

reviews

# Pipilotti Rist

Museum of Modern Art

**P**our Your Body Out (7354 Cubic Meters), Pipilotti Rist's hypnotic, immersive, crowd-pleasing video extravaganza, set in MoMA's vast atrium, is an animated, 21st-century version of Monet's *Water Lilies*. At 25 feet high, the site-specific, high-definition, multichannel video, accompanied by Anders Guggisberg's music sound track and seating designed by the artist herself, merged effortlessly with the museum's architecture. The piece creates a kind of out-of-body experience, with the viewer providing the body and Rist the psychedelia. MoMA curator Klaus Biesenbach,

Once settled, you entered an anti-gravitational field, beamed up into the flow—art as rhapsody and rapture in a saturated MTV Eden, paradise not yet lost. The color itself was worth the price of admission, to which was added the music, conjuring ignored interior body sounds, whooshing, burbling, pulsating, and moaning, followed by a few minutes of melody. Out of a ravishing kaleidoscope of pictures emerge celestial blue skies; fields of pink tulips; scarlet tulips; details of silken petals; scrumptious, squeezable fruits, including strawberries running from green to red, and oranges,

apples, bananas, and mangoes; glistening earthworms dug up by dirty hands; bare feet walking through mud; feet that morph into what seem to be more-intimate body parts; shimmering water; reeds; underwater scenes; close-up human skin; huge pores; strands of hair; and an eye so liquid it seems on the verge of dissolution.

Bits of humor and less-lyrical imagery keep it all from floating away into neo-New Age mush. For instance, a pig's moist, hirsute snout is filmed close-up, then a view of its

open, voracious pink mouth is followed by an image of a young redheaded woman—Eve?—crouching down to take a fallen apple in her mouth, holding it like a garnish for a roasted pig. Even the trash looks good here, squashed soda cans colorized to improbable vividness, with their abstract starbursts and other patterns splattered across them. In one sequence the entire field turns into liquid reds, its significance evident. Yet for all the work's visual allure—and it is gorgeous—the piece lacks the haunting, bittersweet wistfulness that makes works like *Sip My Ocean* (1996) unforgettable. However, *Pour Your Body Out* was delightful, a hearty antidote to global recession and winter blues. —Lilly Wei



**Pipilotti Rist, *Pour Your Body Out* (7354 Cubic Meters), 2008, multichannel color video projection with sound, projector enclosures, and circular seating element.**

who organized the exhibition, has likened it to a pool filling up with images and sound.

The video, streaming across three walls from projectors housed in two breastlike swellings high on the walls, and the rhythms, alternating between fast and slow, feminized and eroticized the towering, hard-edged atrium. Seated or sprawled out, visitors gathered on and around an enormous low slate blue circular couch, which surrounded a dark center. Viewed from above, it resembled the eye's iris and pupil, an apt allusion. (The mood was somewhat dispelled, however, by the guards who constantly reminded visitors to take off their shoes before clambering onto the couch.)