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Rist, Pipilotti, *Selbstlos im Lavabad*, 1994, Audio- und Videoinstallation, Einkanal-Video, 6 Minuten 20 Sekunden, Farbe, Ton, Loop. 1 LCD-Monitor 4 x 5, in Boden eingelassen, 1 DVD-Player. Ed. 3 + 1AP,

Documentation level

■■■■■

Name

Rist, Pipilotti

Other version/s of name

Rist, Elisabeth Charlotte

Dates of birth and death

* 21.6.1962 Grabs

Municipality of origin (CH)

Altstätten (SG)

Nationality

CH

Brief biography

Videokünstlerin

Fields of activity

Video, Performance, Installation, Computer Art, Film, Objektkunst

Lexicon article

Pipilotti Rist grew up in the St. Gallen Rhine Valley. After obtaining her university entrance certificate at the Sargans Cantonal School, she studied applied, print and photo graphics at the University of Applied Arts in Vienna from 1981–85. She then attended audio-visual design classes ([René Pulfer](#)) at the Basel School of Design from 1986–88. From 1988–1994, she was a member of the musical performance group *Les Reines Prochaines*. Having been awarded the Swiss Federal Art Scholarship (1991 and 1993) and the Manor Art Prize St. Gallen (1994), she spent a year in Berlin on a DAAD grant (1996). From 1997–98, she was artistic director of the Swiss National Exhibition Expo.02, originally planned for 2001 but postponed until 2002. From

2002–03, she was a guest professor at the University of California, Los Angeles. The Berlin University of the Arts granted her the title of professor in 2003. In 2001, she was awarded the Art Prize of the City of Zurich, in 2007 the St. Gallen Cultural Prize. Pipilotti Rist lives in Zurich.

Besides performances, video and film presentations, and musical performance, she has participated in numerous international individual and group exhibitions. Solo exhibitions at galleries since 1989; first touring exhibition in 1994 at the Kunstmuseum St. Gallen, Neue Galerie Graz and Kunstverein Hamburg. 1994, *São Paulo Biennale* (with [Hannah Villiger](#) and Herzog & de Meuron); 1996, Centre d'Art Contemporain in Geneva and Museum of Contemporary Art in Chicago; 1997, Kunsthalle Baden-Baden (together with Samir); 1998, Hamburger Bahnhof – Museum für Gegenwart, Berlin; Kunsthalle Wien, Vienna; Wadsworth Atheneum, Hartford (Connecticut); 1999, Kunsthalle Zürich, Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris; 2000, CCA Kitakyushu, Public Art Fund, Times Square, New York; 2001, Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofia, Madrid; 2002, Shiseido Foundation, Tokyo; 2003, Kiasma Museum of Contemporary Art, Helsinki; 2004, SFMOMA, Museum of Contemporary Art, San Francisco. In 2005, she officially represented Switzerland at the *51st Venice Biennale* and created the *Stadt lounge* in St. Gallen. From 2005–09, she worked on the feature film *Pepperminta*. 2008, Museum of Modern Art, New York; 2009, *Elixir – Pipilotti Rist* at the Museum Boijmans van Beuningen, Rotterdam, subsequently at the Kiasma Museum for Contemporary Art, Helsinki. 2010, Pinakothek der Moderne, Munich; 2011, Kunsthalle Bremen, Albright-Knox-Gallery, Buffalo (NY), Wexner Center for the Arts, Columbus (Ohio). 2011–12, retrospective at the Hayward Gallery, London, subsequently at the Kunsthalle Mannheim and the Kunstmuseum St. Gallen. 2016 solo show at Kunsthaus Zürich.

Pipilotti Rist confronts the method – established in high art since the 1970s – of using video as a critical, phenomenological reflection on the media with her interest in the medium of television as the heart of contemporary popular culture. She exploits the specifically graphic qualities and cinematic potential of television and positions it within her video sculptures as part of an ambiance that, supported by music, places the viewer in a narrative context. The painterly treatment and thematic staging of her video films within a sculptural setting are in the tradition of Nam June Paik, although Pipilotti Rist, by contrast with his encyclopaedic approach, places the emphasis on emotional content such as eroticism and physicality. Her video films are characterised by spectacular moving shots and a bombardment of images that, together with modified images

and associative montages, result in dreamlike sequences.

Pipilotti Rist's criticism of the conventions of the high art of the 1980s is pioneering. Her pragmatic, virtuoso and entertaining combination of video, music and film was provocative in an international context in which artistic genres remained strictly separated and Modernism's latent ban on content continued to suppress narrative impulses in art. Works by Rist such as *Pickelporno* (Spotty Porno) indirectly criticise the anthropocentrism and humourlessness with which art had appropriated themes such as physicality, intimacy and female sensitivity since the 1970s. It is a matter of course that feminism, for example, should be part of her artistic stance, without being a subject of discussion or celebrated in her work. Although Pipilotti Rist herself appears in many of her films, and although many episodes could be construed as autobiographical, she does not identify herself directly with her works, but remains ironically detached. She does not regard her identity as an artist – such as in *Selbstlos im Lavabad* (Selfless in the Lava Bath) – as a tragic destiny, but rather as a role that can be played one way or another.

With her appointment as artistic director of the Swiss National Exhibition *Expo.02*, which she held from 1997 to 1998, the artist adjusted her artistic approach, focusing on matters pertaining to interior design, architecture and the organisation of public space. Despite her premature resignation, she had a considerable influence on the structure and atmosphere of *Expo.02*, which occupies a special position in the recent history of world and national exhibitions due to its integration of art and architecture. The climax of this rapprochement with a wider public – and at the same time symbolic of the problems involved in contact with the world outside art – is the installation *Open My Glade*, displayed on the electronic ticker board in New York's Times Square in 2000.

Without the work of Pipilotti Rist, the synaesthetic blending and atmospheric structure of an entire series of works by artists of the most recent generation would be unthinkable. Rist's presentation *Homo Sapiens Sapiens* in the Church of San Staë was one of the main attractions at the 51st Venice Biennale in 2005 and confirmed her position as one of the most prominent figures in the international art world. In September 2009, Pipilotti Rist's first feature film, *Pepperminta*, was shown at the International Film Festival in Venice. The protagonist of the film, a kind of alter ego of the artist, lives entirely by her own rules in a futuristic Villa Villekulla. With two friends, she sets out to make the world a more colourful place and to free people from their fears. In more recent exhibitions, Rist has projected her videos on floors, ceilings, walls and curtains suspended in the room, so that visitors are completely immersed in the opulent environment. She called her 2011–12 retrospective *Eyeball Massage*, referring with this title to her desire to appeal not only to the eye, but to all the senses.

Works: Berlin, Swiss Embassy, *Ein Blatt im Wind*, 2001; Bern, Swiss Confederation, Federal Office of Culture; Buchs, UBS, *Flying Room*, video installation, 1995; Chicago, Museum of Contemporary Art; Frankfurt, Museum für Moderne Kunst; Geneva, Musée d'Art et d'Histoire; Middelburg (Netherlands), Vleeshal; Kunstmuseum St. Gallen; St. Gallen, Raiffeisenzentrum, *Stadtlounge*, 2005;

Kunsthau Zürich.

Philip Ursprung, 2005, updated 2011
Translation: Toby Alleyne-Gee

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- *Pipilotti Rist - The tender room*. Columbus, Wexner Center for the Arts, 2011. [Texts:] Christopher Bedford, Kristin M. Brockman and Lynne Tillman. Columbus, 2011
- *Elixir. The video organism of Pipilotti Rist*. Rotterdam, Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, 2009; Helsinki, Museum of Contemporary Art KIASMA / Finnish National Gallery, 2009. Authors: Paul Kempers [et al.]. Rotterdam: Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, 2009
- Michael Hegglin: *The Colour of Your Socks / Die Farbe deiner Socken. A Year with / Ein Jahr mit Pipilotti Rist*. Zürich: Catpics Coproductions, 2009, [DVD], 53 Min.
- *Pipilotti Rist. Herzlichen Glückwunschl*. *Magasin 3, Stockholm Konsthall, 2007*. Hrsg.: Richard Julin und Tessa Praun. Baden: Lars Müller, 2007
- *Pipilotti Rist - Pepperminta: homo sapiens sapiens. Boxa ludens*. Biennale di Venezia. Hrsg.: Bundesamt für Kultur. Baden: Lars Müller, 2005 [1 Schachtel mit verschiedenen Dokumenten und Illustrationen, erscheint anlässlich der Ausstellung in der Chiesa San Staë als Beitrag der Schweiz zur 51. Biennale von Venedig 2005]
- Anne Söll: *Pipilotti Rist*. Köln: DuMont, 2005 (Künstlermonographien Friedrich Christian Flick Collection 3)
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- Peggy Phelan, Hans Ulrich Obrist and Elisabeth Bronfen: *Pipilotti Rist*. London: Phaidon, 2001
- *Pipilotti Rist. Apricots Along the Street*. Ed.: Cornelia Providoli. Zurich, Berlin and New York: Scalo, 2001
- *Himalaya. Pipilotti Rist, 50 KG (nicht durchtrainiert)*. Kunsthalle Zürich; Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris, 1999. Redaktion: Cornelia Providoli. Köln: Oktagon, 1999 [Beilage: CD-ROM]
- *Remake of the Weekend. Pipilotti Rist*. Berlin, Hamburger, Bahnhof, Museum für Gegenwart, 1998; [...]; Kunsthalle Zürich, 1998. Redaktion: Cornelia Providoli [et al.]. Köln: Oktagon, 1998 [Beilage: CD-ROM]

Website

<http://www.pipilottirist.net>

Direct link

<http://www.sikart.ch/kuenstlerinnen.aspx?id=4006655&lng=en>

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