

# THE PRESENT TENSE

Bruce Kurtz

Beryl Korot's four-channel video work, *Dachau 1974*, weaves very precisely timed paired images back and forth in relation to each other. In subtle and complex relationships, these images of the former concentration camp, now a tourist attraction, seem to weave in and out of memory, from the past to the present. An acute sense of rhythm and of very carefully controlled composition results in a series of completely compelling visual waves from one monitor to another and back, a kind of weaving itself. The weaving of imagery is not just two-dimensional, or even three-dimensional, but also involves peaks of emotional involvement with the subject as it emerges into the present, which naturally evokes associations of the past. *Dachau* explores a kind of space that has to do with very deeply felt emotions outside of language and its narrative derivatives, and outside of purely visual drama. It has to do with surface, but with a surface that fluctuates from near to far, from now to then, and a kind of emotional landscape that can be developed only through time.

Though the work is recorded, it has about it a sense of urgency that projects it into a sense of the present. At the same time, it retains its links with the past. In *Dachau 1974*, Beryl Korot may have discovered a means of employing video to deal with a profound sense of history without using literary or primarily visual devices, but by using the unique time and space of the medium.

VIDEO ART

HARCOURT BRACE JOVANOVIICH