



Dan Graham: *View of Roll*, 1970, film installation, 1 minute, 11 seconds; at Marian Goodman.

conceptual in a vital response to the nature of art practice at the time. —Edward Leffingwell

Annika Larsson at Andrea Rosen

Two provocative 16-minute video projections by Annika Larsson, a Stockholm-born, Berlin-based artist, constituted her first U.S. solo. (Both were concurrently shown at London's ICA.) All Larsson's videos since 1998 have investigated interactions among men, with particular focus upon power. In *Inbjudan Till Herr B* (1998), for example, a man invites four others to a party and forces them to dance before him; in *Cigar* (1999), one man watches another smoke; and in *40-15* (1999), two men simulate a game of tennis in front of a bedroom mirror.

In *Dog* (2001), the earlier of the works shown here, two men in business suits stand together silently, silhouetted against a gray sky. One is older, better dressed and in control, both of the younger man and of the large dog on a silver chain he holds in his leather-gloved hands. A seduction is conveyed through the camera's meticulous recording, often in extreme close-up, of such movements and details as shifting eyes or parting lips. Clichés of erotic suggestion abound, the camera's focus (and vantage point) most often being below the men's waists. The pace is slow; anticipation builds and yet when the music rises to a crescendo and a climax of sorts is reached, the sensation is not one of release but of devastating emptiness.

Poliisi (2002) takes place under the cover of darkness. Here Larsson subtly conflates political content with Christian symbolism. The video opens with the word *poliisi* emblazoned across the back of a police-

man's leather jacket. Inside an unmarked white van, a blond man in a yellow jacket, white pants, beige kneepads and high black boots allows a policeman to put a mask, presumably drugged, over his nose and mouth. Soon unconscious, the figure is laid out on the ground of a public square where a heroic statue can be seen and a cathedral looms behind. Three black-clad policemen circle him as a march plays, giving way to other music with a pulsing, heavily percussive beat. (The music for both videos was arranged by the Swedish multimedia and performance artist Tobias Bernstrup.) Although the scene takes place in the open air, it is pervaded by a sense of claustrophobia. At last the man wakes, raising one white-gloved hand in greeting; the police lead him on his knees back to the waiting van.

On one level, this video investigates good and evil (conventionally symbolized by white and black), submission and domination. On another level, like Larsson's other works, it speaks of the power of the artist. Given

her preoccupation with voyeurism and surface appearances and the sense of waiting and stillness that pervades her work, it's no surprise to learn that she once worked for Vanessa Beecroft. She extends Beecroft's investigations of social roles and types into richly conceived, symbol-laden, dreamlike narratives. Particularly intriguing is her focus on interactions—without any real communication—among an entirely male cast. This was an arresting debut, for the 30-year-old artist.

—Roni Feinstein

Patty Chang at Jack Tilton/Anna Kustera

Patty Chang's second solo exhibition at Tilton/Kustera is not as transgressive as her first, the images not as unsettling or ferocious, the humor not as biting and questions of identity, gender and sexuality, while ever present, have been toned down. However, there are still disturbing images here, especially in two of the new videos. In the more memorable one, the artist, seated, faces the camera dressed like a prim

schoolgirl in a buttoned-up white blouse and short black skirt. She is squirming, breathing hard, her face contorted in discomfort or fear or some other emotion, tugging at her skirt to reveal glimpses of her panties. Under her blouse, something wet and swelling writhes, leaving damp spots. It appears Chang is being tortured, possessed by aliens or enjoying a kinky form of sex—perhaps all three. In any case, what finally bursts from her blouse is a snarl of eels. In the other video, two monitors show close-ups of Chang coupled with her mother and then her father, kissing and sucking their lips, tears streaming from everyone's eyes, a bare-bones melodrama about the family romance that makes you wince at its nonchalant perversion. Actually, however, this sequence turns out to be a backward-running tape of Chang eating an onion, which she shares with her parents.

Chang's subject is almost always herself in different guises, a bad-girl Chinese-American version of Cindy Sherman as a performance artist. This selection of recent video projections and photographs was mostly about illusion—what you see is not exactly what you see—little tricks that make you smile. For instance, in the video-related photo *Contortion*, she looks at you like a variant of Manet's *Olympia*, with Mona Lisa's hovering smile—a china doll odalisque, only fully dressed in sultry red and gold, with an artificial flower tucked behind one ear. She reclines on her stomach, chin propped in one hand, while her legs extend improbably, impossibly over her. The answer, of course, is that there are two bodies involved. It's a bit of a one-liner but appealing to look at.

The most imposing video, but not necessarily the most impres-

Annika Larsson: Still from *Dog*, 2001, DVD, 16-minute loop; at Andrea Rosen.

