



See Me, Feel Me

By Amy Taubin
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Cruel to say, in the field of video art, technology's cutting edge is seldom tempered with intellectual or aesthetic fire. *Time and Memory: Video Art and Identity* scores high on all three counts, an achievement all the more impressive considering that the show is the Jewish Museum's first foray into the medium. Curator Fred Riedel has included a thoughtful selection of single-channel tapes, highlighted by Nam June Paik and Shigeo Kubota's offhandedly moving *Allan 'N' Allen's Complaint*, but the exhibition is distinguished by its three installations: Grahame Weinbren and Roberta Friedman's interactive *The Erl King*, a revival of Beryl Korot's near-classic *Dachau 1974* and Juan Downey's slight but stunning mix of media and metaphors *About Cages*.

The touch screen of *The Erl King* yields an abundance of images and sounds from *within* the piece; *Dachau 1974* involves a different kind of interactivity. Like major works of minimal art, Korot's installation is a locus a touchstone, for the viewer's own meditations. "This is a fragile work," writes Korot. "In its verbal silence, rigorous formalism and focus on the present, it ultimately depends on human memory to endow it with meaning." In the mid '70s, Korot, a painter and video maker, visited Dachau with a black and white video Portapak. She recorded the former concentration camp site inside and out- barbed wire, watchtowers, crematoria- and then edited the material into four tapes that run simultaneously on monitors lined up like tiny windows in a single wall. The shadowy images are frequently punctuated with a second or two of total blackness that function like rests in music. The black bits, which occur nonsynchronistically, alert the viewer to the contrapuntal structure of the piece. They are also signs of what cannot be shown or even thought. Watching, one becomes aware of the place where the mind's eye blinks and turns away. Although Korot uses the image of a loom in describing the piece, the experience is closer to music- midway between hearing and reading a score.