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Introductory notes to the 27th issue of View.

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The Formatting of Late Television

If one is to believe Raymond Williams, author of the pioneering analysis of the television medium, "one of the innovating forms of television is television itself."[1] Perhaps even the only one, since, as Serge Daney adds, television shifts the focus from production to distribution, revolutionizing not so much the way moving images are produced, but the way they are circulated worldwide.[2] If the invention of television is television itself, it is because even if we don't watch too much of it – because we prefer digital platforms or news channels on YouTube – it still decides how our worldview is formatted. Today, when it already seems to be an outdated medium, interesting perhaps only for historians of the recent past, it gains, paradoxically, in legibility: it shows the birth of the era in which we are still living, an era of television not so much conquered by new media as it has been intensified by them to a level previously unimaginable. Returning to television, we can see once again that which we are still subject to, perhaps most of all when we think that the problems born by television are long gone.

In this issue of *View* we invite you to return to the pioneers of Polish reflection on television, in order to show quite early insights into its long-term effects. In **Viewpoint** we present an English translation of a fragment of a visionary theoretical work by Grzegorz Królikiewicz entitled *Off*, along with a commentary by film scholar Paulina Kwiatkowska. We would also encourage you to take a look at the works of Wojciech Bruszewski, in which television is a recurrent object of reflection and criticism – there is also a contemporary counterpoint in the form of a text by Filip Pudło. In the **Close-Up**, the historical perspective is adjacent to quite current uses of the television medium. Juliette Bessette reminds us of the reflections on television by Jack Burnham and John McHale, who looked for a continuum between mass media

and art. Marta Wódz returns to radio, both another important medium for modernity and a little outdated, offering a take on the contemporary use that artists (especially one Polish female artist) have made of it. Richard Langston, in turn, shows how Christoph Schlingensief skillfully played with the format of a television show, introducing the most difficult topics to public debate and staging the dramatic conflicts that bourgeois society has been plagued by. Monika Borys analyzes TV programs produced today in Poland, such as *Projekt Lady* [*Project: Lady*], to reveal how Polish television envisions class promotion.

In the **Panorama** we only seemingly go beyond reflection on television, as the three texts in this section address the most important problems whose solutions television formats have always constantly blocked. Kacper Pobłocki, announcing his new book on the history of serfdom, asks about non-standard methods of practicing history as an academic discipline. Rita Muller interprets the status of things and objects related to refugees with the example of several works by contemporary artists and public reaction to them. Marcin Kościelniak, on the other hand, draws in his article a genealogy of the 1990s abortion "compromise" in Poland and the birth of the ideology sanctioning it.

The **Snapshots** section also includes traces of the television medium – for example, a review by Aleksander Kmak of *Performans TV*. In a critical essay by Madeleine Ulrich, we learn about the history of soap opera and its relation to the development of American television. Piotr Kosiewski's and Xawery Stańczyk's texts address the recent history of Polish culture – respectively the Wschodnia Gallery and the intertwining of music with political activism. Samuel Weber once wrote that television is a medium of difference primarily because it "also and above all differs from itself."[3] This is because one of its main tasks is to hide what it is actually doing. We hope that in this issue we manage to catch it in the act for a while and show

a moment of difference in which it seems difficult to recognize, although still familiar.

Enjoy the reading!

Furthermore, we would like to announce two changes to the editorial team of *View* – a sad and a good one. Let's start, courageously, with the first: Iwona Kurz will no longer be a member of our editorial team. However, we are taking this undoubtedly sad opportunity to express our gratitude for her invaluable contribution to the creation and development of *View*. It has been a real pleasure to observe the professionalism, passion, and intelligence of Iwona, as well as to regularly enjoy her sense of humor and self-irony. Our magazine wouldn't exist without her; the more difficult it will now be to continue. But most of all: thanks a lot!

And the good news? Iwona is joining the Editorial Advisory Board of *View*, so she is leaving, but not quite. One could thus say: "Welcome aboard"!.

1 Raymond Williams, *Television: Technology and Cultural Form* (London-New York: Routledge, 2003), 75.

2 Cf. Serge Daney, *Le Salaire du zappeur* (Paris: P.O.L. Éditeur, 1993).

3 Samuel Weber, "Television: Set and Screen," in: idem, *Mass Mediauras: Form, Technics, Media* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996), 110