

Art Papers

Reviews: Southeast

by Phil Oppenheim

Curator Travis Pack insightfully selected the works of two other artists in relation to Xie's televisual aesthetic. Each responded to his work by reinserting painterly techniques into the video medium. Oliver Smith's (in)visible frenzy sourced close-ups from porn videos as his raw material. He edited them together, digitally degraded the images until they became abstracted suggestions of faces, and presented them as looped videos on two eye-high monitors. While this could have led to a merely academic explication of Laura Mulvey's canonical text, "Visual Pleasure in Narrative Cinema," or worse, another tired example of artworld porn-chic, the work is more mysterious and evocative in its impressionistic treatment of the video image.

In *Television*, Smith's reedits a 1940s-era industrial film explaining the history and science of television in order to highlight the film's gratuitous reliance on a stereotypical bombshell to hold its (male) viewers' interest during some of the more boring sequences. This amounts to a quasi-Freudian tale of paternal subjugation, fetishized femininity, and repressed sexuality. Importantly, Smith's revision glows with a seductively luminous blue tint.