

Press Release

Liz Rodda, *Total Body*, 2015
Lawndale Art Center, Houston

Where is the human body in the twenty-first century? At the gym, in traffic, outdoors, or home alone? Wherever the emblematic sites of embodiment for the present day might be, they are always also online. We pass bodies and their parts to one another via smartphones, we post them on websites, and we find them—absurd, touching, sexy, troubling—when streaming digital video from all sorts of online caches. We can ignore our bodies and those of others, choosing to withdraw into the abstract thoughts that our bodies house. Even so, we can never empty those thoughts entirely of the sensations our bodies produce.

Despite its wry title, Liz Rodda's dual-channel video piece doesn't explain what it means to be flesh and blood. It doesn't identify the mishmash of existential musings that make up its soundtrack, or distinguish the notion of humanistic, virtual actions from those that are virtually human. *Total Body* shows us the extreme irreconcilability of each "small fraction of a human that is human" mentioned in its voiceover. This is no tragedy. Paradoxically enough, *Total Body* suggests it may just be a primary source of life's pleasure.

Rodda is one of the most distinctive artists working in expanded media today. Her aesthetic is cerebral—and rousingly funny. Her work in digital formats as well as her installation practice avoids obvious moral questions of consumer culture and identity, zeroing in on the uncanny forces that drive our media- and object-based interactions.

—Jennifer Stob

Jennifer Stob is a scholar of experimental film and video. She is an assistant professor of contemporary art history in the School of Art and Design at Texas State University and a film programmer for Experimental Response Cinema in Austin, Texas. Her essays have appeared in *Evental Aesthetics*, *Moving Image Review* and *Art Journal (MIRAJ)*, *Philosophy of Photography* and *Studies in French Cinema*.