



Donna Conlon, *Dry Season* (still), 2003

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## Videoecology

### New practices in Latin American Art

This paper investigates a series of recent video art works that reflect upon ecological problems from a historical perspective in contemporary Latin America. Far from understanding the idea of Nature as a «pure entity», young video artists such as Donna Conlon (Panama), Rivane Neuenschwander (Brazil), Tomás Ochoa (Ecuador) and David Zink Yi (Lima) have analysed the destruction of the environment in Central and South America as the irresponsible policies of social and economical agents. Using different styles and various subjects, these video pieces update Theodor W. Adorno's dictum «the old mystification: nature instead of history».

In several art projects developed during the last decade, these artists have not only denounced intolerable practices against the richness of Latin America's wildlife, but also offered vigorous counter-ideological discourses that actively demonstrate the power of art as a significant process of independent and critical thought. Tomas Ochoa's *SADCO The Blind Castle* (2003) reflects upon the landscape changes occurred in area of Portovelo, Ecuador, due to the mining actions of a US multinational firm. Donna Conlon's *Dry Season* (2003) presents a Panamanian garbage dump where it suddenly begins to rain empty bottles. David Zink Yi's two-channel video *Alrededor del dosel* (2004) lyrically explains the habitat of the Peruvian Harpy eagle to comment upon fauna destruction in the Amazon rainforest. Rivane Neuenschwander's *Contingent* (2008) show an army of ants devouring a *mapamundi* made of honey.

Through the political and aesthetical analysis of these art works, this paper studies the way in which these art videos have originally dealt with environmental problems and local forms of community ecology without surrendering to ideological stereotypes.