

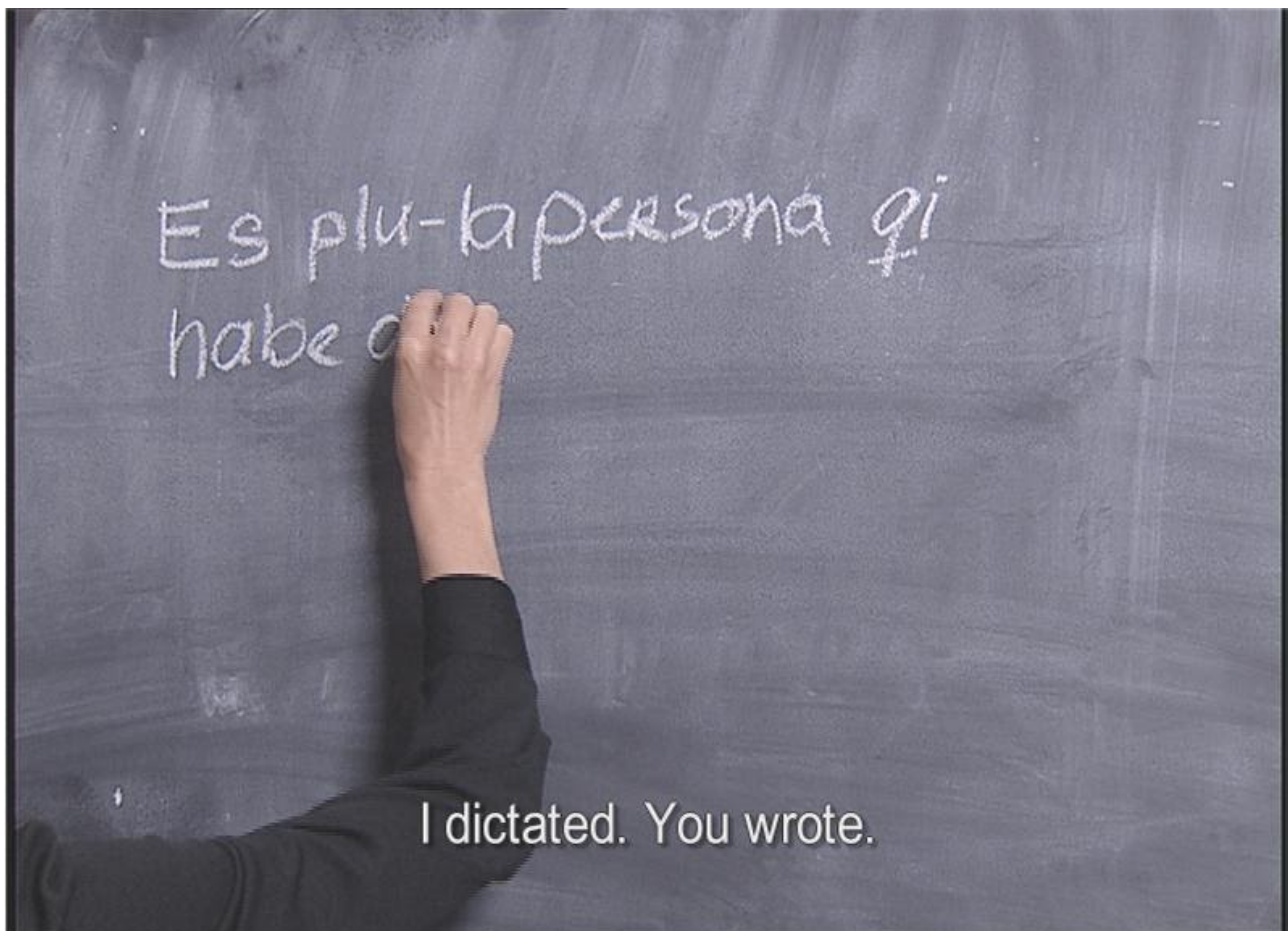
Qo akti?

Videoinstallation on six monitors, Mathilde ter Heijne, 2003

The diversity of languages in our world has led to the fact that many people cannot understand each other. English, the most useful language, is relatively easy to learn compared to French, but for a Chinese person it is more difficult to speak than Arabic is for us.

According to the American linguist Noam Chomsky, basic language structure resides internally and basic patterns are innate to human beings. This theory is termed universal grammar. Chomsky's definition of universal grammar is "the system of principles, conditions, and rules that are elements or properties of all human languages, the essence of all human languages." Essentially, what is being said is that humans, when born, have a set of rules already built into them. These rules allow human beings the ability to learn any language. The next logical question to arise would be, seeing as how all languages are not structured similarly, how does one set of rules pertain to all languages?

As a solution to language diversity, Professor Hogben developed in 1943 *Interglossa* (later *Glosa*), a proposal for an universal language. It has a vocabulary of only 1000 words and is based on scientific terms. It is a language that has no grammar, and that is not bound to one country or one part of the world and so is neutral. It is a language that can be learned in a two days and is therefore suitable to be used by everyone who wants to communicate.



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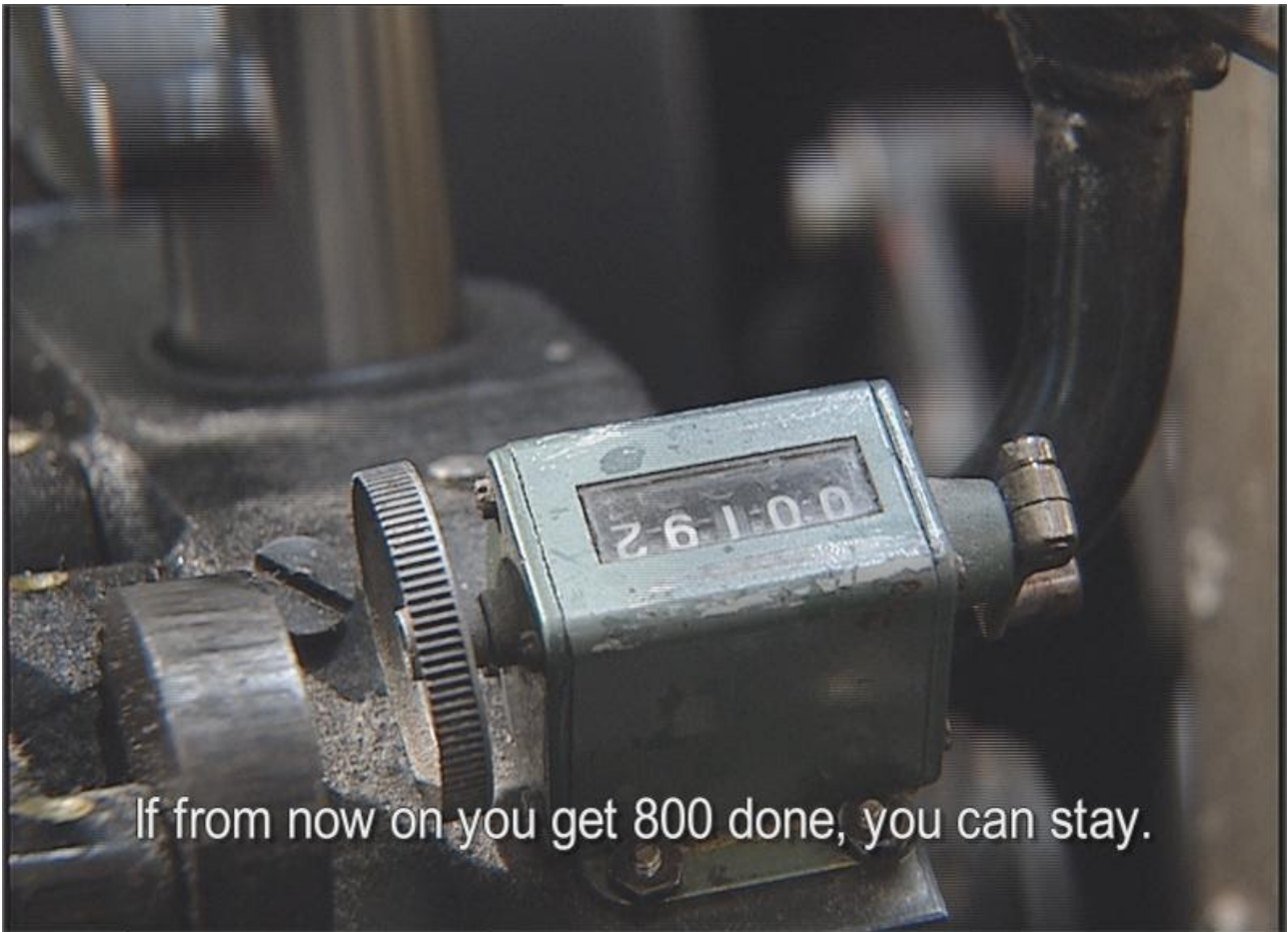
The text of the video work *Qo Akti?* is taken from the script of a never shot film by Italian director Liliana Cavani about the French philosopher Simone Weil. Mathilde ter Heijne has had part of the script *Lettere dall' Interno* (written by Liliana Cavani together with Italo Moscati in 1971) translated into Glosa. Glosalist Wendy Ashby developed this language together with Ron Clark in the 1980's. She has translated and spoken a part of the original script by Liliana Cavani in newly-developed *Euro-Glosa*.



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The little-known script is a melodrama of partly biographical and partly documentary character. The life of Simone Weil (a struggle to free the working-class and provide equal opportunity for everyone) and her thoughts (about death, suffering, and deliverance) picture the following string of events: from her working in a factory in France at the beginning of the 1930's, her fighting in the Spanish Civil War, the exile in the USA to her death at the beginning of the 1940's in England, where she died at the age of 34 of self initiated malnourishment and exhaustion.

Simone Weil refused to eat more than her compatriots suffering under German occupation. She was a woman for whom authenticity could not be reached without own existential experience; a socialist, who always advocated, that leftist philosophers have to be understandable for all, that also the mass of workers can understand them. And who has been fulfilled by a deep religiosity.



If from now on you get 800 done, you can stay.

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The place where Mathilde ter Heijne shot her videomaterial is the former Nazi barracks in Kramnitz in the vicinity of Berlin, where the Russian army was stationed before German reunion. Nowadays this place a popular set for many movies.



You have to do one movement after another

Overview of the 6 Monitors

F.F.A.L. (Fake Female Artist Life) #1, #2, #3
Soundinstallation, Mathilde ter Heijne, 2003

Three female artist who have been invented and whose life has been decribed in famous novels are pictured in this installation: Elvire Goulote, a French Painter, Elaine Risley, a canadian and Ueno Otoko, who became famous in the middle of the 20th century in Kyoto(from: La Femme assise, Guillaume apollinaire, Cat's eye, Margaret Atwood, Utsukushisa To Kanashimi To, Yasunari Kawabata). Textfragment taken from the books are transformed into a soundcomposition with is spoken and sung byt the three dummies.



Installation overview F.F.A.L. #1,#2,#3