

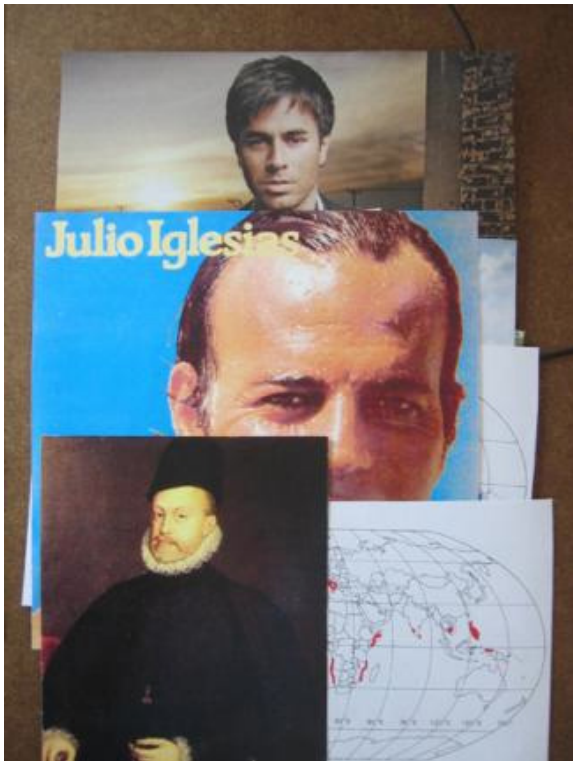
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# ARTFORUM

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“Patricia Esquivias”  
Murray Guy  
By Cecilia Alemani



*Folklore II*, 2007, still from a color video, 13 minutes 30 seconds.

For her New York solo debut, Caracas-born, New York-based Patricia Esquivias presents a video duet at two locations. In White Column's White Room is a selection from her ongoing series *Reads like the Paper*, 2005–, a cut-and-paste video collage of short episodes that appear in seemingly random order. Esquivias often uses her laptop's screen as an experimental stage: The artist films her own computer, overlapping unusual characters with short videos—a sort of virtual theater of the absurd. Merging low-tech devices with an intimate, humorous approach, Esquivias's shorts chronicle quotidian events, mixing wry irony and skepticism to transform the materials into strange, almost philosophical reflections.

At Murray Guy, Esquivias presents *Folklore I*, 2006, and *Folklore II*, 2007, two lectures about Spanish history, in which vernacular culture merges with a hypersubjective reading of more “official” historical narratives. Both videos proceed according to random associations and unpredictable chains of events. The camera focuses on the artist's hands as they frantically grab old photos, scraps of paper, notebooks, and advertisements that are used as illustrations for Esquivias's homemade lectures. *Folklore I* presents General Franco's protégé Jesús Gil, whose biography Esquivias enigmatically juxtaposes with the history of rave culture in Valencia. *Folklore II* draws a hilarious parallel between King Philip II and sleazy crooner and sex symbol Julio Iglesias. Speaking in a somber monotone, Esquivias offers delirious accompanying monologues that—despite the absurdity of their content—manage to evince a certain credibility, suggesting that history is a malleable substance that can be reconstructed at will.