Sigmund and Martha weave through my own memories and take their grandparental place.

Although I have no visual memory of anything preceding the scenes of my English childhood, there is the remembered sound of the way my mother all her life spoke the name Vienna invoking a psychic amalgam of love, longing, legend. And loss.

Into this humming memory space, the Vienna of her youth, the big city where she visited friends, frequented the best cafés, shopped for shoes and handbags; where, long before they met, she and my father as children were taken by their respective parents to the best doctors; woven into this space, this word-sound which signalled for me the life-long loss that is exile, a sound that crossed the ocean as part of our own subsequent migration, came an awareness of Freud, its impact profound enough for me to declare at the age of fifteen that it was my intention to study and practice psychoanalysis.

By this time in Montréal, I was in a milieu where such a dream, in the absence of resources, mentors or know-how, was unrealizable. It nevertheless accompanied my other activities like a descant, and for the young girl who had never known her grandparents, Grandfather Freud... Grandpa Sigmund... Zeidah Ziggy... and his work remained a force. In university now, immersed in studies of art and anthropology, I learned by chance that there was an International Psychoanalysts' Symposium (I no longer recall the precise name of the event ...) at a downtown hotel; the Mount-Royal, or the Ritz-Carlton perhaps. And, on some invented pretext, I presented myself and persuaded the conference gatekeepers to let me in.

Ignoring curious looks, but listening to one paper after another, taking notes, grateful through the dense thicket of academic prose for a momentary insight here and there, I sat quietly, denying the growing suspicion that some of what I was hearing was curiously dull, even trivial. Mostly I was thrilled to be within speaking distance of a phenomenon I had found so compelling as a young girl; I experienced a sense of homecoming through this public consideration of an extraordinary process of illumination of the structures of the unknown by which one's inner self and outer actions were governed. In my mind, these considerations echoed and resonated with the received memories of the now legendary city, in what remained of our family, by which my own internal forces had been shaped.

What one of my colleagues referred to later, unconvincingly, as »The bad news from Vienna ...« had for me a double power, both personal and intellectual, which converged and came into focus at the party following that symposium.

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(Thinking now of the Viennese friends populating my adult life, their capacity for joy tempered by a complex irony, their heavy history eased by pragmatism, their mystical tendencies turned secular or vice versa by the subtleties of wine ... I can see that what I am saying here must seem very naïve, but of course naïve it was, and so it remains.) That I was an undergraduate student in another discipline no longer mattered. I was young, and made to feel reasonably attractive. Tall, friendly, admiring, I was swept into the celebration on this beautiful early summer night, given a glass of wine and made welcome.

It is rarely in the nature of turning points to announce themselves to the life being turned. Although I realized that something important was happening, I could not identify what it was. The chain of suites where the crowded party was being held, with their imitation Louis XIV furniture, clever papier-maché mouldings, synthetic velvets and brocades, became the site for a sequence of conversations that surprised me deeply at the time, and have haunted me ever since.

What happened at what I took to be the celebratory heart of the International Psychoanalytic movement, or at least its North American version, was a series of confessions, one after the other, for which I found myself the utterly unprepared confidante, too polite and too flattered to escape. These confessions shared a common theme. Whether near the bar, or on the embroidered couch, beside the open window, or on the terrace with a magnificent view down to the gleaming St. Lawrence River, silvery mauve in the dusk, I was privy to one disclosure after another that bore an uncanny resemblance to each other: Dr. X. had always wanted to be a violinist but his father wouldn't hear of it; Dr. Y. had an unfulfilled longing to sculpt in clay. Dr. Z. sometimes stole a few hours from his practice and his family to paint water colours – he knew it could come to nothing; he was alas, only an amateur, but his hobby gave him both frustration and delight and refreshed his mind. There was an emulator of Marcel Marceau; a secret poet; a photographer with a dark-room in his basement. Twice my age and from many distant cities, their individual laments, peopled with uncomprehending parents and teachers, wives and children, braided themselves that evening into a combined sigh of regret: »Oh, how I wish I'd had the courage (the support, the talent, the time, the resources ...) to be an artist ...«

Was this a kind of collective courtesy to a young art student? Or simply evidence of the underlying creativity of those drawn to the practice of psychoanalysis?

By now the wine was flowing. The doctors, freed from the strain of the day's presentations, were growing ruminative, in one instance even maudlin. The impact of these encounters on an illicit visitor cannot be exaggerated. The most accomplished and respected practitioners of what was for me the most sacred contemporary avocation all wanted to make art.

Again, can this be possible, or were they simply being polite to a young art student? Could it mean that psychoanalysis attracted predominantly creative people? Or had I happened, by chance, to encounter a particular group of men who, freed temporarily from the lecture hall, and the

scrutiny and allegiance of their communities, were allowing themselves to fantasize another way of life? I would never know what combination of fate, will and circumstance sent me home that night profoundly disturbed, having witnessed the regrets, and even, in some instances, the self-recrimination of people who had betrayed a vital part of themselves, or conversely, even if they had actually done just what they wanted in life – not only what ›mama‹ and ›papa‹ had insisted upon – were, for whatever reason, retroactively imagining a preferred alternative. The mysteries of that evening were many.

I see the faces of my troubled interlocutors as if we'd met and talked yesterday. Decades later I am in their debt. In the same way that there is said by some to be no coincidence, there are perhaps no surprises in life's encounters; perhaps only one's inner self inviting into its field of energy an external mirroring.

Those doctors embodied and distilled in one evening an internal conflict I had spent years avoiding and made me helped to shape the course I subsequently took, and, in time, brought me here, to install the results of my labours in a city far from home, in a museum that didn't exist in the Vienna of my parents' youth or mine.

A Rivalry

The other half of this story begins in Linz, with another museum that also didn't exist either when my mother and father were young, nor since: the Führermuseum, Hitler's grandiose fantasy of building in the city of his boyhood home, a vast art repository that would demonstrate to the world the cultivation and power of the Third Reich and of Nordic culture generally.

Knowing little of the Vienna-Linz rivalry, of which the Führermuseum fantasy was an early expression, I found myself fifty years later caught in its force-field after accepting an invitation from the art historian and curator Sigrid Schade to make a work for the group exhibition *Andere Körper* at the Offenes Kulturhaus (now the OK Centrum für Gegenwartskunst) in Linz. My acceptance of that invitation so offended a respected curator of a planned Viennese solo exhibition of my work that the exhibition was never held.

But now I was in Linz, gathering impressions, information, images, visiting the city archives, studying the façades on the street where the family Hitler lived, the windows of the school he once attended, the two finance buildings constructed after the Anschluss, the Pestsäule in the Hauptplatz, and the rooms and corridors, offices and stairwells of the building, (a former convent, school, Wehrmacht prison) that was then the Offenes Kulturhaus. And slowly the work evolved into the six-channel video installation on the Kunstraub policies of the third Reich and, since 1995, its growing website.

It is this work, *Body Missing* that I bring to Vienna, to the sad, gentle, »Ach, Wien!« of my exiled mother's memories, the ironic ›City of Dreams‹ of Robert Musil's *Madman*, in *The Man without Qualities*, the primary point of departure for the ideas underlying the practices of some analysts I once met at a party in Montréal, ideas generated in the interior spaces of what is now the Sigmund Freud Museum.

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Situating Body Missing in these rooms creates for me a sense of simultaneous closure and re-opening. Closure because I bring to the place from which the Freuds were forced out, a work in which the madness responsible for that forcing out is scrutinized and countered through another force, the force of memory, of commemorative process. That I, the child of refugee parents, should return to the city where, had the madness not taken hold, I might have gone to school, lived and worked; and to the apartment where... how shall we say it?... my symbolic grandfather, well perhaps ›Great-Uncle‹, Sigmund, lived and worked, offers a curious aptness. Once cut off from one's roots it is not possible to reconnect them seamlessly, but it is possible to mark the absence or the scar, to experience the particular regret that accompanies the loss of a world view, of the multitudinous tiny transactions that constitute family, city, culture, language.

But I can imagine that in my bringing this work, of another time but of the same place, I am paying a visit to my mother's Onkel Sigmund, her Tante Martha, Tante Minna, and her lovely cousin Anna.

Return

Time has telescoped. We are meeting here after the war. In my imagination I am somehow fluent in German, with what my father once called, with a smile, »einem innerlichen Verständnis«. I smell the familiar cooking, look out of the same windows, seeing much of what they saw. I hear the usual creaks in the wooden parquet floor, the sound of doors closing, first downstairs from the street, then footsteps on the stairs, then the apartment door opening and closing, a quiet sigh as coat and hat are hung in the vestibule, questions regarding the events of the day, talk of plans over dinner.

The figures dissolve behind the tears in my eyes. The sounds now are sounds of flight, the atmosphere taut with fear. The voices muted, speech curt, focussed on the eminently practical. Our Great-Onkel wants but will not be allowed to die in his home of so many years, in his own city, among friends and family.

There's a sudden startling encounter with a young photographer, hired by a family friend to document the flat discreetly before all disappears. Soon, the packing is completed. A last look out of the study window. A glance around the empty rooms. Doors open and then close one more time. First the apartment door, then the footsteps and the scraping down the stairs of whatever remaining boxes or valises the Freuds will take with them, the contents of the apartment having been packed and now waiting for release. Then the downstairs latch, the creak of the hinges, the final glance up at the windows on the Berggasse side, and the Freuds are in flight with Great-Onkel Sigmund moving towards the last chapter of Moses and Monotheism and of his life, devoted Anna attending, mother and aunt doing their part, a friend or two to help, with other friends en route, and at their destination. Things to be grateful for even in their desperation.

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I have no right to assume an intimacy with the Family Freud. Apart from the fact that we have lived in quite different time periods, from the little I was able to learn of my far more modest background, it would preclude in a milieu as hierarchical as Vienna, a relationship with the Freuds. But what is present here derives from another realm, another affinity; the profound affinity of the falsely accused and the unjustly punished; the bond forged by the shared gasp of astonishment at each cruelty inflicted, one more inventive than the other; and the shared desire to protect what is cherished and to see it prevail.

It is a primordial bond, sealed with grief on both sides. For those outside this affinity it is difficult to fathom the pervasive power of trauma, the fact that everything, everything, whether beautiful and benign, or their opposites, is forever altered, by that bond, that gasp of fear and disbelief. It is because I am a citizen in that realm, not only that I was born in this part of the world, not only because together with my whole generation I am fascinated by the mind and the life of Freud, not only because I have found myself drawn into a testimonial practice as an artist, but because Great-Onkel Sigmund, Tante Marthe, Tante Minna, Kusine Anna, and their kin live in my heart as members of the family of the exiled. It is a large family with many branches, and has endured many forms of unreason in many parts of the world.

This particular branch, however, centering on this apartment, this family, this exile, feels familiar. I'm grateful to be able to renew the acquaintance and to pay my respects.

Toronto/Banff, February 2000

VERA FRENKEL, Künstlerin, lebt in Toronto; Die Videos, Zeichnungen, Fotografien, Installationen, Drucke, Performances, Texte und Medien-Projekte der multidisziplinären Künstlerin Vera Frenkel untersuchen Macht und Zwänge (in) der Migration, das Erlernen und Verlernen kultureller Erinnerung und die Bürokratisierung des täglichen Lebens. Ausstellungen u. a.: documenta IX in Kassel 1992, Biennale di Venezia Club Media 1997, Canadian Images Festival of Film, Video and the New Media in Toronto 1997; Wanderausstellung Deep Storage, 1997 – 1999; Not On Any Map: Travel and Identities of Displacement, The Film Center, School of the Art Institute of Chicago, 1999 Fragile Electrons, National Gallery of Canada und the British-Canadian Video Exchange, LEA, London, 2000. Der Riksställningar Stockholm zeigte Body Missing und ...from the Transit Bar in Skandinavien und Polen, 1997-98. Artist-in-Residence Projekte u. a.: Slade School of Art, London; the School of the Chicago Art Institute; Akademie der Künste in Wien; the McLuhan Programme in Culture and Technology, Toronto, the Royal University of Stockholm, the Institute for Research in Gender Studies SUNY-Buffalo, Institut für Museologie an der Universität Wien. Sie erhielt zwei der höchsten kanadischen Preise, die an lebende Künstler vergeben werden und die Ehrendoktorwürde des Nova Scotia College of Art and Design. Bis zu ihrer Entscheidung 1995, sich gänzlich auf ihre künstlerische Praxis zu konzentrieren, war sie Professorin im Interdisciplinary Studio Programme, Faculty of Fine Arts, York University. Ihr derzeitiges Hauptprojekt ist eine Video-Web-Serien-Erzählung über die Machenschaften einer größeren kulturellen Institution The Institute: or, What We Do for Love. Sie bereitet die vollständige Sechs-Kanal-Version der Video-Installation Body Missing und die Erweiterung der Body Missing Website (<http://www.Yorku.ca/BodyMissing>) für eine Ausstellung im Sigmund Freud Museum in Wien Mai 2001 vor.

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