

## Michel Auder: Chronicles and Other Scenes

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Michel Auder has fervently recorded his life, experiences, and observations on video for over 30 years. Auder is an exemplary video *raconteur*, whose work elicits a sense of intimacy paired with the conscious pleasure of looking. The participatory character of Auder's videos is shaped by his use of the camera as a tool of social interaction. Auder's video chronicles create the impression that he carries a camera with him everywhere and that the camera inevitably mediates his perception and experience. This seemingly indefatigable use of video provokes a sense of infinite coverage, ostensibly effacing the distinction between experience, memory, and representation, and consequently brings further attention to the way technologies of representation mediate between individual and social histories.

Launching his career as a fashion photographer, Auder began making films in the early 1960s. By 1968, filmmaking became his primary conduit through his association with a constellation of radical independent filmmakers in Paris known as the Zanzibar Group. Auder began exploring the documentary value and creative possibilities of video soon after portable video equipment became available beyond the television industry. Auder acquired his first Sony Portapak video camera in 1969; since then, his work has spanned a variety of styles and genres, from fictional narratives to media appropriation collages, travelogues to exercises in mediated voyeurism, and video portraits of artists and friends such as Taylor Mead, Alice Neel, Larry Rivers, Cindy Sherman, Annie Sprinkle, and Hannah Wilke. Fundamentally, Auder is an assiduous visual chronicler who has documented and shared his life and observations with the medium of video. His cinema vérité-style memoirs have simultaneously documented personal domestic environments and that of the New York art world, from the glitterati of Andy Warhol's Factory in the late-1960s to the present. A confluence of representational systems informs these video chronicles, however the home mode and video diary formats are the most immediately perceptible.

The archive of footage he has amassed, and continues to collect, provides the source material from which he creates discrete works that range in length from under five minutes to several hours. While a few works were formed completely in-camera, most have been edited years, and sometimes decades, after the original footage was shot. As time passes, certain situations, people, and images are revisited, edited, and released from the archive. His process of explicit recollection is not about retrieval as much as it is about retelling and the processes of memory: looking back from the present on events in the past and searching for a means to tell stories, to communicate.

Auder is a poet of visual observation, who has been informally named the "Video Laureate." (1) Auder's chronicles of situations, behaviors, intimate details, and unexpected gestures offer glimpses into the quotidian and profound. These videos are remarkable for their aesthetic and historical value, offering an intimate view into a social scene "whose members have long since apotheosized into cultural mythology" (2) or have been otherwise recognized for their important contributions to art and culture. Collectively, the archive and videos effectively function as a form of visual autobiography. Film historian and theorist Michael Renov has identified this form of "essayistic" autobiography in recent film and video as "the site of a vital creative initiative being undertaken by film- and video-makers around the world that is transforming the ways we think about ourselves for ourselves and for others." (3)

### France, 1968

Auder was born in 1944, in the small industrial town of Soissons, France, approximately 60 miles north of Paris. An aspiring filmmaker, he moved to Paris in his late teens, where he found employment as an apprentice photographer. By 1961, Auder opened his own photographic studio and was introduced to New York City while on assignment with the legendary fashion photographer Hiro for *Harper's Bazaar*. Enthralled with the New York scene, Auder overstayed a two-week visa until he was deported several months later. Returning to Paris, Auder learned he had been conscripted for military service. He was instated in the photo and film division of the French Army and ultimately deployed in Algeria as a military photographer shortly after the war ended.

Like other young filmmakers of his generation, Auder was interested in challenging how modern life was represented, particularly by television and the classic narrative techniques of cinema. He found encouragement in the films of Pier Paolo Pasolini and the Nouvelle Vague for the manner with which they presented certain aspects of modern life, including frank explorations of sexuality, and challenged bourgeois morality. To this day, the French New Wave's cinematic fascination with the details and small rituals of everyday life is lavishly evident in Auder's work. Jean-Luc Godard and Andy Warhol decisively inspired Auder. Both film artists eschewed traditional realist conventions and in distinct ways manipulated the basic form and elements of cinema. Godard and Warhol were formative influences and confirmed his desire to "make films differently from the principles that had been laid out for so many years in the Hollywood system." (4)

Auder encountered a cadre of kindred thinkers when he became involved with the Zanzibar Group that formed in France in early 1968. Incorporating roughly a dozen young filmmakers, most in their early twenties, the group was allied in their conviction that cinema was the medium with which immediate actions and emotions could be captured and transformed into history. Between 1968 and 1970, the Zanzibar Group made thirteen films funded entirely by a single patron, Sylvina Boissonnas, a young heiress and future militant feminist. Henri Langlois often showed their films at the *Cinémathèque Française* in late-night screenings and thus ushered in the first installment of the post-*Nouvelle Vague* generation. Many of these films have been lost forever, but are perhaps best known today through Jacquie Raynal's *Deux Fois* (1968) and the expansive career of Philippe Garrel. Glamour and style were so central to their code of ethics and aesthetics that Zanzibar participants were often referred to as the "Dandies of 1968."

At times bewilderingly innovative and experimental, Zanzibar films enact a more extreme rejection of classical narrative than their forbearers, preferring improvisation and untrained actors while often making films without scripts. Such concepts were not necessarily new to Auder; between 1964 and 1965, he shot, directed, and edited his first 16mm film, *Anne Evadée des Saisons*, which starred Sabine Surget, Miss France 1962, first runner-up Miss United Nations 1963, and his romantic interest at the time. Discovering that the screenplay was irretrievably misplaced during production, Auder was nonetheless determined to carry through relying on improvisation to complete the film.

A parallel cinema, existing apart from and in opposition to standard structures of production and distribution, Zanzibar films were rarely screened in the U.S. Although most were shot on 35mm, these renegade productions were noted for their immediacy, directness, and stripped-down style that, by comparison, made the French New Wave look slick. Generally, Zanzibar productions are films of images, in which shots tend to be

autonomous and narrative is secondary. Editing was consistently subtle and minimal, while sound was often asynchronous or absent. The coalescence of these formal elements has been stalwartly maintained in Auder's practice after thirty years of production. These were defiantly personal films, hovering between documentary and fiction, marking and recording the emergence of the desires and demands that were expressed in the May 1968 political uprising in France. Thus, the Zanzibar films have been recently described as "a curious collection of cinematic parables that either addressed the demonstrations head-on or examined the personal and political issues that were at their core." (5) Such is the case with Auder's no longer extant films featuring lush Ektachrome footage of the 1968 protests.

1968 unfolded to be a propitious year for Auder. In that same year, he attended a screening of Andy Warhol's underground epic *Chelsea Girls* in Paris at Galerie Alexandre Iolas. *Chelsea Girls* (1966) was Warhol's first commercially successful film, which *Newsweek* deemed the "Iliad of the Underground" and the *New York Times* decried as a "travelogue of hell." (6) Auder considered it "the best fucking film I had ever seen," (7) and his decisive response confirmed and reinvigorated his desire to make films differently. Wandering through the streets of Paris while on a dandy *dérive*, Auder recognized Nico from her performance in *The Chelsea Girls*. He boldly approached the model turned spectral chanteuse for the Velvet Underground and introduced himself. Accompanying her was Viva, the ultimate "offbeat vamp of the underground" (8) and star of the Warhol films *Nude Restaurant*, *Bike Boy*, *Lonesome Cowboys* (1967), and *Blue Movie* (1968). A "high-cheekboned Botticelli beauty," (9) Viva was the reigning queen in Warhol's camp of "handsome women and beautiful men" (10) that were transformed into serial Superstars. Viva and Auder started dating and she soon inspired and starred in his next film. The ensuing relationship was one of several associations between Zanzibar filmmakers and Warhol's factory scene. Other Zanzibar participants, including Oliver Mosset, Caroline de Bendern, and Zouzou, had previously spent time at Warhol's Factory or had Factory ties. Nico would become Philippe Garrel's muse and they collaborated on several films, including *La Cicatrice Intérieure* (1972), released in the U.S. as the *Inner Scar*.

### Keeping Busy

Auder made approximately seven hour-long 16mm films between 1964 and 1970, which were shot and edited on a hand-wound Moviola machine. *Keeping Busy* (1969) was his first film with synched sound as the earlier films used "whatever was on the portable radio as my soundtrack." (11) Filmed on both 35mm and 16mm film, *Keeping Busy* chronicles the lives of Viva and Louis Waldon following the production of Warhol's *Blue Movie*. Auder's verité film diary features the Superstars playing themselves over the course of several weeks living out a jet-set fantasy life, gadding through a succession of luxurious locations including Rome, Morocco, and Malibu, and using Auder's production budget to do so. The film is non-narrative and non-sequential as it cuts between various locations. The principal footage was shot over an eleven-day period in Rome inside numerous fashionable hotel rooms, where the two stars simply lounge about and recount events from *Blue Movie*. *Keeping Busy* is as much a document of Viva and Waldon's mundane antics as it is of Auder and Viva's budding romance.

Waldon and Viva had both reaped illustrious notoriety for their performances in *Blue Movie* and the candid depiction of sexual intercourse therein. Warhol's film, originally titled *Fuck*, documents its own time frame of production: shot during one afternoon in the apartment of David Bourdon, art critic and *Vogue* editor, recording the conversation and sexual relations between the two individuals. As Warhol recounted, "I'd always wanted to do a movie that was pure fucking, nothing else, the way *Eat* had been just eating and *Sleep* had been just sleeping. So in October '68 I shot a movie of Viva having sex with Louis Waldon. I called it just *Fuck*." (12) Before and after the scene in which the stars consummate Warhol's sole directorial objective, Viva and Waldon discuss a litany of contemporary issues, including Vietnam, Nixon, Lindsey, voting, termites, and the police, among other things.

Warhol inadvertently shot the lovemaking scene with inappropriate film stock; as Viva reports, "He used outdoor [film] when he should have used indoor." (13) This oversight produced a curious unexpected aesthetic effect and created a hazy greenish-blue tint. The result, as one reviewer described it, was "a peculiar mixture of the obscene and the sentimental. [...] [T]he unfiltered daylight floods in on the sheets, the air, and the interlocked bodies, changing them all into a heavenly pale blue—copulating cherubs, lit by Hallmark cards." (14) Vincent Canby in the *New York Times* characterized *Blue Movie* as "a cheerful stag film, rather prettily photographed in which the performers actually do what has only been simulated in more conventional films." (15) The film was eventually declared hardcore pornography by both city and state courts. *Blue Movie* played at New York's Garrick Theater for one week in July 1969 before police seized the print and arrested the theater manager, projectionist, and ticket seller for possession of obscene materials. After deliberating for less than thirty minutes, a three-judge panel in Criminal Court ruled unanimously that the Warhol film met the criteria for obscenity on all counts: it aroused prurient interest, offended community standards, and was totally without any redeeming social value or significance. As such, *Blue Movie* was considered not to be art juridically, and, therefore, in violation of the Penal Code (16). *Blue Movie* was Warhol's first film following his near-fatal assassination attempt by Valerie Solanas. It would also become Viva's final appearance in a Factory film, despite various offers by Warhol, as she felt unfairly compensated and exploited.

*Keeping Busy* is both a para-Zanzibar and Factory document: featuring Warhol Superstars but sponsored by Boissonnas through Auder's association with the Zanzibar Group (17). In fact, many of the sequences shot in Rome were filmed using the 35mm camera of traveling companion Garrel, who was in the city filming at the same time. This unscripted film diary of Superstars on holiday was subtitled "a Film Novel about what they did to keep busy," and unequivocally acknowledges Warhol's influence on Auder (18). Like the Warhol films, Auder's film diary experimented with the relations (and tensions) between the real-time of action and actors and the reel-time of film and audience. These films test the conventions of realism and challenge the discrete categories of fiction, documentary, and biography. As John Hanhardt has explained, "The arts have long been concerned with how we see reality and the world around us, and Andy's films made us rethink the way in which a camera records, represents – and misrepresents – reality. We do not see action upon action here, leading logically to a conclusion." (19) Filmmaker Paul Morrissey, director of *Lonesome Cowboys* and many other Factory Films after 1966, characterized the Warhol cinematic aesthetic as "one of performers. ...Content is the record on film of the people's personalities in depth and in some richness." (20)

The scenes from *Keeping Busy* filmed in Hollywood and Malibu were completed while Viva was starring in another film, this time by celebrated Nouvelle Vague filmmaker Agnes Varda. Viva was offered one of the three lead roles in Varda's *Lion's Love* (1969) and cast alongside Gerome Ragni and James Rado, writers of the super-successful Broadway musical *Hair*. The three performers ostensibly play themselves with the narrative caveat that they are waiting for a big Hollywood break. Pioneer independent filmmaker Shirley Clarke, the creator of *The Connection* (1961) and *The Cool World* (1963), plays a director newly arrived to Hollywood to make a New York style underground film with Viva as its star. By posing as a movie within a movie, the plot suggests multiple levels of reality and representation engaging such concepts as "playing" on- and off-screen personae, reality versus the filmed image, and all the while juxtaposing its stars' private lives with public events. These layers of the filmic and

pro-filmic and the intentional blurring of the fictional and biographical prompted critics to describe the Varda film as a “meta-Warhol movie.” (21)

While filming *Lion's Love* in Los Angeles, Viva's marriage proposal to Auder, witnessed in an early scene of *Keeping Busy*, was fulfilled. They abandoned the set and fled to Las Vegas to be married, stalling Varda's production in the process. Yet, as Viva recounts in her best-selling *roman à clef*, *Superstar* (or what she called her “fictional semi-autobiographical novel” (22) published in 1970), their wedding was deferred multiple times so that Auder could film the ceremony. First, Auder struggled to track down high-speed color film, ultimately settling on Super-8 film, but then had to locate a floodlight; the ceremony was postponed, yet again, to hunt for sound recording tape. For one book reviewer, writing in the *Village Voice*, this seeming dependence on recording experience—and intentionally deferring experiences until they can be suitably documented—exemplified the emergent psychology of a new generation who “are at more than a loss when separated from cameras, tape recorders, or transistor.” (23) The 30-minute ceremony was finally held at a drive-in chapel and Ruth, the proprietor's wife, was instructed how to operate the camera. Afterwards, Auder (“Angelo” in the novel) excitedly raved about the nascent filmmaker's abilities; he then inspects the camera and exclaims, “Shit, the film didn't go through the camera. We don't have ONE frame.” (24)

### New York: The Chelsea Hotel

The newly-weds, Michel and Viva Auder, moved to the Chelsea Hotel in New York City following *Lion's Love*. A literary and architectural landmark, the Chelsea Hotel was long renowned as a residential, creative hub for artists and writers. By the late 1960s, the Chelsea had become an established destination for the international bohemian underground, and Warhol's *The Chelsea Girls* undeniably influenced its notoriety. A resident once described the hotel's madcap ambiance as “a cross between the Plaza and the Port Authority Bus Terminal.” (25) In this context, Auder developed a feature film, an underground version of *Cleopatra*, with Viva in the title role, alongside previous co-stars Louis Waldon as a queer Antony and Taylor Mead, a heterosexual Cesar. The film also featured an expanded band of Superstars, new and old, including Andrea Feldman, Gerard Malanga, Ondine, Ultra Violet, among others.

Ever since *Nude Restaurant* (1967), Viva had seized the attention of the media as the archetypal, definitive Superstar persona (26). Viva was often described as a unique cross between Marlene Dietrich and Vanessa Redgrave, Greta Garbo and Lucille Ball, while alternately characterized as “the most widely exhibited freak in Andy Warhol's collection.” (27) This publicity potential, along with an increased commercial interest in the piquant and profitable scandals associated with underground film, particularly for its unconventional representations of sexuality, enabled Auder to secure the funding necessary for production. Auder entered production with one condition; he insisted on a complete lack of interference from his producers.

Auder's *Cleopatra* is decidedly idiosyncratic, recklessly garrulous, and ultimately courted production disaster. When its producers saw the results, they were so incensed that they had the film destroyed. Auder was never able to release a final edit; instead, an earlier work print was surreptitiously salvaged and screened at the Cannes Film Festival by Henri Langlois. *Cleopatra* (1970), also known as *Viva Viva*, survives today as a degraded third-generation work print transferred first to video and then later to DVD, a record of its own failed production. Auder withdrew entirely from the commercial film industry, following the production debacle that prevented *Cleopatra* from being released, and opted for a new visual recording technique: video. Michel and Viva Auder purchased a Sony Portapak with the advance secured for the publication of Viva's novel *Superstar*. Video replaced film as Auder's preferred medium because of its accessibility, mobility, and intimacy. Moreover, the relative economy of video technology enabled synchronized image and sound recording, and, unlike film, video possessed the unique quality of real-time immediacy which Auder described as “Instant Gratification!” (28)

Video pioneers challenged the sanctioned and distinctively modern boundaries of public and private by positioning the individual and the world of the “private” over and against the “public” space of the mass media (29). Auder does not claim neutrality or objectivity with regard to his subject matter, and, thus, the distance generally associated with traditional documentary practice is abandoned or, at least, diminished. Accordingly, even when unseen by the audience, the artist can be recognized as a participant as well as documenter.

### Chronicles: Video Diaries and Home Movies

“When I used to go visit Michel at the Chelsea Hotel, around 1970, video camera was always there, always going, a part of the house, apart of his life, eyes, hands. It still is. A most magnificent love affair—no, not an affair: a life's obsession.” Jonas Mekas, 1991

Jonas Mekas has suggested that until the 1960s “no filmmaker was really filming his or her own life.” (30) The availability of portable film and video technologies, coupled with the blurring of boundaries between public life and the private self, promoted the emergence of new forms of personal, domestic, and autobiographical filmmaking, including film diaries and home movies. In the process, this matrix of forms challenged and extended the definitions of traditional film practice and avant-garde formal innovation.

“Since the 1950s, with filmmakers such as Stan Brakhage and Jonas Mekas, the American avant-garde has appropriated home movie style as a formal manifestation of a spontaneous, unhampered form of filmmaking,” film scholar Patricia R. Zimmermann has noted (31). This non-conformist, “amateurist” style knowingly purges the rigid standards of composition and narrative and rejects the “erasure of the filmmaker” or effacement of the recording apparatus that characterized (illusionistic) realism and, instead, flaunts “subjects interacting with the camera, openly posing, fire-hosing camerawork, and scenes from daily life in no particular sequence.” The cinematic techniques strive to document time and place without the imposition of supplementary authoritative narrative anchors, such as voiceover. In addition to the exemplars of the *Avant-Garde* “home movie style” identified by Zimmermann, filmmakers who have worked in this mode include, Peggy Ahwesh, Bruce Baille, Bruce Conner, Jerome Hill, Ken Jacobs, Taylor Mead, Marie Menken, and Auder. Richard Chalfen has defined the model of visual communication centered on everyday domestic life and a circle of intimacy as the home mode (32). The celebratory characteristics of home movies often obfuscate the realities of everyday domestic life. As such, home movies rarely deal with personal trauma and family strife; passionate arguments and divorces are as rare as weddings are commonplace (33).

Auder's video chronicles vividly documented the birth and early years of daughter, Alexandra, and subsequent moments in the family's turbulent history; much of the earliest footage represents collaboration with Viva (34). The *Family Chronicles* present ordinary, everyday occurrences within a framework focused on domestic life and the impact of marriage and childrearing on the couple's relationship. Incidental and ambient sound from the street, television, and radio is omnipresent and the camera's gaze often roams to inspect the environment. Using the most direct video methods, Auder captures such quotidian rituals as shaving, applying makeup, dressing and undressing, nursing, bathing, etc. Throughout, intimate

scenes of mother and child are presented in conjunction with travels and publicity appearances.

Auder's *Family Chronicles* does not avoid conflict or difficult issues in its representation of the joys and stresses of marriage and parenthood. As Gary Indiana has suggested, the complexity of real life in Auder's videos is never reduced to dramatic formula (35). For example, we witness a public altercation that erupts as Viva attempts to breastfeed her child at a restaurant in a London hotel. Management refused to serve the couple and their guests for what they considered the mother's "indecentcy." When Viva protests and Michel threatens the manager, they are thrown out of the hotel where they had been staying. In subsequent shots, we see the front pages of *The Sun* and *The Daily News* where the episode we just witnessed was reported.

By the late 1970s, the diary film was heralded as "a vastly important genre" in Avant-Garde circles (36). Over time, artists such as Sadie Benning, Lynn Herschman, Tom Kalin, Shigeko Kubota, George Kuchar, Jonas Mekas, Susan Mogul, and Anne Robertson, in addition to Auder, have produced media works that document and reflect on their lived experience, so-called film and video diaries. In most cases Michael Renov has noted, "the interest lies not so much in recovering time past or in simply chronicling daily life—there is little illusion of a pristine retrieval—as in seizing the opportunity to *rework* experience at the level of sound and image." (37)

"I'm not really keeping a diary," Auder insists. Rather, he modestly considers his work a "collection of images" while conceding, "I use the diaristic form and the documentary form but I manipulate it." (38) Auder's manipulation and examination of these forms engage two of video's essential properties: intimacy and real time.

Unlike the written diary, composed and read by individual, isolated subjects, other people in addition to the diarist often participate in the production of a video diary (39). Video provides more opportunities for social interaction both in its creation and in reception. Thus, the video diary presents a peculiar conflation of the public and private. The video diary, like the home movie with which it is aligned, assumes an act of documentation, if only through the preservation and accumulation of quotidian fragments. Glimpses of daily life become far more significant and vital than comprehensively sequenced scenarios. Whereas autobiography may present a fictive vantage point to reflect upon the past, a film or video diary provides "a series of discontinuous presents" as P. Adams Sitney suggested (40).

The video diary tends to privilege the process and moment of composition, in a manner similar to a written one where narration (or recording, in the case of video) is transformed into an action in itself. And yet, the written diary's tense is generally that of the past perfect "recollections of events and states of mind that have passed. The only present it can record is that of the moment of composition and reflective commentary on writing: 'So I make my first entry today' (Thoreau). Image and audio recording, by contrast, cannot escape the present and the present tense, for filming can only capture events as they happen." (41) In the work of Auder, this on-the-spot immediacy and intimacy often results in the elliptical, fragmented, and casual recording of spontaneous sight. In this discontinuous and heterogeneous present, the videomaker is witness, participant, and documenter simultaneously. Here, the documentary impulse is greeted with a forceful and necessary self-reflection, a reciprocal, or at least, double focus. The viewer is made simultaneously aware of two events: the event recorded and the event of recording (*narration intercalée*). The video chronicles by Auder are reflective texts—not simply in the sense of self-consciousness, but in the sense that the videos and their very production exert an effective influence on both their "author" and "performers."

In his sociological study of home movies, Chalfen asserts that "picture taking has the power to transform on-going patterns of activity into other behavioral routines—into patterns of behavior that are socially appropriate and culturally expected when cameras are in use." (42) In other words, the presence of the camera introduces an impulse toward theatricality, toward performing an idea of self for the camera (43). David James has characterized this as the "theater of self-presentation," in reference to the films of Andy Warhol and the Superstars' relation to the camera and filmic space, where people are "always trying to accommodate themselves to the demands of the camera." (44) Considering that many of the people surrounding Auder, and, thus, the material for his early video chronicles, had ample experience with and exposure via Warhol's camera, Village Voice critic Andrew Sarris' observation seems acutely pertinent: "Warhol's people are more real than real because the camera encourages their exhibitionism. They are all 'performing' because their lives are one long performance, and their party is never over." (45) Perfectly aware that they are being filmed, individuals repeatedly address the camera directly in the work of Warhol and Auder; such ruptures break the spell of filmic illusion, "the sense one is watching a world separate from oneself." (46) Recognizing the formative power of the camera, the filmmaker and the act of filming raises questions concerning the fixed distinctions between documentary and performance, spontaneous and staged performance, intimacy and distance. Auder has emphasized this dynamic in his work, stating, "it's more of a performance than reality. When I turn the camera on... it becomes performance." (47)

### Real Time and Reel Families

Auder began his domestic video chronicles several years before PBS introduced the weekly documentary series *An American Family* in 1973. This popular series featured the Loud family from Santa Barbara, California, whose everyday lives were broadcast on national television. The directors utilized an "observational mode" of documentary filmmaking, which stresses the absent presence of the filmmaker and editing that enhances the impression of real time, immediacy, and intimacy (48). *An American Family* proved to be immensely influential and is regarded today as the origin of so-called "Reality TV." At the time, art critic Douglas Davis applauded the series not for its supposed transparent realism but for its critical function as documentary. Davis suggested, "though edited, it made less attempts to structure and pace narrative events than any popular television series yet. Often long stretches of meaningless, boring conversations were allowed to play out, unstructured." (49) Auder's video chronicles share a similar uninhibited tempo of expanse and meaningful tedium. One tactic he routinely employs is to simply let the camera run, allowing situations to develop unfettered. In these documents of everyday life as lived, "he burdens the viewer with a slowness which becomes an omnipresent device." (50) The tension in Auder's videos, as Yvette Brackman has suggested, "lies in the gap between unreflected real-time documentation and the minute shifts of focus and framing that distinguish Auder's work as cameraman and editor, and raise his real-time recording into reflections of depth and duration." (51)

The prospect of watching a recorded event in real time often unsettles audiences, since modern mass media has accustomed viewers to expect life represented not as it is lived but in condensed narratives, with scenes of heightened action and sound accompaniments to guide emotional responses (52). "For to enter the world of the feature film is to enter the world of imagined time," as Stephen Koch describes, "that arena where film uses the momentary and concrete to seduce the mind into illusions of duration." (53) Moreover, the record of quotidian fragments from everyday life on video often requires some familiarity or contextual knowledge of the people and events depicted. In this sense, memory serves as an interpretative faculty and familiarity as a point of entry. As video historian Sean Cubitt has pointed out, "the experience of watching someone else's wedding tape is a bizarre one, especially when

you know absolutely no-one shown there.” The formulae and conventions are generally apparent enough, but a sense of exclusion may also occur—of viewing something private to which you were uninvited. Nonetheless, Cubitt maintains that a correlative, if unexpected, response “is the intensity of interest with which it’s possible to watch total strangers enacting an otherwise familiar spectacle.” (54) Perhaps, it is this intensity of interest that led a reviewer to conclude, “One does not simply watch Auder’s diaries; one enters them...” (55) Similarly, the experience of observing Auder’s work has been characterized as evoking “the feeling of losing oneself in the poetry of pure observation... [and] induces you to release yourself into the rhythm of captured moments.” (56)

### Chelsea Girls with Andy Warhol

Auder has been narrowly characterized as a video voyeur, wherein the term voyeurism generally implies a detachment and distance from the subjects observed. One problem here is that no categorical statement will do justice to Auder’s range. The issues and practice of voyeurism are certainly resonant for both artist and viewer, since the *cinéma-verité* form Auder employs, or often combines with other styles of recording and editing, invites voyeurism. However, Auder is intimately involved in the situations—often decidedly intimate situations—that he records and exposes to the public. For Auder, video functions as a means of personal expression, documenting the people, places, and events in his immediate surroundings.

A comparison with Andy Warhol’s relation to voyeurism, technology, and representation, and his objectification of aesthetic distance and emotional remove, may help elucidate this important distinction. Warhol described his love affair with television and his “marriage” to recording technologies in his book *The Philosophy of Andy Warhol*. He wrote, “The acquisition of my tape recorder [in 1964] really finished whatever emotional life I might have had, but I was glad to see it go.” (57) Warhol’s tape recorder and camera further allowed him to absent and depersonalize himself and thus bolster the emotional distance required of voyeurism. One of Warhol’s most distinguished cinematic techniques involved taking the voyeurism inherent in both the film practice and experience and transforming it into the central principle of his work. Auder adopted this framework but purged the sly malice of Warhol’s exploits and the manipulative, often sadistic psychological twists Warhol frequently employed to achieve (inter-) personal drama. Auder tempered the definitive voyeurism structuring Warhol’s films and re-personalized it via a more intimate and compassionate gaze. And, it is through the framing of this gaze, through his view, that Auder’s own presence is registered in his films and videos. As Auder has indicated, “Even though you rarely see my face in them, they tell my secrets.” (58)

The people who surrounded Auder at the Chelsea—actors, filmmakers, musicians, models, assorted misfits, and other artists—became the material of his work and emerge as the collective exponent. As Auder explains, “The camera position in my work is loosely based on the relationship of the camera to the subject.” (59) The compilation tape *Chelsea Girls with Andy Warhol, 1971-1976* (1994) is a case in point that casually documents the circle of friends and their interactions with Warhol. Though largely shot within various Chelsea Hotel apartments, it includes footage from the opening gala for Warhol’s 1970 retrospective at the Whitney Museum and an afternoon garden party hosted by John Lennon and Yoko Ono. Art world and celebrity gossip is indulged throughout, as are thorny discussions about compensation and duty, particularly Warhol’s responsibilities as “godfather” to Alexandra, Viva and Michel’s daughter. The main participants, Brigid Berlin, Viva, and Warhol, regularly refer to their own mediated images: television appearances and journalistic accounts. For example, Viva describes showing a video of her giving birth on television (60), and later laments her decreasing opportunities for media appearances. Warhol encourages Viva to oblige the advice of her agent and participate in the game show circuit, but she questions, “What would that do to my image?”

The viewer becomes privy to intimate telephone conversations between Warhol and Brigid Berlin, also known as Brigid Polk or simply “The Duchess.” We observe one side of the conversation, but hear both sides since Auder has rigged the telephone unbeknownst to Warhol. Recorded telephone conversations between Berlin and Warhol were not rare, in fact they provided the source material for several of Warhol’s works in other media, including his 1975 book *The Philosophy of Andy Warhol (From A to B and Back Again)*—the “B” being Brigid Berlin - and his lesser-known two-act comedy *Pork* (1971), which premiered at La MaMa Experimental Theatre and traveled to London’s Roundhouse theater. The dialogue for the play was distilled by writer and director Anthony Ingrassia from hundreds of hours of recorded telephone conversations between the two. The central figure is a disinterested voyeur named B. Marlowe surrounded by “characters” that are thinly veiled caricatures of Superstars, including Amanda Pork (Brigid Berlin), Vulva (Viva, played by a drag queen), her husband portrayed as “a virile Hollywood peacock,” (61) and their curly haired daughter.

In Auder’s video, Berlin continually questions Warhol’s honesty and the reliability of his memory. At one point, she mentions a Bob Dylan performance, to which Warhol mockingly replies, “Oh, you mean, ‘Bobby Zimmerman’ that Edie [Sedgwick] was going to marry?” Picking up on his derisive tone, Brigid retorts, “But, you’re Warhol!” Warhol coyly responds, “Do you think that’s true? Do you think that woman downstairs is really my mother?” Later, in response to further proddings about his sincerity, Warhol compares himself to Brigid’s father, Richard E. Berlin, President of the Hearst Corporation, “Your father is exactly like me, making money from trash, newspapers.” Aggravation escalates between Brigid and Warhol when the topic of Pat Ast “playing her” is raised. Berlin scolds Warhol for not calling or visiting Viva since her daughter was born; all the while, Viva is present witnessing and hearing the telephone conversation, as Auder records and we observe. Viva finally enters the conversation and speaks directly to Warhol, and compares the “most excruciating pain” of labor and childbirth with the near-fatal gunshot wound Warhol suffered at the hands of Solanas in 1968—the specter of which continually haunts the video. In another sequence, while Larry Rivers interviews Warhol at the Factory on Broadway in 1976, a commotion erupts as Christopher Makos must ward off a “crazy woman downstairs... in an army jacket... trying to get in.” Auder’s camera captures the image of the woman in the foyer through the surveillance camera monitor prominently displayed on Warhol’s desk. The final scene features Brigid Berlin reading excerpts from *The Philosophy of Andy Warhol* at a reception for the paperback release. She reads from a podium outfitted with a video monitor that features a silent Warhol. Appropriately, the reading and tape end as the video image of Warhol begins to flicker and finally fades out.

The *mise en abyme* technique operative in *The Chelsea Girls with Andy Warhol*, the internal layering of mediated images and the mirroring effect of recording technologies, is a powerful motif in Auder’s videos and is flamboyantly displayed in *The Cockettes, New York City, 1971* (2002). The Cockettes were a San Francisco-based theatre troupe who produced campy, platformed parodies of 1930s musicals and Hollywood glamour, of which the disco diva Sylvester (“You Make Me Feel Mighty Real”) emerged. With great fanfare, these “hyper-superstars” (62) arrived in New York and Auder was at the airport to greet them with camera in tow. He captured their extravagant antics and the shocked responses of the guileless public.

The Cockettes’ *Tinsel Tarts in a Hot Coma* turned out to be a critical and commercial flop. The washout revealed divisions between East and West Coast sensibilities regarding gender performance: “passing” and verisimilitude were favored in Manhattan, while the ultra-camp aesthetic of the Cockettes enacted a fusion of hippie communalism and glam rock that flaunted the “incomplete pose.” (63) Back in Auder’s Chelsea apartment, the Cockettes assembled to watch the footage he shot of their arrival. The camera then shifts to them, and we watch as they view their own images on the screen in real time. Enthralled by the initial encounter with this new

technology, they vamp and strike various poses for the camera and for themselves. The effect is much more than simple narcissistic display; rather, this collective revelry in identity as performative simulacrum enacts a subtle striptease, casting off imposed gender binaries, and, ultimately, attests to a desire for, and the power of, media (self-)representation.

### **Video Memories: The Morocco Tapes**

When describing the method involved in rendering recorded experiences concrete via completed video chronicles, Auder asserts, “I try not to deal with the material as soon as it’s made. It’s only years later that I deal with the material. I store it up. I wait until I can look at it and say, ‘What was I doing?’” (64) Importantly, Auder’s videos are non-nostalgic since the retrieval of the past into the present, in this case, is neither necessarily dislocating nor disorienting. However, in its attempt to re-present the past, and the negotiation of memory and duration, recollection and deferral, therein, a certain double valence is produced, and this double valence is registered in the overall style of his work and particularly in its nuanced editing. On another occasion, Auder elaborated on this process:

That’s why I keep all my work, not because I think it’s great but because I had some kind of calling to shoot every minute of it. There’s no reason for me to erase it even if it looks bad. Experience has told me that I can look back 20 years later and find something interesting. I was smart enough to understand that things get older and the meanings change. (65)

This scenario resembles Freud’s description of *nachträglichkeit*, or deferred actions, a term used to convey the manner by which experiences, impressions, or memory traces are altered after the fact as a function of new experiences and are thus rendered capable of reinvestment, producing new, even unexpected effects and meaning (66). This is particularly relevant and palpable in the two Moroccan chronicles featured in the exhibition, *Chronicles/Morocco 1971-72* (1976) and *Morocco 1972: The Real Chronicles with Viva* (2002). As a pair they present a complex tale of memory and forgetting in terms of both form and content. Edited and released almost thirty years apart, the videos offer a powerful testament to the dependence on the vagaries of memory and its representation.

Being able to control the past may mean being in control of the present self. Auder’s model, however, privileges the messiness of past, present, and memory. The footage for both tapes was all shot during the same trip, a family vacation, but what initially appears to be a simple travelogue is actually a highly manipulated construction. Several weeks into the trip, tensions developed between the couple and Viva left while Auder stayed in Morocco for several more months, almost a year total. The first edit, released in 1976, eliminates almost all traces of Viva; the coda completed in 2002 restores her and daughter Alexandra. As such, they are temporally divided versions of one another in re-collection and re-presentation although not (necessarily) in experience. The two videos feature almost entirely different footage, thus reminding us of the irremediable breach between experience and its externalized representation. Experience is always reconstructed in memory, and memories are not pure representations. Considering the strategies and overall style Auder has developed for his video chronicles, we can see how he, in fact, highlights the tensions between memory and forgetting, recollection and narration, preservation and erasure. This tension becomes a powerful metaphor for the method of the chronicles itself, signaling “the very aporias, the contradictions, the gaps, the failures involved in trying to make language (or film)” represent or even “substitute for experience and memory.” (67) P. Adams Sitney has described this cinematic strategy in autobiographical cinema as one that “confronts fully the rupture between the time of cinema and the time of experience and invents forms to contain what it finds there.” The title of the Moroccan coda, *Morocco 1972: The Real Chronicles with Viva*, not only recognizes this rupture but plays with it, flaunts it, and distills it, seeing as Auder has forewarned us: “Nothing is real if it’s from the camera. Context and editing change everything. I see it as a pointing light inevitably fixed to the time the event was shot.” (68)

### **Media Appropriation and Video Remixes**

During the 1980s, Auder developed several videoworks that utilize television as subject and material by appropriating and then reconfiguring footage shot directly from a domestic television screen. This collection of Reagan-era remixes, including *Steve McQueen* (1981), *End of the World* (1982), *Gorgeous Ladies of Wrestling* (1986), and *Racing in the Car* (1988), demonstrates Auder’s creative and pioneering use of scratch, montage, and experimental sound techniques. Likewise, the focus on broadcast mass media extended the artist’s long-time examination of the medium of video and forms of representation.

Although he did not grow up with a television set, Auder’s first memory of television was the 1956 Winter Olympics held in Cortina d’Ampezzo, Italy. Perhaps it was this enduring memory that compelled him to create an alternative, furtive view of the 1984 Summer Olympic Games in Los Angeles. Composed entirely from network coverage of the international contest with home video equipment, *The Games (Olympic Variations)*, completed in 1986, is a wildly suggestive video and a tour de force paradigm of media appropriation practices of the era.

The tape presents a mass of accentuated musculature and tendons; fragmented and magnified, these protracted images revel in the expressive capacity of the human physique. This collage of transplanted sports images has been thoroughly reconfigured through Auder’s seamless use of scratch video in which brief clips are rapidly repeated. After dislocating the visual imagery, the details are rearranged, layered, and juxtaposed. The discordant and often hilarious effect is enhanced by the intricacy of his sound track. For example, as the image of crotch-grabbing wrestlers is introduced, the voice of Howard Cosell announces “Let’s look at the action again,” and the tape does just that, repeating the sequence several times while successively zooming closer.

This strategy of excess proves immensely seductive and in conjunction with the overall alteration of syntax creates the powerful sensation of having time and momentum perceptually altered. Such formal devices shift the viewer’s focus away from the drama of competition, and in its place incites a brazen voyeuristic display that languishes in covert glances. Auder’s close-up, frame-filling compilation of inguinal images is largely fashioned from zooms focused on athletic crotches (and assorted chests) from the L.A. games (69). The distorted fragments often appear androgynous, but even when gender is evident, it becomes clear that the video treats male and female bodies indeterminately.

Auder’s formal manipulations render the human body, as Hamza Walker has suggested, simultaneously eroticized and mechanized. After

surveying a variety of conspicuous Speedo adjustments, we observe an entire sprint shown in slow motion framed entirely at crotch level. The action presented is seen through the delicate fabric of running shorts as an Olympian's penis is violently flung from side to side; meanwhile a disembodied male voice declares, "We are looking for a few good men." The athletes' expressions of pain and rapture look increasingly sexual as they multiply; the intensity of this suggestion seemingly culminates with the image of spittle on a male runner's face, which closely resembles a pornographic cliché.

In *Gorgeous Ladies of Wrestling* (1986), Auder similarly zooms in on suggestive body contact and fragments of exposed flesh recorded directly from the television screen. This time, the focus is on female wrestlers featured in a short-lived, campy television show popularly referred to as "G.L.O.W.," which in retrospect seems oddly emblematic of the various contrivances associated with the mass media in the late-1980s. In this gaudily overt spectacle of good versus evil, white lace, hearts, and pink spandex (accompanied by matching shades of lipstick and rouge) are used to distinguish the heroines from the villains sporting black leather, spikes, teased hair, and Siouxsie Sioux style makeup. This impertinent role-playing media concoction seems to depict a fantasy world in which Molly Ringwald and Jem, the then popular "truly outrageous" cartoon character, join forces to battle Hulk Hogan and the World Wrestling Federation over ratings. And, even while "G.L.O.W." makes the WWF look like a serious athletic contest, the voice of a child, Auder's daughter Alexandra, is heard in the opening of the tape asking repeatedly, "Who won?"

### Recent Work: Mediated Voyeurism and Other Observations

The hyper-acceleration of consumer video technology and the accompanying ubiquity of video in mass culture has stimulated both adaptation and transition in Auder's approach as observed in his chronicles with Louis Waldon produced in the past decade. In the first, *Louis Waldon* (1994), Auder reunites with Waldon in Los Angeles, and they reminisce about their initial meeting, making *Keeping Busy*, Cannes, and catch up on the fate and activities of estranged friends from times past. While doing so, Waldon plays videotapes of two Warhol films starring Viva: *Tub Girls* (1967) and *Nude Restaurant*, also featuring Waldon. With Viva on the television monitor, Waldon recalls thinking he was in love with Viva while filming *Blue Movie* and expresses his utter astonishment that Auder and Viva actually married. The chronicle focuses its attention on Waldon, his environment, and the mediated image of Viva; occasionally, Auder's bare feet enter the viewfinder and his figure is sometimes reflected in the television monitor and the narrow mirrored paneling behind it. In contrast, the follow-up video *Louis Waldon in Chronicles: Los Angeles/Bel Air (July 1999)*, released in 2002, opens with the face of its documenter, Auder. Digital video technologies have enabled Auder to record himself in the scene with greater ease. The newer cameras are significantly smaller, efficient, and discrete, allowing Auder to position the camera on a tabletop, or a similar stationary support, and record events as they develop. He is now free to wander and interact with less restraint, and, as such, his presence is represented with greater frequency.

In general, Auder positions himself, reflectively, in the present, more often in the work shot and edited in recent years. Immediate and direct access to events has increased through digital recording technologies, while also making the camera and filmmaker's presence less intrusive. Auder's recent work effectively responds to the expanded structures and technologies of surveillance and the anonymity of the Internet. Various advances in technology have made electronic surveillance increasingly powerful yet decreasingly visible (70). For example, a 1998 study by the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) of New York estimated that there are nearly 2,400 surveillance cameras trained on public places in Manhattan alone. Approximately 2,000 of those cameras are operated by private entities, with the rest belonging to government agencies (71).

Auder's recent work also responds to the relatively new forms of mass-mediated, nonfiction voyeurism as exemplified in the explosive proliferation of "reality"-based voyeuristic media, from *The Real World* to *Big Brother*, *The Surreal Life* to *The Simple Life*, and *Survivor* to *Cheaters*. The defining characteristic of this highly profitable format is unrehearsed, unscripted moments of real life played out before, and captured by, a video camera. Shot out of Auder's Brooklyn studio window, *The Conversation, Brooklyn, 2002* (2003), captures a private discussion between two young women about sexuality and drugs, contraception and their hopes to be better mothers than their own. "That really might be the most transgressive video I ever made because you really see those two young women talking," Auder explained. "They are about to be women, and they are talking right there on my stoop and I can hear them from my studio and I just put my camera out and it just happened." (72) Another recent project *Rear Window, NYC, 2002* (2003) explicitly references Hitchcock's narrative of voyeuristic intrigue as the camera records the silent interactions of neighbors. The viewer is irrevocably isolated from the scenes documented; access to these intimate scenes is inescapably distanced. For the viewer, this distance cannot be overcome; we are plainly left to ponder what can be communicated or interpreted through gesture, proximity, and body language. These recent videos are exercises in mediated voyeurism, which has been defined by Clay Calvert in his book *Voyeur Nation* as "the consumption of revealing images of and information about others' apparently real and unguarded lives, often yet not always for purposes of entertainment but frequently at the expense of privacy and discourse, through the means of mass media and Internet." (73)

*Rooftops and Other Scenes* (1996) is a hybrid work intermixing aspects of travelogue, media appropriation, and visual chronicle. In this video, scenes from urban life are punctured by visions of the countryside, but the most arresting images are those gathered from the picture window of a 12<sup>th</sup> floor studio off Canal Street and Broadway looking out onto lower Manhattan. From this perspective, the viewer is offered glimpses of other people's lives in unsuspecting, intimate moments: a woman exercising on a rooftop terrace while workers tar an adjacent rooftop, a couple cuddling under the sheets, and another couple engaging in oral sex in a "private" roof garden. The scenes are more suggestive than graphic and are edited in a manner to bring attention to the distinctive subtleties of gesture and body language. In a later sequence, the camera surveys a group of museum patrons being guided through a retrospective of photographs by Cindy Sherman, Auder's wife at the time. The sequence is silent and directs viewers' attention to the intent gazes of museum-goers and the degrees of engagement or distraction. "I don't know if I'm a video voyeur," Auder explained,

I have a method of adapting to my environment -- that would be my main talent. ...I have spied on people in a voyeuristic way, but never on my friends -- or if it is my friends, you cannot recognize them in the footage. What are captured are simply gestures or words that are non-specific or general. It's never about exposing somebody for what they do (74).

In conversation with media artist Stephen Vitiello, Auder elaborated on the issues and ethics of exposure and anonymity, "The worst that could happen to me is that someone would recognize themselves on the tape. This is about bringing anonymity back into our lives." (75) "My entire life is about observing. Maybe it becomes voyeurism at some point," Auder recently claimed, and then somewhat mockingly continued, "But

voyeurism, the dictionary definition of people having sex, I've seen so much of that. And so, it'd better be really good to be interesting to me." (76) The "dictionary definition" Auder references is that of voyeurism as a sexual disorder, pathology, or form of deviance, and, indeed, such a definition helps to clarify the distinction Auder insists on. Sigmund Freud, in an essay on sexuality, wrote that the pleasure in looking [scopophilia] becomes a perversion (a) if it is restricted exclusively to the genitals, or (b) if it is connected with the overriding of disgust (as in the case of voyeurs or people who look at excretory functions), or, (c) if, instead of being preparatory to the normal sexual aim, it supplants it (77).

An earlier video, *The Roman Variations* (1991), is a chronicle of Auder's time spent in Rome, during a residency at a studio provided by gallerist Barbara Gladstone. In this anti-travelogue, Auder creates an elegant narrative of the everyday that is rich and seductive in detail. As Hamza Walker has described, "Whereas Rome unavoidably announces itself to the lens as one big historic landmark, Auder is interested in capturing the city's character as revealed in the unconscious and informal gestures of the city's inhabitants going about their daily lives" (78). Throughout the poetic assembly of images, Auder's observations of daily life are intercut with re-scanned imagery from Italian television. The video is structured around variations on recurring motifs large and small. These include traffic patterns, Vespa-filled streets, bustling piazzas, vendors at Campo de Fiori, window gazing at exclusive boutiques, monumental and quotidian ruins, political rallies, violence and bondage in Renaissance painting, and Roman statuary featuring fragmented genitalia. A recurrent site of engagement for the observations of ordinary life is the view from Auder's studio window onto the cobble-stoned street below and the neighborhood *tabacchi*. From here, we view activities both inside and outside of the store, including sales, daily chitchat, various demonstrative conversations, and a steady flow of handsome, young *carabinieri* smoking and taking lunch. The video concludes as two employees acknowledge the camera and walk onto the street to greet the person behind it.

The audio structure for the video *Voyage to the Center of the Phone Lines* (1993) consists of cordless and mobile phone conversations Auder recorded using an electronic scanner. The surreptitiously retrieved conversations are banal, sinister, humorous, and ultimately fascinating. We hear the disembodied, anonymous, yet utterly distinct New York voices "share" shreds of gossip through the static, hiss, and distortion of the phone lines. We listen to lovers planning a tryst; an estranged couple concerned about their 18-year-old daughter's regular sexual liaisons with a neighborhood drug dealer; men betting on sports; two women talking about sex and comparing dates; lovers giggling and bickering; and chillingly, two men planning a "hit." At one point, we hear a man ask a woman if she is leaving him for another; there's a silence and he says, "I'm gonna lose you... my battery's dying." This incident serves as a fitting allegory for both the recording process and human communication in general (79).

Auder layered the appropriated audio recordings onto serene images of coastal landscapes, spectacular sunsets, drifting clouds, gliding seagulls, plants swaying in the breeze, and ordinary household interiors. This combination highlights the discrepancy between image and sound creating an elegiac effect of reversal, where the sound is foregrounded as primary and images form a visual soundtrack. As curator and critic Dan Cameron has noted, "The disjunction between the banality of the conversation and the serene emptiness of Auder's images is subtly menacing," and, as such, alludes to the source of Auder's title—Jules Verne's novel *Journey to the Center of the Earth*—and the admonition of adventure and peril it narrates (80).

### Dear Video Diary

"During the 1970s, I was using my life as the basic material to make the work," Auder explained in 1999. "I didn't think my life was so interesting; it was the people around that were interesting. Back then it was like my whole life was a stage to make videotapes. I didn't have a real life, it was all about making works." (81) The traditional literary diary may be considered as a project committed to self-perception, in which the diarist is generally inclined to recognize her or himself through the agency of the diary. This self-perception requires, with greater or less intensity, that the documenter develop a sense of otherness apart from the documented subject. In literary studies, this arrangement has been described as the gap of the diaristic subject between the narrating self (*erzählendes Ich*) and the experiencing self (*erlebendes Ich*); in the case of video, the process can be understood as the temporal split between experience (filming) and secondary revision (editing).

In a recent interview with Lisa Dorin, Assistant Curator at Williams College Museum of Art, Auder expressed a significant change in his approach to what Jonas Mekas characterized as his life's obsession: recording life on video. In the 1970s, he recounted, "it was my entire *raison d'être* to have this camera with me and interact with people through it. But I think that I have changed. I still go out with people but now I want to live it, I don't want to film it. For the first time I am able to sit there watching and enjoying it without thinking about my camera." (82) Auder's narrative recalls the words of Henri Frédéric Amiel in his *Journal Intime*, the first personal diary published in Europe (printed posthumously in 1882 and 1884). Recording his most private and intimate thoughts in diary form for over a quarter of a century, Amiel began to recognize that this document of self-observation also had the potential to depersonalize the same self. Thus, Amiel wrote, "I am a reflection reflected, as in two mirrors facing one another. My identity is somewhere between the first and second persons, and totally fluid." (83)

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An earlier exhibition *Michel Auder: A Retrospective, 1969 – 2001* was organized by Hamza Walker for the Renaissance Society, Chicago, March 10 – April 21, 2002. Selections from the retrospective were screened at Anthology Film Archives, New York in the program *Intimate Stranger: Selections from the Work of Michel Auder*, June 12 – 22, 2003.

All images reproduced courtesy of the artist.

### NOTES

1. Jerry Saltz, "Michel Auder at Nicole Klagsbrun," *Art in America* 82 (July 1994), 91.
2. Ed Halter, "Factory Family Secrets," *Village Voice* (June 11-17, 2003), 116.
3. Michael Renov, "The Subject in History: The New Autobiography in Film and Video," *Afterimage* 17 (Summer 1989), 5.



4. Mark Webber, "Excerpts from Taped Conversation Between Michel Auder and Mark Webber," *Michel Auder* (Lüneburg, Germany: Revolver-Archiv für Aktuelle Kunst, 1999), 45.
5. John Petrakis, "Another Look at the French Films of 1968," *Chicago Tribune* (October 13, 2000).  
Philippe Garrel, the unofficial leader of the Zanzibar Group, won the fourth annual festival of young cinema at Hyères his first feature, *Marie Pour Mémoire*. Garrel declared conventional cinema was an anathema: "If film was to have a value, it should be like a cobblestone hurled into the cinema." Sally Shafto, "The New, New Wave," *Guardian* (February 9, 2002), 4.
6. Jack Kroll, "Underground in Hell," *Newsweek* (November 14, 1966), 109 and Dan Sullivan, "Andy Warhol's *Chelsea Girls* at the Cinema Rendezvous," *New York Times* (December 2, 1966), 45.
7. Jeremy Blake, "Son, You'd Better Get it Right" (Interview), *Michel Auder* (New York: Thread Waxing Space, 2000), 19.
8. Parker Tyler, *Underground Film: A Critical History* (New York: Grove Press, 1969), 227.
9. David Remnick, "Flash and Fame at the Factory," *Washington Post* (August 8, 1982), H1.
10. Sterling McIlhenny and Peter Ray, "Inside Andy Warhol," *Cavalier* (September 1966), 86.
11. Blake, 19.
12. Andy Warhol and Pat Hackett, *Popism: The Warhol '60s* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1980), 294.
13. Guy Flatley, "How to Be Very Viva – A Bedroom Farce," *New York Times* (November 9, 1969), D17.
14. David Denby, "Viva and Louis," *Film Quarterly* 23.1 (Fall 1969), 43.
15. Vincent Canby, "Warhol's Red Hot and 'Blue' Movie," *New York Times* (August 10, 1969), D1.
16. Morris Kaplan, "3-Judge Panel Here Declares Warhol's *Blue Movie* Obscene," *New York Times* (September 18, 1969), 44. Viva explains, "The Warhol films were about sexual disappointment and frustration: the way Andy saw the world, the way the world is, and the way nine-tenths of the population sees it, yet pretends they don't." Viva, "Viva and God," *Village Voice* 111.1 (May 5, 1987), Art Supplement 9.
17. *Keeping Busy* was screened at the 7<sup>th</sup> New York Film Festival in 1969, where authorship was co-credited to Michel Auder and Viva. Other films featured in the "Underground Films at Elgin" series were Warhol's *Imitation of Christ*, Shirley Clarke's *Portrait of Jason*, and shorts by Stan Brakhage, George Kuchar, Gerard Malanga, Jonas Mekas, and Lucas Samaras (*New York Times* advertisement, December 19, 1969).
18. As Lia Gangitano has commented, "*Keeping Busy* directly responds to Andy Warhol's distilled film ennui by positing this presumed home movie as a worthy pastime for superstars on holiday." *Michel Auder: Secret Sharer* Press Release (New York: Participant Inc., 2003).
19. Glenn Collins, "Where the Action Was," *New York Times* (April 24, 1988), H23.
20. F. William Howton, "Filming Andy Warhol's *Trash*: An Interview with Paul Morrissey," *Filmmakers Newsletter* 5.8 (June 1972), 25. In *Arts Magazine*, Gerard Malanga asked Warhol, "Why do you let your camera run for the time it runs?" Warhol responded, "Well, this way I can catch people being themselves instead of setting up a scene and shooting it and letting people act out parts that were written because it's better to act naturally than act like someone else because you really get a better picture of people being themselves instead of trying to act like they're themselves." Gerard Malanga and Andy Warhol, "My Favorite Superstar: Notes of My Epic, *Chelsea Girls*," *Arts* 41.4 (February 1967), 26.
21. Vincent Canby noted, "Miss Varda has taken Viva, Warhol's most valuable found object, and lit and framed her in a way that brings out the gentle pre-Raphaelite beauty suggested but never realized in things like *Bike Boy*, *Lonesome Cowboys* and *Blue Movie*." Vincent Canby, "Film Fete: Viva, Ragni, and Rado in *Lion's Love*," *New York Times* (September 22, 1969), 37.
22. Flatley, D17. 23. Nick Browne, "Superstars and Yuppies: Cheerful Chutzpah," *Village Voice* 16.8 (May 6, 1971), 19.
24. Viva, *Superstar* (New York: Lancer Books, 1970), 224.
25. Maureen Dowd, "The Chelsea Hotel, 'Kooky but Nice,' Turns 100," *New York Times* (November 21, 1983), B1.  
The Chelsea began as a cooperative apartment-hotel sponsored by a group of established artists who sought spacious studio accommodations, located in what was then the center of the theater district. When completed in 1883, the building's eleven stories made it the tallest building in the city. The hotel's past is studded with names of literary and artistic notables: Mark Twain, Sarah Bernhardt, O. Henry, Edgar Lee Masters, Robert Flaherty, Thomas Wolfe, Dylan Thomas, Brendan Behan, Niccolò Tucci, Arthur Miller, Willem de Kooning, William Burroughs, Larry Rivers, Jean Tinguely, Niki de Saint-Phalle and many more.
26. Tony Rayns, "*Lonesome Cowboys*," *Cinema* (UK) (October 1969), 10.
27. Review "Viva, *Superstar*," *Publishers Weekly* 200 (September 20, 1971), 50.
28. Blake, 19.
29. Martha Rosler, "Video: Shedding the Utopian Moment," in *Illuminating Video: An Essential Guide to Video Art*, eds. Doug Hall and Sally Jo Fifer (New York: Aperture Foundation, 1990), 32.
30. Scott MacDonald, "Interview with Jonas Mekas," *October* 29 (Summer 1984), 89.
31. Patricia R. Zimmermann, "The Amateur, the Avant-Garde, and Ideologies of Art," *Journal of Film and Video* 38.3-4 (Summer/Fall 1986), 81.
32. Home moviemakers rarely edit their footage; the rushes are commonly shown in the chronological order. Other characteristics typical of the home movie include flash frames, over- and underexposure, swish pans, variable focus, lack of establishing shots, jump cuts, hand-held cameras, abrupt changes in time and place, inconsistent characters and no apparent character development, unusual camera angles and movements, and a minimal narrative line. Jeffery K. Ruoff, "Home Movies and the Avant-Garde," in *To Free the Cinema: Jonas Mekas and the New York Underground*, ed. David E. James (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992), 297.
33. Ruoff, 299.
34. Collaboration also resulted in Viva's second book, *The Baby: A Video Novel* (New York: Random House, 1975). Illustrated with video frames, it is a literary counterpoint to the video chronicles Michel and Viva Auder made of their daughter's life – and their own – since birth. For an interesting review of Viva's participation in the International Festival of Women and Film 1896-1973 held in Toronto see, Carol Zemle, "Women & Video," *Artscanada* 30 (October 1973), 30-39.
35. Gary Indiana in *Michel Auder* (New York: Anthology Film Archives, 1991), 12.
36. P. Adams Sitney, "Autobiography in Avant-Garde Film," *Millennium Film Journal* 1.1 (Winter 1977), 103.
37. Michael Renov, "Toward a Poetics of Documentary," in *Theorizing Documentary*, ed. Michael Renov (New York: Routledge, 1993), 25.
38. Chun-Hui Wu, *Interview with Michel Auder* (Taipei: Chinese Film Archive, 2002).
39. See Christine Tamblyn, "Qualifying the Quotidian: Artist's Video and the Production of Social Space," *Resolutions: Contemporary Video Practices*, eds. Michael Renov and Erika Suderburg (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996), 24.
40. Sitney, 103.
41. David E. James, "Film Diary/Diary Film: Practice and Product in Walden," in *To Free the Cinema: Jonas Mekas and the New York Underground* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992), 153.
42. Richard Chalfen, *Snapshot Versions of Life* (Bowling Green: Bowling Green University Popular Press, 1987), 10-11.
43. Film theorist Bill Nichols refers to this recurrent scenario in documentary film as "virtual performance," which "presents the logic of actual performance without signs of conscious awareness that this presentation is an act." Bill Nichols, *Representing Reality: Issues and Concepts in Documentary* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1991), 122.
44. David E. James, *Allegories of Cinema: American Film in the Sixties* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989), 67.  
See Douglas Crimp's essay "Face Value" for his description of the "ethics of anti-voyeuristic looking" in Warhol's early films. Douglas Crimp, "Face Value," in *About Face: Andy Warhol Portraits*, ed. Nicholas Baume (Hartford: Wadsworth Athenaeum, 1999), 110-125.
45. Andrew Sarris, "Film: *Chelsea Girls*," *Village Voice* (December 15, 1966), 33. As another film critic wrote after seeing Warhol's *Blue Movie*, "We may live our lives in constant reference to movie stars and talk about them in the most familiar terms. But as long as they are actors, as long as they are playing roles and trying to create illusions of some sort, there is a measure of respect, or reserve, and *distance* in our relations with them. In Warhol's documentaries, however, the people are

always playing themselves, and because of this and what they do..., the saving distance is annihilated, we are brought disastrously close, and we can only respond with the full cruelty of personal evaluation." Denby, 43.

46, Fred Camper, "Some Notes on the Home Movie," *Journal of Film and Video* 38.3-4 (1986), 13.

47, Wu, 2002.

48, James M. Moran, *There's No Place Like Home Video* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2002), 123.

49, Douglas Davis, "Filmgoing/Videogoing: Making Distinctions," *Video Culture: A Critical Investigation*, ed. John Hanhardt (Layton: Visual Studies Workshop Press, 1986), 273.

50, Heike Munder and Chrisoph Gerozissis, "Michel Auder," *Michel Auder* (Lüneburg, Germany: Revolver-Archiv für aktuelle Kunst, 1999), 18.

51, Yvette Brackman, "Through the Viewfinder Into the Field," *Michel Auder* (Lüneburg, Germany: Revolver-Archiv für aktuelle Kunst, 1999), 29.

52, Amy Cappellazzo, *Making Time: Considering Time as Material in Contemporary Video and Film* (Lake Worth: Palm Beach Institute of Contemporary Art, 2000), 16.

53, Stephen Koch, *Stargazer: The Life, World, and Films of Andy Warhol* (New York: Marion Boyars, 1991), 86-87.

54, Sean Cubitt, *Videography: Video Media as Art and Culture* (New York: St. Martin's, 1993), 6.

55, Halter, 116.

56, Brackman, 28.

57, Andy Warhol, *The Philosophy of Andy Warhol* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1975), 26.

58, Kristine McKenna, "Four 'Diaries' are Opened for Public Viewing," *Los Angeles Times* (September 27, 1993), 6.

59, Wu, 2002.

60, For instance, *A Natural Childbirth* by Michel Auder was broadcast on December 7-8, 1971, sponsored by the Experiments in Art and Technology program.

61, Leonard Leff, "Warhol's Pork," *Art in America* 66.1 (January-February 1972), 113.

62, Jules Novick, "For this they had to come from Frisco?" *New York Times* (November 14, 1971), D1.

63, Mike Kelley, "Cross Gender / Cross Genre," *PAJ* 64 (2000).

64, Carole Ann Klonarides, "Michel Auder Interview from a Phone," *Bomb* 48 (Summer 1994), 9.

65, Webber, 48-49.

66, See Renov, "The Subject of History: The New Autobiography in Film and Video," 6.

67, Sitney, 61.

68, Klonarides, 9.

69, In more recent years, British tabloids have been known to print images featuring the exposed parts of famous footballers on the field; such inadvertent exposures earned David Beckham the nickname "Goldenballs."

70, "Secret videotaping may very well be the single greatest threat to personal privacy," Louis Mizell Jr., a former special agent and intelligence officer in the U.S. Department of the State, argued in his 1998 book *Invasion of Privacy*. "More than 20,000 women, men, and children are unknowingly taped every day in situations where the expectation and the right to privacy should be guaranteed, i.e., while showering, dressing, using a public rest room, or making love in their own homes." Louis R. Mizell Jr., *Invasion of Privacy* (New York: Berkley Books, 1998), 23.

71, Bruce Lambert, "Secret Surveillance Cameras Growing in City, Report Says," *New York Times* (December 13, 1998), 61.

72, Lisa Dorin, Interview with Michel Auder, November 26, 2003, unpublished transcription.

73, Clay Calvert, *Voyeur Nation: Media, Privacy, and Peering in Modern Culture* (Boulder: Westview Press, 2000), 2-3.

74, Wu, 2002.

75, Stephen Vitiello and Michel Auder, "How Do I Know If I Need a Trunk-Tracking Scanner," *Felix* 2.2 (1999), 30.

76, Wu, 2002.

77, Sigmund Freud, *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality*, trans. James Strachey (New York: Basic Books, 1962), 23.

78, Hamza Walker, *Michel Auder: Retrospective 1969-2001*, exhibition brochure (Chicago: Renaissance Society, 2002).

79, As Auder explained, "I actually did hear people I know. As a matter of fact, I picked up on a conversation between Robert Longo and Cindy [Sherman, Auder's wife]. I did hear some of it but I turned it off. I didn't want to... With the scanner I have, you pick something up and suddenly it's gone. Even if it's very interesting, you're not able to control if you can follow that conversation. If a guy is traveling in a car, it will change stations and I'll be off. If they're stuck in traffic, talking to someone at home, you might be able to record for a long time. Sometimes it'll be something really exciting and then, it's gone! You can't really choose." Vitiello, 30.

80, Dan Cameron, "Goings on About Town," *New Yorker* (February 7, 1994), 20.

81, Webber, 46.

82, Lisa Dorin, "Interview with Michel Auder," *WCMAmail* (Winter/Spring 2004), 7.

83, Quoted in Trevor Field, *Form and Function in the Diary Novel* (London: MacMillan Press, 1989), 154.