
Interface 2.0

By Kevin B. Lee

Interface 2.0 is a short video essay that I produced for this issue of *Frames*. It engages with Harun Farocki's 1995 short *Schnittstelle* (*Interface*). *Schnittstelle* was originally a two-screen installation made for the Lille Museum of Modern Art, and later adapted into a single channel video combining the two screens. In *Schnittstelle*, Farocki depicts his editing practices and reflects on the differences between working with film and video, as well as found footage and newly filmed material.

This video essay is not intended as a finished work, but an initial engagement with Farocki and his work. It takes Farocki's work as a model, as a way to engage with, re-enact, and critically interrogate the original, within the context of the current proliferation and practice of online video essays and videographic film studies. (I must acknowledge that *Schnittstelle* is not the only model in service of this video, but also the film "What Farocki Taught," directed by Jill Godmilow, which employs a similar critical application of Farocki's methods by restaging another Farocki film, his 1969 *Nicht lösches Feuer / Inextinguishable Fire*). I started making video essays before I discovered Farocki's works; like many of my contemporaries, I conducted my videographic inquiries with limited awareness of their precedents, the many instances of cinema scholarship produced by means of the medium itself. I gained an appreciation of this rich heritage of through the 2009 [Kunst der Vermittlung project](#), to my knowledge the first and most extensive curation and exhibition of videographic film studies, showcasing the works of Farocki, Gustav Deutsch, Alain Bergala, Jean Douchet and many others.

These works - abundant in quantity and quality, yet still relatively neglected - offer a wealth of insight for those interested in engaging with this format, whether they are studying such works or producing their own. For instance, making this video and engaging with Farocki's methods and aesthetics stimulated in me a newfound awareness of the implications of each decision involved in creating a video essay. The process also raised questions for what potential video essays have as an artform in themselves, if they could become an expression of an autonomous cinema, where "images comment on images," achieving a consciousness independent of spoken or written erudition. Now that we have reached a point where not only filmmakers, but critics, scholars, and all enthusiasts of cinema have the ability to communicate in moving

images, it is worth investigating what expressions this newly ubiquitous language can achieve.

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