

## WHO MURDERED MARIA ?

Myriam Thyes, 1995

Video U-matic Lowband Pal, digitised, 17:30, b/w and colour, stereo.

A literary video based on the text of the same name by Mithu M.

Sanyal. Language: German.

With Mithu Sanyal (voice, illustrator), Julia Friedrich (voice), Franca Wechsler and Schiryn Höpfner (drumming).

Direction, script, camera, editing, effects, sound, 3rd voice: M. Thyes

Mithu Sanyal's narrative concerns the inner dialogue of a woman with her alter ego 'Maria', who oscillates between goddess and the Christian Madonna, and with her lover. The woman is an artist and at the same time her partner's nude model. She comments on her own account by means of feminist (self-) analysis. The text is partly self-deprecating; the reflections of the first-person narrator are detached and intellectual. Anger resonates subliminally, because during her contemplation she realises how she has been manipulated by her boyfriend and by her own values.

Snatches of dialogue with her partner, the painter Mack, and with 'Maria' emerge in her memory. The artist begins to verbally create her own image of Maria, the goddess, and of herself. The story is spoken alternately by three female voices to the accompaniment of drum rhythms. This form lends the text something ritualistic. It is not the individual fate that is emphasised, but that which affects many women as a cultural given. In addition, the three voices allude to the Three Marys and the three aspects of the primordial goddesses.

The video was largely filmed in Myriam Thyes's studio. The quiet black and white views of the room and the scenes showing the narrator drawing herself serve as an imaginary space for the viewers. The coloured inserts show details from Antwerp Cathedral. They mark emotions in the text as well as chronological shifts in the narrative.

