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1. Dale F. Eickelman, 'The Middle East's Democracy Deficit and the Expanding Public Sphere', in Peter van der Veer and Shoma Munshi (eds), *Media, War and Terrorism: Responses from the Middle East and Asia* (Routledge: New York, 2004), p. 66. The video can be found in English online at http://www.ciaonet.org/cbr/cbr00/video/excerpts/excerpts_index.html.

2. Declan McCullagh, 'Post 9/11 Antiterror Technology: A Report Card', 7 September 2006. *Online Publishing* at CNet News.com. http://news.cnet.com/Post-911-antiterror-technology-A-report-card/2100-1028_3-6113064.html

3. Tim Weiner, 'The Long War: How Little Has Changed', *New York Times*, 22 July 2007, Week in Review, p. 12.

4. Beatriz Colomina, *Domesticity at War* (MIT Press: Cambridge, MA, 2007).

In the U.S. war on Iraq and the elusive, euphemistic 'global war on terrorism' manufactured in response to the events of September 11, video and surveillance have been used in radically diverse ways, eroding the line between public and private in the service of state control, political recruitment, terror, individual curiosity and radical critique. These technologies have been used to scrutinise the body by government agencies, publicise beheadings by Iraqi insurgents, send global messages by Osama Bin Laden and produce a recruitment tool by Al-Qaeda now on the Internet.[1] Many independent agents have produced private videos that have found their way to a global audience via Internet sites such as YouTube, and, of course, the news media rely on video, subject to the pressures of state control. Artists, too, draw on the technologies of video, surveillance and the media to produce critical works about the troubling and often invisible effects of war. In this essay I examine some of these effects, focusing on the work of Krzysztof Wodiczko and his post 9/11 video, sound and vehicle projects, which mobilise war and media technologies in order to perform a radical critique of the war on terror, particularly the political repression it has unleashed against immigrants in American society and the frightening impulses and enduring damage it has effected on soldiers who function as both perpetrators and cannon fodder in this imperialist adventure.

Surveillance technology is everywhere in evidence today, from puffers, chemical scanners and biometrics devices being installed in airports to radio-frequency chips being inserted into passports, and 'machine-gun toting robots' being developed for deployment in Iraq to the thousands of video surveillance cameras in public spaces. One report notes, 'if face-recognition software is linked to the cameras, police can effectively compile dossiers on Americans' movements whenever they're in public places'.[2] And yet, despite ramping up public surveillance, it seems to have no effect on 'security' according to official U.S. intelligence assessments between 2000 and 2007, causing the *New York Times* to note, 'We live in a continuous Code Orange, despite thousands of lives lost and uncounted billions of dollars spent in the battle the White House now calls "the long war"'.[3] The invidious practice of surveilling the body to contain and control the population promotes the illusion of safety through fear of the pervasive potential of terror without actually providing greater protection. But this surveillance serves as a signal example of the erosion of the line between public and private, civilian and soldier or, put another way, between the peaceable domestic sphere and the perpetual militarisation of domestic space.

Video media such as television also exemplify the increased blurring of the line between private and public. When television entered the home in the 1950s, it transformed the home from sanctuary and retreat from the threat of the outside world into a zone into which war could enter at any time.[4] By the 1960s, however, television also had become a dynamic force for radical critique as well as a powerful state and corporate instrument. Artists such as Nam June Paik subverted the corporate and state-run

hegemony of television by appropriating its real-time capabilities as a medium for democratic potential, which was critical for the turn to social and political issues in the radical art movements of the 1960s and 1970s. Radical video artists questioned the ideological monopoly of television by changing our relationship to video and television from a passive to an active one.[5] Feminists, in particular, used video to interrogate conceptions of private and public, and responded to the way the mass media positioned the mass audience.[6]

If television allowed war to enter the home in the twentieth century, the Internet now allows the home dweller to interactively explore the world of war. The Internet user blurs the line between private and public by her ability to participate in the global blogosphere of the Internet community while nonetheless sitting at home alone, even preserving the ability to remain anonymous. Thus video and media technologies have been instrumental in dissolving the divide between public and private for both conservative and radical purposes, that is, for state and corporate influence and control, and for radical critique of those hegemonic institutions. As a form of dissent in the era of permanent warfare, video and mass media have been crucial players in the public sphere, which I define here in Peter van der Veer's terms as 'the spaces, sites, and technologies available for public discourse that is critical of the state'.[7]

Even conservative commentators have noted the sense of perpetual war produced on the domestic front. Historian Andrew Bacevich observes that for Americans most of the twentieth century was 'an age during which war, actual as well as metaphorical, was a constant, either as ongoing reality or frightening prospect', producing 'a relentless process of militarization'.[8] Right-wing pundit George Will bluntly notes in the aftermath of 9/11, 'For Americans, there are only two kinds of years: the war years and the interwar years'.[9] The new 'global struggle' may be seen as a deliberate attempt to cast the open-ended war on terror as a successor to the Cold War following World War II, continuing the constant threat of war that state power requires.[10]

In this context, attempts to control mainstream media technology have been increasingly tightened. If Vietnam was the first televised war, the Persian Gulf War of 1991, which acquired the reputation of being the first to be broadcast in real time through satellite communication, was also the first to control the movement of journalists through selective pools, to subject all copy, photographs and video to strict censorship, and to force journalists to rely on military briefings where they could be fed false information. Most infamously, the Persian Gulf War disappeared all evidence of dead bodies, an unknowable number on the Iraqi side, substituting instead the antiseptic 'eye' of the smart bomb and effectively blacking out coverage of American atrocities. Today, the excess production and circulation of images beyond government control is crucial in revealing atrocities such as the tortures at Abu Ghraib and the senseless slaughters of Iraqi civilians. Other more private and domestic traumatic effects are made visible through artistic intervention and deployed against the logic of the endless war and militarised homefront.

Appropriating the Vision of Surveillance

Krzysztof Wodiczko's 2005 project *If You See Something* . . . suggests that the technologies of artistic, military and media culture are integrally related in

5. John G. Hanhardt, 'Dé-collage/Collage: Notes Toward a Reexamination of the Origins of Video Art', in Doug Hall and Sally Jo Fifer (eds), *Illuminating Video: An Essential Guide to Video Art* (Aperture Foundation Inc.: New York, 1990), pp. 71–2.

6. Martha Rosler, 'Video: Shedding the Utopian Moment', in *Illuminating Video: An Essential Guide to Video Art* (Aperture Foundation Inc.: New York, 1990), p. 31.

7. Peter van der Veer, 'War Propaganda and the Liberal Public Sphere', in Peter van der Veer and Shoma Munshi (eds), *Media, War and Terrorism: Responses from the Middle East and Asia* (Routledge: New York, 2004), p. 13.

8. Andrew J. Bacevich, *The New American Militarism: How Americans Are Seduced by War* (Oxford University Press: New York, 2005), p. 5.

9. George Will, 'On the Health of the State', *Newsweek*, 1 October 2001, p. 70, quoted in James Der Derian, '9/11: Before, After, and In Between', in J. David Slocum (ed.), *Terrorism, Media, Liberation* (Rutgers University Press: New Brunswick, NJ, 2005), p. 322.

10. Robert Ricigliano and Mike Allen, 'Cold War Redux', in Andrew Martin and Patrice Petro (eds), *Rethinking Global Security: Media, Popular Culture, and the 'War on Terror'* (Rutgers University Press: New Brunswick, NJ, 2006), pp. 85–103.

11. The installation was shown at Galerie Lelong in New York from 10 September to 22 October 2005, and at the Museu d'Art Contemporani in Barcelona from 22 September to 27 November 2006.

12. Raphael Cuir, 'Krzysztof Wodiczko', *Artpress*, December 2005, p. 78.

13. John Haber, 'Political Art and Architecture, Fall 2005: Luc Tuymans, Krzysztof Wodiczko, and Sam Durant', *Haber's Art Reviews*, available online at http://www.haberarts.com/polifa05.htm. For other reviews, see Nancy Princenthal, *Art in America*, vol. 93, no. 10, November 2005, p. 170, and Roberta Smith, *New York Times*, Arts & Leisure, 14 October 2005; Dore Ashton, 'If You See Something', reprinted by Galerie Lelong from *The Brooklyn Rail*.

14. See Krzysztof Wodiczko, *Critical Vehicles: Writings, Projects, Interviews* (MIT Press: Cambridge, MA, 1999); on the Bunker Hill Project, see Lisa Saltzman, 'When Memory Speaks: A Monument Bears Witness', in Lisa Saltzman and Eric Rosenberg (eds), *Trauma and Visuality in Modernity* (University Press of New England: Hanover, NH, 2006).

15. For an interview between Patricia Phillips and Krzysztof Wodiczko on the central premises of his work, see 'Creating Democracy: A Dialogue with Krzysztof Wodiczko', *Art Journal*, vol. 62, no. 4, winter 2003, pp. 32–47; also see Patricia Phillips, '(Inter)Disciplinary Actions', *Public Art Review*, vol. 15, no.1, fall/winter 2003, pp. 11–15, and Elizabeth Ellsworth, *Places of Learning: Media, Architecture, Pedagogy* (Routledge: New York, 2004).

ways that define our post 9/11 historical moment. The work consists of a quartet of video projections on walls in a darkened room in which indistinct life-size figures are seen as if through frosted glass windows, acting out private dramas of pain.[11] The figures are immigrants who are alone or talk to others present or on cell phones about their desperate situations, including deportation proceedings, political harassment, physical humiliations. We hear phrases such as 'detainees', 'happened to me', 'American citizen', 'everything I have', 'no one wants to play with him', 'crying'. Sometimes police lights flash in the distance. Some figures wear business suits, some pace as if in a cage; a man holds up a newspaper to the window, like a desperate message in a bottle whose urgent meaning we cannot read (Fig. 1). Though staged for the video camera, the stories are true and the voices that narrate them are those of the afflicted. The scenes convey the anxious and casual moments in which appeals are made or confidences revealed – a woman to a co-worker during a cigarette break, a man to his lawyer, one prisoner to another, a father to a school principal. How do those strangers understand the racial, ethnic, gendered and class nature of the traumatic experience? The potential dilemmas for the overt listeners in the video installation are simultaneously presented for the viewers positioned as covert observers.

Fearful of the long arm of the government, the speakers convey a growing, inexorable sense of helplessness and hopelessness. The overlapping islands of sound as one moves about, projected through small speakers placed in relation to the projected windows, heighten the sense of disconnection and fragmentation, of stories, of lives, just as the figures themselves fade in and out of visibility. They perform their own anxieties and re-enact their own lives as the viewer watches in the darkness and listens through a veil of light and sound. The work turns the interior of the art gallery, as art historian Raphael Cuir writes, 'into an expression of the interiority of the individual' so that viewers might 'project themselves into the projection' and empathically find themselves on the other side of the milky glass.[12] Art critic John Haber suggests that the artist 'let[s] the message take shape and intensify in the listener's ear, while also insisting on the distance between the overheard and the understood'.[13]

Wodiczko is known for projects such as *Voices of Krakow City Hall Projection* (1996), in which victims of domestic abuse tell their stories, *Bunker Hill Monument Projection* (1998), in which the mothers and brothers of young men who were victims of a repeating cycle of urban violence speak their grief and attempt to break the 'code of silence' of the street gangs,[14] and *Hiroshima Projection* (1999), in which A-bomb survivors and their children recount their experiences. Whether in public projections that mobilise the spectacular power of humanly animated civic architecture or through Wodiczko's specially designed technological instruments, which empower individuals to speak in public spaces, the power of the word depends upon the means that enable and deliver it. Each project allows the individual body and voice to function as the body politic of the marginalised and dispossessed in order to effect a process of traumatic recovery and to penetrate and disturb public complacency.[15] Though perhaps more difficult to accomplish in the rarefied art world atmosphere of a gallery or museum than in the vast projections on public buildings he more commonly produces, *If You See Something* ... nonetheless constructs a highly charged space through the creation of a series of vignettes constructed as 'windows' onto private worlds. The installation is a video collage of

Fig. 1. Krzysztof Wodiczko, *If You See Something ...*, 2005. Video installation with four screens. Galerie Lelong, New York. Reproduced with permission from Krzysztof Wodiczko. (Photo: Galerie Lelong.)

simulated surveillance fragments that confront the viewer with the most pressing issues in America today: immigrant rights, racist reaction and the assault on civil liberties carried out in the name of the war on terror.

The projected windows bring into closer focus the life on the street we usually hurry past, deliberately oblivious, not wanting to hear those voices, those stories. The viewer is pressed into uncomfortable voyeuristic positions. In one episode, for example, two men speak in Punjabi, although we recognise a few words of English: 'deportation', 'nine eleven', 'Pakistan' and 'Muslim'. The first man stands in obvious distress with his arms extended, recalling the iconic image of the Hooded Man of Abu Ghraib. The second man tries to comfort him as his plaintive voice intensifies and then, unexpectedly, he weeps.

The ability of the viewer to shift focus among the four projected windows, each with a series of stories, defies linear narrative and reproduces both the street and the open, interchangeable space of the media – newspapers columns, television split screens, the multiple windows of a computer screen – employing what Beatriz Colomina calls 'the logic of the mass media'. These are spaces that can be rearranged and moved through by the viewer/reader, offering an array of information through which the reader navigates at will, superficially or fully.[16] In addition to its formal entwining with media technology, the multiple environments of Wodiczko's installation demonstrate the infiltration of war technology through the trope

16. Colomina, *Domesticity at War*, pp. 264–9. The multiscreen installation was first employed by Ray and Charles Eames at the Moscow World's Fair in 1959, and again at the 1964 World's Fair in New York.

17. Wodiczko, *Critical Vehicles*, p. 120.

18. See Lauren Berlant, *The Queen of America Goes to Washington City: Essays on Sex and Citizenship* (Duke University Press: Durham, NC, 1997), p. 62.

of surveillance. Conceptually, the project addresses the effects of contemporary war culture and the incursion of the heightened power of the state into every kind of domestic or homeland space, creating a perpetual state of hyper-vigilance in which the 'homeland' is always already mobilised for war. If military technology can be domesticated, the domestic also becomes militarised.

Wodiczko earlier employed the logic of the media in his Xenology project, on 'the art and science of the stranger', in which he invented communicative instruments and interrogative devices meant to empower and protect the alien or foreigner. The project consists of a series of portable and wearable video instruments such as *Alien Staff* (1992), *Porte-Parole (The Mouthpiece)* (1993), *Aegis: Equipment for a City of Strangers* (1998) and *Dis-Armor* (1999), which employ video technology to produce greater visibility for the immigrant. *Porte-Parole*, for example, positions a video monitor directly in front of the mouth, displaying huge distorted images of the lips in order to 'spread the communicable (contagious) process of the exploration of one's own strangeness'.[17] 'Aegis' includes a pair of screens rising from the wearer's back that project multiple pre-recorded images of his or her face. Like a strange winged creature, the foreigner transforms the process of surreptitious stares and covert surveillance into a deliberate civic display of a technologically 'angelic' presence. Through such self-surveillance instruments, the normally voiceless and invisibly marginalised enter the public sphere through new media invented specifically for them, projecting not only their presence, but also their anxieties in an unwelcoming environment.[18]

Similarly, *If You See Something* . . . simultaneously figures and subverts the technology of surveillance, commandeering and appropriating its effects. The milky glass in the projected windows functions as a screen through which the invisible video camera records private conversations and solitary moments, recalling the relentless spying represented in the film *The Lives of Others* by Florian Henckel von Donnersmarck. Von Donnersmarck's 2007 drama about the round-the-clock monitoring of East German citizens by the Stasi inevitably evokes the secretive and paranoid political culture of the U.S. government, which has functionally constructed the trappings of its own police state through the unprecedented concentration of power in the hands of the Bush/Cheney executive branch. And like the Stasi officer who ultimately finds himself in sympathy with his subject, we, the viewers, are also meant to empathise with the projected subjects, to recognise the peril of the individual in relation to the state.

Only one moment in the video projection breaks the illusion of an unwitting subject under the surveillance of an unseen eye. This occurs when the man presses a folded newspaper against the milky glass, openly addressing the unseen viewer. The newspaper seems like an offered appeal, though the content is unreadable. Yet we 'read' its import through the gesture, which activates a sense of daily awareness of the media and its role in militarising domestic culture. Like the milky glass that renders the text unreadable, we have been denied the full extent of the effects of the war on terror on the lives of thousands of ordinary innocent people, some brief, piercing examples of which are provided here in the projected windows. By producing an imaginative living archive through the projection of the performative, Wodiczko's project does what the mainstream media, embodied in the offered newspaper, cannot do. Though both the media and the video project may be seen as practicing some form of 'documentary realism', Wodiczko's project enters the public sphere to

challenge the anti-immigrant atmosphere of fear and suspicion that the mainstream media has helped to create by uncritically reproducing government rhetoric in support of the erosion of democratic rights in the name of 'homeland security'.

It may be argued that the environment of the museum or gallery space is a kind of neutral space, resonating with the ideals of high modernism following World War II. The International Style, which offered a promise of universal comfort, economy and clean design as a route to personal contentment and social improvement, produced the massive glass and steel skyscrapers of the corporate city centres, recycling the techniques and materials developed for the military. The World Trade Center, described by its architect Minoru Yamasaki as 'a living symbol of man's dedication to world peace',[19] came to embody the bureaucratic state as the twin colossi of finance capital, which made them such appealing targets (first attacked in 1993). They exemplify both the logic and the failure of this style. The proportions of the projected windows in Wodiczko's project evoke the shape of the towers so that the architectural space of the projected windows and the actual gallery space are mobilised both to invoke and redirect the trauma of 9/11 through the discourse it has produced. Redeployed by the artist, the multiplied modernist towers and the suffering they embody reanimate the implicit emancipatory demand for social freedoms in a democratic state.

The Transit Campaign and Government Spying

If You See Something … also addresses an ongoing media campaign in New York City's mass transit system, begun in 2002 by the Metropolitan Transit Authority (MTA). The MTA plastered the city with posters enjoining citizens who 'see something' to 'say something' and made public announcements on city transit that exhorted listeners, 'If you see something, say something. Don't keep it to yourself'. In the wake of the 11 March 2004 Madrid train bombing and the 7 July 2005 London train and bus bombings, San Francisco transit officials also unveiled a program called 'See Something? Say Something!' for bridges, ferries and buses in November 2005, and the program spread to mass transit in Chicago and Boston; the Washington Metro deployed a 'See it? Say it!' campaign; and the Ohio Department of Homeland Security adopted it. London and Australia have their own versions as Western countries become increasingly preoccupied with their Muslim communities.[20]

Wodiczko's work responds to the injunction to spy on behalf of the state by standing it on its head. Our putative protectors are easily understood not as benign big brothers but as the potential enemy, while those from whom they would 'protect' us – neighbours, coworkers, strangers – emerge as the aggrieved and the harmed, the latest victims in an American history overfull with such victims: immigrants, black people, workers, Latinos, gays, women, leftists. The morally and legally questionable activities of this government are by now well-known: condemning people to torture through 'extreme rendition', the hellhole of Guantánamo, Abu Ghraib and other prisons, and the secret detention camps into which even U.S. citizens declared 'enemy combatants' can be thrown without recourse and held indefinitely, harking back to the incarceration of 120,000 Americans of Japanese descent who were interned in American concentration camps until the end of World War II.[21]

19. Quoted in Holland Cotter, 'Remembrance of Downtown Past', *New York Times*, Weekend Arts, 1 September 2006, B24.

20. According to the MTA website, dozens of municipalities in the United States and around the world have requested permission to use the campaign slogan. In early 2008, the MTA began a new campaign that added to the original slogan ads with pictures of police dogs and the slogan 'You use your eyes. He'll use his nose'. See 'MTA Rolls Out "The Eyes of New York" Ad Campaign', available at http://www.mta.info/ mta/news/newsroom/eyesecurity.htm.

21. The UN first called for the closure of Guantánamo in 2006, denouncing the torture and abuses there as well as the arbitrary detention. See 'UN Calls for Guantánamo Closure', *BBC News*, 16 February 2006, *Online Publishing* at http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/ americas/4718724.stm. More recently, the former chief prosecutor at Guantánamo, Col. Morris D. Davis, became its biggest critic and plans to testify on behalf of a detainee. See William Glaberson, 'Ex-Guantánamo Prosecutor to Testify for Detainee', *New York Times*, 28 February 2008. The case of Mahar Arar, a Syrian-born Canadian who was arrested by the United States during a stopover at JFK airport, falsely labeled an Islamic extremist, and sent to Syria where he was tortured for almost a year, helped arouse outrage regarding the practice of extreme rendition. See, for example, Daina Lawrence, 'Wrongly Deported Canadian is Offered Dollars 8.9 m, Terrorism Ordeal', *Financial Times* (London), 27 January 2007. *Online Publishing* at http://www.lexisnexis. com.proxy.lib.wayne.edu/us/lnacademic/ results/docview/docview.do?risb=21_ T3261754318&format=GNBFI&sort= RELEVANCE&startDocNo=1& resultsUrlKey=29_T3261754321&cisb= 22_T3261754320&treeMax=true& treeWidth=0&csi=293847&docNo=3. On Abu Ghraib, see my 'Torture Culture: Lynching Photographs and Images of Abu Ghraib', *Art Journal*, vol. 64, no. 2, summer 2005, pp. 88–100.

22. Geoffrey Stone, 'Classified Information and the Press', The University of Chicago Law School Faculty Blog, 26 May 2006. *Online Publishing* at http://uchicagolaw.typepad.com/faculty/2006/05/classified_info.html.

23. See www.fulana.org, under 'projects'. The 'see something, say something' campaign has also inspired three theatre works: *The Fear Project* at the Barrow Group Theatre, with works by seven playwrights; *(I Am) Nobody's Lunch* by Steven Cosson; and *Major Bang, or How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Dirty Bomb* by Kirk Lynn. The film *If You See Something, Say Something* (2005), by Josh Safdie, was shown at the Underground Film Festival in New York in 2006.

24. See 'Random Observations on Life, the Universe and Television', 17 December 2005. *Online Publishing* at http://www.triborough.org/blog/?p=175.

25. See *Online Publishing* at http://www.aclu-mass.org/pdf/Operation%20Safe%20Commute.pdf.

By inverting the sense of the MTA slogan, Wodiczko evokes a history of informers and accusers in other persecutory and repressive campaigns, from the Salem witch trials of the late seventeenth century to the Sedition Act of 1918, which forbade Americans to use 'disloyal, profane, scurrilous, or abusive language' about the United States; from the McCarthyite witchhunts of the 1950s to the FBI COINTELPRO (counterintelligence program) operations used to repress political dissent from 1956 to 1971, which led to the government murder of thirty-eight Black Panthers; from Bush administration press spokesman Ari Fleischer's public warning, in response to the comment of a talk show host following 9/11 about the 'courage' of the suicide bombers, that people should 'watch what they say, watch what they do', to former Attorney General Alberto Gonzales's blatant attempt to threaten freedom of the press and intimidate journalists who publish classified information, much of which has been illegally classified and hidden from the oversight of Congress in the first place, by suggesting they might be prosecuted for performing a criminal act. As Geoffrey Stone, a lawyer on the faculty of The University of Chicago Law School notes in a letter to the Intelligence Committee in the House of Representatives, 'In this category of secrets, government officials are attempting to shield from public scrutiny their own misjudgments, incompetence, misconduct, venality, cupidity, corruption, or criminality. In a self-governing society, it is vital that such secrets must be exposed. What makes this difficult is that government officials attempting to maintain such secrets may invoke the claim of national security as a cover'.[22]

A Latina video and performance collective, Fulana, also responded to the MTA campaign, noting in a poster of their own, 'If You Fear Something, You'll See Something', because 'the news and the MTA are drilling fear into your head nonstop, and this could activate prejudices you didn't even know you had'.[23] The group produced their poster in English and Spanish on its website and invited visitors to download the flyers and post them around the city to counter the MTA campaign. A blogger posted a photo showing the addition of a *New York Post* editorial headlined 'Fight Terror, Speak English' over the Spanish version of the MTA ad. The *Post* editorial calls for making English the official language of the United States, a law which specifically denies any right for government agencies or officials to provide information or services in other languages in all spheres of public life, including bilingual education. The blogger ironically notes, 'If you see something, say something, but in English'.[24] The American Civil Liberties Union responded with information on 'What to do if you are stopped or questioned on the subway or bus' by transit police as a result of the MTA campaign, asserting in a counter-slogan, 'If you endure something, do something'.[25]

The distopian visions of George Orwell's *1984* and Ray Bradbury's *Fahrenheit 451* seem to grow in significance as the Bush/Cheney administration, in its own version of 'newspeak' and 'doublethink', redefines torture in order to declare that the United States does not practice it. With ample evidence of flagrant violations of the constitution, the appeal to 'see' what cannot be seen in the upheld newspaper may be understood as the stories suppressed or not yet written. While the MTA campaign encourages seeing the imagined criminal intent of our neighbours, who may, for example, have Spanish or Saudi accents, Wodiczko's *If You See Something …* encourages us to 'see' the mushrooming effects of a growing anti-immigrant hysteria – while leaving ambiguous, however, the political form of the 'tell'.

Immigrants as Workers

Immigrants from Mexico and Central America are at the centre of the American debate on immigration, and are included in Wodiczko's project in the form of an exchange in which a man from Guatemala laments to another Central American of uncertain origin about the injustice of the 1996 anti-immigrant law following the Oklahoma bombing by Timothy McVeigh:

> Man B: . . . The law is not made for you; it is made for them. You understand what I am saying? This law. All right, look at this stuff; remember when Timothy McVeigh blew up the Federal Building?
>
> Man A: uh huh
>
> Man B: That's when the '96 law came in.
>
> Man A: OK
>
> Man B: The '96 law was made for terrorists. You understand?
>
> Man A: So we are terrorists (laughs).
>
> Man B: But look at it. The person who blew up the building is American; he is not an immigrant. He is American. But he is still, they are gonna make a '96 law against immigrants. He's American, he's not an immigrant.[26]

McVeigh is an impossible anomaly for those Americans who find it uncomfortable to consider the fact of white homegrown right-wing terrorists, just as Londoners felt uncomfortable with the fact that the subway and bus bombers were native Britons from Beeston in Leeds, or that the majority of those arrested for plotting to blow up trans-Atlantic airplanes with liquid explosives were British-born, living in High Wycombe and East London. Guatemalans in particular have been caught in the American anti-immigrant net. A great many leave their native country, finding it too difficult to repay loans for land or to farm the soil, and because the schools have no books and there are no health clinics. The rural poverty, landlessness and lack of social services still common in Guatemala, especially for the Mayan Indian groups who make up about half of the population, drive many to migrate north through Mexico to the United States, along with poor Mexicans themselves.[27]

Since 1993 more than 3500 Mexican and Central American immigrants seeking some means of livelihood have died trying to cross into the United States through the desert in Arizona, more than were killed on 9/11. As a result of the 1994 imposition of NAFTA in Mexico, millions of Mexicans were forced out of the countryside into the swelling ranks of poverty in the cities, creating the mass migrations of desperate immigrants looking for work in the United States. It is estimated that ten percent of the Mexican population now lives in the United States, including one in every seven Mexican workers, and the $20 billion they send home annually is Mexico's third-largest source of income.[28] Recent studies show that immigrants do not 'steal' jobs from Americans since these are jobs that Americans do not want to do. Where cheap labour power in the form of immigrant labour is available, employers use it instead of turning to machines.[29] Only the desire to continue the massive exploitation of the millions of 'illegals' that do the dirtiest, lowest paid and most difficult labour in the United States with no citizenship rights has prevented the

26. Excerpt from installation transcripts, courtesy Galerie Lelong.

27. 'Guatemalan Refugees Return to a Hard Life', 1 May 2002. *Online Publishing* at *Refugees International*.

28. Carolyn Lochhead, 'Give and Take Across the Border: 1 in 7 Mexican Workers Migrates – Most Send Money Home', *San Francisco Chronicle*, 21 May 2006. *Online Publishing*; also see 'Labor and the Fight for Immigrant Rights', *Workers Vanguard*, 26 May 2006.

29. Roger Lowenstein, 'The Immigration Equation', *New York Times Magazine*, 9 July 2006.

30. Paul Harris, 'Illegal Immigrants Caught in a Fight for the Headlines', *The Observer*, 3 February 2008. *Online Publishing* at http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2008/feb/03/uselections2008.usa.

31. Patrice Petro and Andrew Martin, 'Introduction', in Andrew Martin and Patrice Petro (eds), *Rethinking Global Security*, p. 5.

32. Most of the participants in this project, whose gradual involvement and trust was accomplished over time, did not meet each other until the opening of the exhibition. Telephone conversation with Krzysztof Wodiczko, 5 June 2006. Wodiczko worked with individuals and organizations such as the American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee; the Asylum Project; Immigrant Rights Program; Bellevue/NYU Program for Survivors of Torture; National Immigration Project; and Physicians for Human Rights. A complete list can be obtained from Galerie Lelong. For theorizing on questions of audience and community, see Miwon Kwon, *One Place after Another: Site-Specific Art and Locational Identity* (MIT Press: Cambridge, MA, 2002), Grant Kester, *Conversation Pieces: Community and Communication in Modern Art* (University of California Press: San Francisco, CA, 2004) and Doug Ashford, Wendy Ewald, Nina Felshin and Patricia C. Phillips, 'A Conversation on Social Collaboration', *Art Journal*, vol. 65, no. 2, summer 2006, pp. 58–82.

legal integration of Mexican labour into the American economy. It was Democrat Bill Clinton's 1996 immigration 'reform' law that first renewed militarisation of the U.S./Mexican border, resulting in increased deaths, in addition to deporting immigrants with green cards for infractions that had occurred decades earlier. As the United States continues to step up the technological militarisation of the border, with support of both Republicans and Democrats, it has done nothing to change the annual mounting death toll, while the monstrous proposal of a nearly 400-mile wall, similar to that built by the Israeli state in the West Bank, along with 500 miles of vehicle barriers, provoked massive outrage in Mexico.

With an estimated twelve million illegal immigrants in the United States, immigrants from South America and other regions of the world function as sources of cheap labour for modern capitalism, only to find themselves the most expendable elements of the labour force during times of economic contraction.[30] *If You See Something …* presents the concrete effects of anti-Arab hostility by employers in the lament of an American woman. She describes how the unrelenting harassment of her Lebanese husband and the unwillingness of employers to hire him drove him to return to Lebanon and forsake the marriage. The construction of Muslims and Arabs as alien elements to be driven from the nation or inferior peoples to be subdued in a 'clash of civilizations' is the basis for the culture of fear and the strategy of permanent war even as it fails to account for the global interpenetration of peoples or to recognise the transnational public sphere. It further fails to understand that terrorism is 'a tactic and not an enemy' and that terrorist groups are stateless, originating in the despair of the impoverished and oppressed.[31]

From a safe distance of privilege and security, the onlookers who survey the actors performing their own stories in Wodiczko's project must realise that 'we' do not exist apart from 'them'. Even if we do not trace our immediate family history to recent immigration, there is no 'we' in America beyond the small ruling elite that is safe from surveillance and the abrogation of civil rights under the rules of the U.S. Patriot Act (or in the UK under the Prevention of Terrorism Act). Middle Eastern immigrants and dark-skinned foreigners are the most harassed only in the first instance, followed by blacks, leftists, workers, environmentalists and dissenters of all kinds. What is remarkable about the torture chambers, rendition and domestic spying is that such police state powers in support of an imperial presidency are no longer covert but openly and aggressively justified, and acceded to by Democrats and Republicans alike.

Wodiczko's appropriation of the technology of the media and of surveillance transforms the condition of 'seeing' into a rather more complex moral dilemma. If we are not to be the eyes and ears of the state's repressive apparatus, what is our relation to its hapless victims? Are we passive bystanders or active witnesses? Wodiczko's project becomes more than a deeply ironic exposé of an arrogant and repressive government, more than troubling glimpses into its terrors and abuses. The project also becomes a vehicle for the persecuted to speak and to find some sense of communal recognition among the project's viewers. Although not a community project in any usual sense, the work is rooted in an ethos that attempts to reformulate the concept of 'community' on an ethical basis oriented toward the public sphere; it utilises a local 'community' of immigrants that is not a community at all in order to conceive 'community' in a larger global way.[32] This is consistent with Wodiczko's long-standing artistic practice of seeking

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to effect social change through the psychological and emotional impact of the work both on its participants as individuals in the process of producing the work and on its audience.

The project is also an invitation to the spectator to consider the fragility of the liberties we take for granted and the need to defend every shred of democratic rights. The dividing line between guilt and innocence is between those whose interests are served by the capitalist state and those who are exploited and oppressed, both at home and abroad. *If You See Something...* creates a collective space that counters the construction of the subject (the viewer) by the ideology of the state with the authentic testimony of its victims, who demonstrate the political results of the ideology of war and the perpetual militarisation of civil society.

In one projected window, two window washers speak to each other in Polish about immigration issues, then a dog sniffs and licks at the window (Fig. 2). Raphael Cuir writes,

33. Cuir, 'Krzysztof Wodiczko', p. 78.

The dog sniffing the olfactory traces of his kind before leaving his own [trace] is as concerned with the concept of territory as the immigration police who obsess on it. Much less trivial than it seems, here the animal serves as a metaphor for Giorgio Agamben's observation that "there are certain thresholds in the surveillance and manipulation of the body that cannot be crossed without entering a new biopolitical era ... the gradual animalisation of mankind carried out through the most sophisticated means."[33]
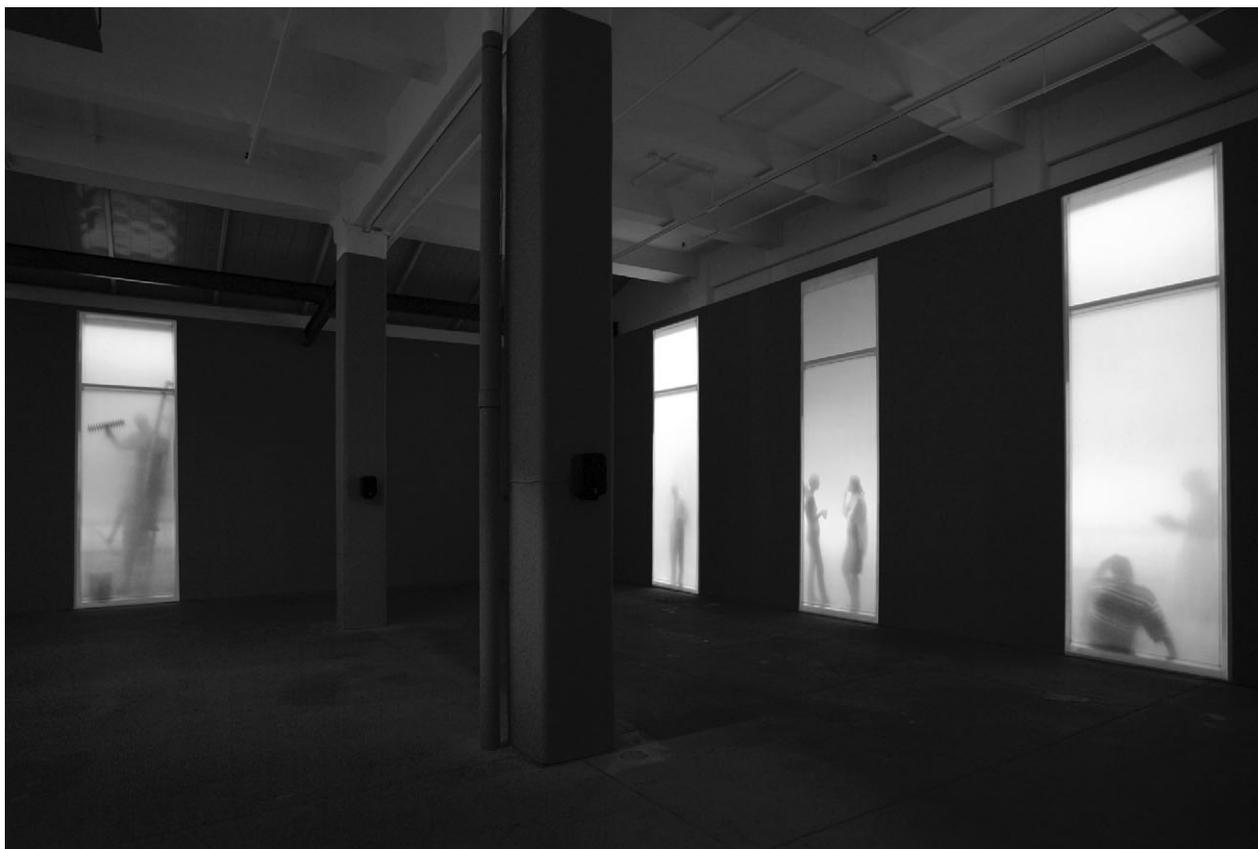

Fig. 2. Krzysztof Wodiczko, *If You See Something* ..., 2005. Video installation with four screens. Galerie Lelong, New York. Reproduced with permission from Krzysztof Wodiczko. (Photo: Galerie Lelong.)

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Downloaded from http://oaj.oxfordjournals.org/ at SWETS - Trusted Agent Gateway - OUP on October 19, 2014

34. Bill Christensen, 'Covert Iris Scanner Close To Minority Report Future', 19 July 2007. *Online Publishing* at Telenovelegy.com.

35. Wodiczko chose window washers for his project who specialized in cleaning the windows of art galleries, and even joined, as a Polish-speaking immigrant himself, such window washing crews as a 'trainee' on several occasions. Telephone conversation with Krzysztof Wodiczko, 18 August 2006.

36. Slavoj Zizek, *The Parallax View* (MIT Press: Cambridge, MA, 2006), p. 301.

37. Zizek, *The Parallax View*, 11. Terry Eagleton also makes this point in, 'On the Contrary: Terry Eagleton on Slavoj Zizek's *The Parallax View*', *Artforum*, vol. 44, no. 10, summer 2006, pp. 61–2.

Intimate forms of bodily scrutiny are part of the logic of state-imposed domination, expanding as new forms of sophisticated technology are developed, such as the iris recognition scanner, which will have the ability to 'scan the iris of the eye without the knowledge or consent of the person being scanned'.[34] The dog is also a figure with which many poor immigrants register an ironic identification, a nomadic creature who sees the world from below and is poorly treated while attempting to stake a claim to a patch of territory. From another perspective, the dog figures terror and surveillance in the form of human/canine border patrol agents, drug-sniffing police dogs and as weapons used to terrify and attack foreign prisoners held by Americans.

The task of window washing in the projected window also reminds us that immigrants are workers; indeed, it suggests the vast army of immigrant workers who do the lowest-paid and often most dangerous manual labour that supports the immense edifice of corporate America. The milky windows, produced by gluing a screen to the glass, separate the corporate sphere from the unwelcome world outside by veiling the teeming multitudes, including the actual teams of immigrant window washers in the city who remain visibly indistinct as well as socially invisible, thereby maintaining the separation between classes on either side of the windows.[35]

The fact that immigrants come to the United States first and foremost to enter the *working class* bears some emphasis. As Slavoj Zizek astutely observes,

> Typically, in today's critical and political discourse, the term "worker" has disappeared, substituted and/or obliterated by "immigrants" [immigrant workers: Algerians in France, Turks in Germany, Mexicans in the United States] – in this way, the class problematic of workers' exploitation is transformed into the multiculturalist problematic of the "intolerance of Otherness", and so on, and multiculturalist liberals' excessive investment in protecting immigrants' ethnic rights clearly draws its energy from the "repressed" class dimension.[36]

More precisely, many immigrants face a double oppression in the United States, both as threatening or suspect because of their perceived foreignness, an attitude that is sharpened with every real or imagined 'terrorist plot' publicised in the media, and as largely invisible but deeply exploited workers.

Among the post-Marxist left, however, talk of 'class struggle' is an idea that can hardly be spoken, a notion almost as unfashionable as the even more reviled concept of a vanguard party. But as Zizek argues, U.S. fundamentalists are more effective in achieving their goals because they believe in struggle while 'the usual gang of democracy-to-come-deconstructionist-postsecular-Levinasian-respect-for-Otherness-suspects' believes only in difference.[37] The seemingly fruitless effects of the window washers' labours on the frosted glass induce a sense of stalled social mobility and unending burden, evoking the labours of the critical artist himself whose work attempts to illuminate what the rhetoric of the state seeks to obscure. At the same time, it evokes the spectre of an organised, radical and politically coherent response that would raise the call for no deportations and full citizenship rights for immigrants, the immediate freeing of all detainees in Guantánamo and other 'black sites', and the immediate withdrawal of American troops from Iraq and Afghanistan.

John Haber, while finding Wodiczko's project representative of a deepening anger, and a more complex response than many projects produced in the wake of September 11, nonetheless criticises it as yet another expression of Wodiczko's longstanding critique of the abuse of power: 'For a good thirty

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years, Wodiczko has invoked a police state, and his postmodern devices have had a way of staying on message a little too long for their own good'.[38] Haber seems to imply that the message has become worn out, or overly didactic, the police state deployed as a generic device, perhaps derived from the artist's own experience of Stalinism in his native Poland. Haber seems to question the reality of a society perpetually militarised and mobilised for war, 'the war years and interwar years'. Far from being a figment of Wodiczko's imagination, however, the war on terror has brought us closer to a police state than at any point since the McCarthy era. The project uses the technology of war and the media to bring the private terrors of the persecuted into the public domain, politicising domesticated technology as a clear form of dissent. The glimpses into the torments of the persecuted constitute a form of public testimony, a strategy Wodiczko has successfully employed in his previous projects. The prosthetic eye of Wodiczko's camera transforms the instrument of surveillance and repression into history's witness.

Speaking Flames

Wodiczko employs different technology in his 2005 installation, *Speaking Flames*, composed of three artificial candles (with real flames) on pedestals with soundtracks that seem to emanate from each candle (Fig. 3). The tiny gusts of air that affect the flames are generated by the vibration of sound from unseen speakers though thin air tubes concealed by the shafts of the candles. Despite the lack of any visible agency, the flickering flames respond, in uncanny fashion, to the expulsive breath of the voices one hears, producing a chilling effect that makes the viewer aware of his or her own breathing. With sound that seems to come from everywhere and nowhere, the work creates a new kind of rhetorical space, a metaphorical space in which one might lose track of the surroundings and find oneself conceptually in a vast darkness, wanting solace in the presence of these incorporeal voices.[39]

Two of the flames contain indistinct fragments of soldiers' interactions in the course of combat in Afghanistan and Iraq, privately recorded snippets that convey the adrenaline-fueled context in which soldiers feed each other's
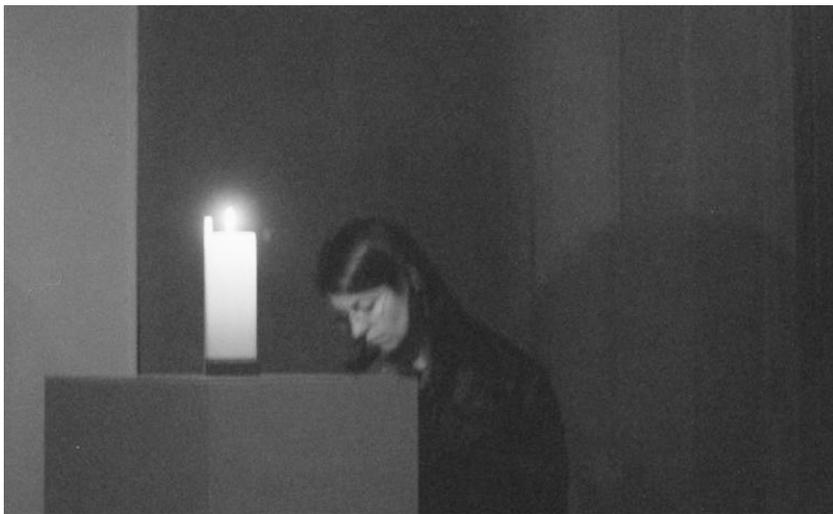
Fig. 3. Krzysztof Wodiczko, *Speaking Flames*, 2006. Installation view. Galerie Gabrielle Maubrie, Paris. Reproduced with permission from Krzysztof Wodiczko. (Photo: Galerie Gabrielle Maubrie.)

40. J. David Slocum, 'Introduction', in J. David Slocum (ed.), *Terrorism, Media, Liberation*, pp. 1–4.

frenzied drive to kill or that exhibit the intense stress of being under attack. In one instance, while interviewing two soldiers on leave, Wodiczko watched and recorded the audio of a video they had made from their armored vehicle while in Iraq that captured a suicide attack; in the other he recorded the audio of a film on the Internet showing the killing of people from a helicopter at night in Afghanistan.

Thousands of viewers watch videos of such scenes on Internet video-sharing sites such as YouTube and Google Video, which represent a massive expansion of private surveillance and souvenir production using new technologies. Such images constitute the primary form of war experience for most viewers, who vicariously participate in the current war through them. For this reason media theorist David Slocum argues against the sense of separation, promoted in public discourse, between core experience and media representation of that experience. Such a distinction, he asserts, fails to recognise that the public's understanding of war through media images is not secondary but *primary* war experience and therefore central to our understanding. Photographs, films, television and the Internet replace modern life's real experience with the representational, reflecting the 'depersonalised and distant relations that define the capitalist political and economic order'.[40]

The switch from the visual mode to the aural adds to a sense of disorientation in the installation of 'speaking flames'. The principal and only clearly articulated voice among the three candles is fixed on the centre flame, where an American officer conveys in his halting monologue a profound uneasiness about his experience as a self-described killer. He begins by declaring his ambivalence, followed by the justification for his actions:

> Umm … again, very strong feeling of ambivalence, because through my actions and my unit's actions umm, I'm convinced that we were, that we were able to … save American lives. Um … which I believe is a good thing. … Uh … there was an instance where umm, there were, uh, enemy inserted forces who were firing rockets and missiles at our various bases, umm, in and around the Syrian border. … We returned fire and, and, and we, we killed those enemy operatives. And it was, it was perfect and we were, we were happy about it. Um, I was happy about it. I was the one who had given the order to fire.

But his satisfaction with a successful mission is undermined by later doubts and a desire to distance himself from the killing:

> Um, it's only in retrospect, looking back, that I see, um, that I have grown uncomfortable with the idea of being happy about having killed other people. Even though, I didn't directly pull the trigger, um, there's a, there's a sort of psychological displacement there. I didn't directly kill anyone, but I was, ya know, as the officer in charge, the person who gave the order to fire, I … I … I am responsible for what happened.

He momentarily becomes uncomfortable with the word 'killing':

> Um, and, and so it's hard to tell, the more I think about it, um, the more I, the more I wonder should I have been glad uh, to have, to have, um … removed these individuals? Um, should I be happy over their deaths?… as time progresses, and I get further and further away from the events, I, uh, wonder more and more about it and it leads to a greater feeling of ambiguity.

Finally, he faces the moral dilemma:

> I, I, I suppose, I suppose what troubles me most is that um, I felt happy to have killed other people, which by extension means that I was happy to be, to be a killer. And killer has such

a negative connotation to it, even though it is true and precisely what it was that I was at that time.[41]

The trauma here is conveyed by the impossibility of holding two different and mutually exclusive conceptions of the self simultaneously, one as an honourable man, of which one can be proud, and the other as a killer, which induces shame. Shame arises when an individual feels he has violated the social codes of the community and acted in morally unacceptable ways. There are two communities in conflict here: the military and the civil. The soldier, moreover, is repulsed at discovering in himself the joy of killing, a feeling impossible to reconcile with the expectations of civilian life. *Speaking Flames* constitutes a critique of American militarist bellicosity produced by juxtaposing it with the psychic damage it has produced in relation to expectations of the domestic sphere.

'Democracy assassinated the family that was here'

More than 4000 U.S. soldiers have died in Iraq, figures that are not yet commensurate with the estimated 100,000+ Iraqis who have been killed. As Seymour Hersh and others have shown, the tortures and murders at Abu Ghraib and Haditha were not aberrations but the result of conscious policies designed to secure the occupation of Iraq, like the 1968 My Lai massacre of some 500 villagers in Vietnam, and the massacre of some 400 Korean civilians at No Gun Ri during the Korean War in 1950. A recently revealed government document shows that top U.S. military officers and Korean officials sanctioned the killing of civilians who fled the fighting that led to the massacre at No Gun Ri. At My Lai, General Koster, the division commander in overall charge of the troops, watched the killings from the air and radioed orders to Lieutenant Calley who led the massacre in the village.[42] In Haditha, where U.S. soldiers on a rampage killed twenty-four unarmed civilians, the *Washington Post* (27 May 2007) notes a line of graffiti on one of the houses of the murdered: 'Democracy assassinated the family that was here'. 'Democracy', American-style, has become code for criminal occupation, wanton murder and massive destruction.

Wodiczko's sentient candles evoke eternal flames in the tombs of unknown soldiers and commemorations of genocides, but also act as surrogate figures both for the tens of thousands of unnamed dead and injured in Iraq and Afghanistan, whose public mourning has been prevented in the United States by keeping their deaths anonymous and uncounted, and for the American and allied dead and injured, most of whom have been thrown into the rapacious maw of destruction for reasons they little understand. For the living on all sides, the implications for altered lives, fractured families and the larger burden on society have only begun to become broadly visible.[43] By giving voice to the flames, Wodiczko shifts their function from the elegiac to the horrifying and undermines the possibility of a redemptive narrative. The transmutation of body into voice becomes a metaphor for the invisibility of pain.

The conjuncture of confession and candles also evokes the rituals of the Catholic Church, without, however, offering the solace of faith. Instead it conveys a failure of absolution for the disillusioned soldier. Implicit is the soldier's sense of betrayal by the government in whose name and in whose defence he and others like him carried out their acts of terror and

41. Installation transcripts, courtesy Krzysztof Wodiczko, Galerie Lelong, New York.

42. On Abu Ghraib see the articles by Seymour Hersh, who broke the story in the *New Yorker*: 'Torture at Abu Ghraib', posted 30 April 2004, available online at http://www.newyorker.com/fact/content/articles/040510fa_fact; 'Chain of Command', posted 9 May 2004, available online at http://www.newyorker.com/fact/content/articles/040517fa_fact2; and 'The Gray Zone', posted 15 May 2004, available online at http://www.newyorker.com/fact/content/articles/040524fa_fact; see also Lila Rajiva, *The Language of Empire: Abu Ghraib and the American Media* (Monthly Review Press: New York, 2005); Dora Apel, 'Torture Culture'; for documents on Haditha, see PBS Frontline. *Online Publishing* at http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/haditha/etc/links.html; on Korea, see Charles J. Hanley and Martha Mendoza, 'AP Updates Its "No Gun Ri" Pulitzer Winner: New Document Reveals Order to Shoot Refugees', *Editor and Publisher*, 29 May 2006. *Online Publishing* at http://www.editorandpublisher.com/eandp/news/article_display.jsp?vnu_content_id=1002577038; on Vietnam, see Patricia Sullivan, 'Samuel Koster, 86, General Charged in My Lai Killings', *The Washington Post*, 10 February 2006. *Online Publishing* at http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2006/02/09/AR2006020902097_pf.html.

43. See, for example, the photographs of wounded veterans by Nina Berman in *Purple Hearts: Back from Iraq* (Trolley Books, 2004), and more recently in *Nina Berman: Purple Hearts: Photographs of Iraq Veterans* at the Jen Bekman Gallery in New York in August 2007. Berman's photos are also published online at http://ninaberman.com/index3.php?pag=prt. See also Holland Cotter's review, 'Words Unspoken Are Rendered on War's Faces', *New York Times*, 22 August 2007.

44. Manual Delgado, 'Symbolic Wars: Struggle, Play, Festival', in Antonio Monegal and Frecesc Torres (eds), *At War* (Centre de Cultura Contemporania de Barcelona, Institut d'Edicions de la Diputacio de Barcelona, Forum Barcelona and Actar: Barcelona, 2004), pp. 52, 48.

45. Mieke Bal, 'The Pain of Images', in Mark Reinhardt, Holly Edwards, Erina Duganne (eds), *Beautiful Suffering: Photography and the Traffic in Pain* (The University of Chicago Press: Chicago, IL, 2007), pp. 110–11.

46. Robert Hariman and John Louis Lucaites, *No Caption Needed: Iconic Photographs, Public Culture, and Liberal Democracy* (The University of Chicago Press: Chicago, IL, 2007), p. 188.

violence, a recognition of that government's inability to compensate for the effects of conscience. The speaking flames draw on the opposition between terrorist and citizen, the former a transnational actor, the latter an embodiment of the nation, as an opposition that is easily lost or confused in the context of war.

Manual Delgado defines the anthropology of war as the settling of an 'accumulated volume of debt', which in this case might be regarded as the 'unfinished business' of the Gulf War initiated by Bush Sr. Writes Delgado, 'Violence and warfare are not the outcome of opposed parties having given up on their ability to communicate, but of them having decided to intensify the efficacy of their messages to the maximum. Contrary to what is usually thought, armed conflicts are not a consequence of the "failure of dialogue", but of its exacerbation'.[44] Cheney and Rumsfeld et al. sought to intensify the efficacy of their message through a 'shock and awe' bombing campaign that might be said to rival the blitzkrieg of the German Luftwaffe over Guernica during the Spanish Civil War. While Picasso's painting famously evoked the print media coverage of that event in the French newspapers, Wodiczko's work employs contemporary war and media technology to produce a new kind of performative, living memorial for the twenty-first century. Like *If You See Something . . .*, *Speaking Flames* contemplates the continuing and devastating implications of war in the domestic sphere.

The project, in its bodily effect, conveys the trauma that many perpetrators cannot escape and that they transmit to others, evoking the creation of a new generation of veterans suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder with its social dysfunction, violence and suicides, who are inadequately cared for, if not largely abandoned, by the state. But the disarticulation of voice and body has the important effect of preventing the soldier's narrative from being reduced merely to the personal experience of an individual. On one hand, it allows the listener to embody the disembodied voice, to experience not only intellectually but affectively the easy slide into complicity through heteropathic identification. Yet this is a troubled, unsettled identification that does not allow the wholesale pleasure of vicarious identification, which cancels out the difference between self and other. The listener is left in a deliberately uneasy position, in which the other cannot be ignored. As Mieke Bal asserts, 'Suffering requires witnessing', for 'without witness, the sufferer is irremediably alone, deprived of a social environment and all but dehumanized'.[45]

On the other hand, the work may also be read as a metonym for the damaging actions of the nation. This tension between the psychological and the political, or between the individual and society, in Wodiczko's post 9/11 projects, points to what may be regarded as the key problematic in liberal sensibility, in which individual experience stands for the whole so that individual healing equates to national healing. Robert Hariman and John Lucaites define this as 'the fundamental dilemma of liberalism: by making the individual's experience the primary source of meaning, internal transformations can suffice for action in the world'. In this sense, the political is elided in favour of the individual. 'The fundamental tension in political life', they note, 'is between the individual and society, and once the individual is protected other political possibilities are likely to be deferred to the more immediate engagements of private life', so that 'public life becomes a dead zone'.[46]

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The War Veteran Vehicle Project

Wodiczko's War Veteran Vehicle Project, designed in collaboration with Theodore Spyropoulos (and still under production as of this writing), is a vehicle with mechanical wings as 'communicative shields' equipped with video screens and speakers for transmission of the memories and images of war. It includes special containers and display components attached to the inside sections of the vehicle wings, and a screen and speakers attached to the top of the vehicle to allow for transmission of the face and voice of the veteran without direct exposure of his or her actual face (Fig. 4).[47] The vehicle addresses the war trauma that is deepened and extended through the unprecedented multiple redeployments of older soldiers from the military reserves and National Guard, many of whom have new families. Wodiczko notes that 'each returning-from-war soldier retraumatises seven to nine people, children, spouses, and parents among them ... one third of the US population is already a victim of primary and secondary war trauma. ... In this way, the spread of war trauma reaches the epidemic level'.[48] The War Veteran Vehicle is meant to pierce the silence of the media and of the returning soldiers themselves, most of whom will never speak publicly.

Through the use of the vehicle's 'communicative shields', the proposed vehicle would both assist a war veteran in 'acknowledging in the open the presence of his or her emotional defensive war "armament", while inspiring the veteran to "disarm" himself or herself' by publicing sharing war and postwar experience. However, the process of exposure can be carefully controlled. 'When it becomes emotionally necessary', writes Wodiczko, 'the vehicle will allow the veteran to seek refuge behind the closed-again vehicle shields, opening them and closing them again and again as often as needed' (Fig. 5).[49] Physically manifesting the desensitising and numbing emotional shields necessarily developed by soldiers, the vehicle

47. Description of this project relies on the unpublished preliminary text for 'The War Veteran Vehicle Project', emailed to me by Krzysztof Wodiczko, 27 September 2007.

48. Wodiczko, 'The War Veteran Vehicle Project'.
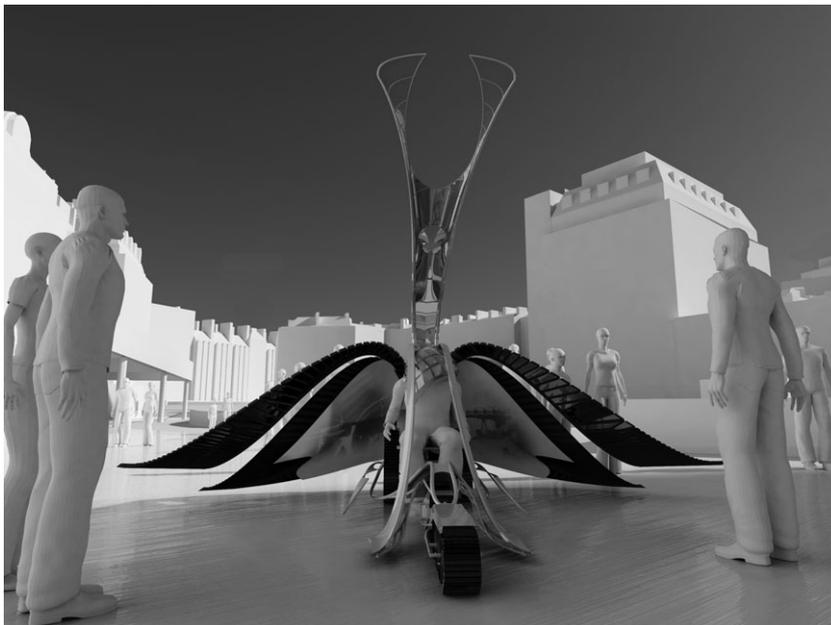
49. Wodiczko, 'The War Veteran Vehicle Project'.

Fig. 4. Krzysztof Wodiczko with Theodore Spyropoulos, The War Veteran Vehicle Project, 2007. Preliminary drawing. Reproduced with permission from Krzysztof Wodiczko. (Photo: Krzysztof Wodiczko.)

50. Susan Buck-Morss, *Thinking Past Terror: Islamicism and Critical Theory on the Left* (Norton: New York, 2003), p. 71.

51. Colomina, *Domesticity at War*, p. 301.

52. See Wodiczko, *Critical Vehicles*. For discussion of another project on the homeless, see Rosalyn Deutsche, 'Krzysztof Wodicko's *Homeless Projection* and the Site of Urban "Revitalization"', in her *Evictions: Art and Spatial Politics* (MIT Press: Cambridge, MA, 1998).

53. The phrase is Wodiczko's.

Fig. 5. Krzysztof Wodiczko with Theodore Spyropoulos, The War Veteran Vehicle Project, 2007. Preliminary drawing. Reproduced with permission from Krzysztof Wodiczko. (Photo: Krzysztof Wodiczko.)

operates as a metaphor for the difficult and lengthy process of dismantling the emotional armour which must first be recognised and acknowledged by the veterans themselves, their families, friends and the larger public.

With the 'post Sept. 11 brave-new-world of surveillance', as Susan Buck-Morss has dubbed it,[50] which includes tapped phones and snooping through computer sites, library accounts and bank accounts, the space of the home as a protective sanctuary has shrunk considerably, narrowing down private space to absurd proportions in portable and nomadic technologies, such as the gas masks Israelis wore in their homes in 1991 as Saddam Hussein sent Scud missiles into Israel, or the plastic sheets, wind-up radios and duct tape advertised in the United States following 9/11.[51] Wodiczko produced several forms of protective nomadic technology prior to the war veterans vehicle. His 1988–1989 Homeless Vehicle and 1991 Poliscar, designed for the displaced and dispossessed, simultaneously offer a supportive technology for daily living while underscoring the inability of the capitalist state to support its own population through full employment and housing. This makes the need for a beautifully designed homeless vehicle painfully ironic.[52] Just as the homeless vehicle projects are not a permanent solution to the problem of homelessness, the War Veteran Vehicle Project is not a permanent solution to war trauma; both are a kind of 'transitory artifice'.[53] Such vehicles allow the marginalised to develop a civic voice in the public sphere through technology, externalising the interiority of trauma by making what is functionally private and effectively invisible into something highly public, and demonstrating, in the case of the War Veteran Vehicle, the social militarisation of domestic space and the drastic shrinking of that space for the victim of war trauma and homelessness alike.

In Wodiczko's post-9/11 projects, utilising the very war and media technologies that have worn away the division between private and public,

the works expose the criminal processes of imperial power in their less visible aspects. *If You See Something ...* speaks to the ways in which xenophobic nationalism, the suppression of class interests and the reification of stereotypes are utilised to promote a pervasive domestic atmosphere of suspicion. In the interests of permanent warfare, such suspicion is designed to paralyse political will, suppress dissent, and justify the onslaught against basic democratic rights and civil liberties up to and including the deprivation of life itself. *Speaking Flames* and the War Veterans Vehicle Project examine the effects of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan on traumatised soldiers who tend to be forgotten once they have returned from war, though the damage and destruction of American bellicosity will resonate for generations.