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## Aïda Ruilova

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09.07.11-10.23.11 *Salon 94 Bowery*

Aïda Ruilova once used low-budget consumer-grade cameras to make videos lasting not much longer than television commercials. Drawing on horror films and experimental music, those looped works produced compact spaces of convulsive disorientation. While her latest completed project, *Goner*, 2010, upgrades her practice with slick production values and stylized cinematic pans, this eleven-minute 35-mm film (transferred to DVD) never quite develops a coherent plot—which is troubling, considering the action that takes place in it. The film begins with an attractive young woman, played by the model and actor Sonja Kinski, waking up in a brightly lit bedroom, ordinary in every way except for a heart-shaped bed. Over eleven minutes, an unseen assailant gruesomely stabs her multiple times, lands several mean punches on her face, and drags her across the carpet. The room itself attacks the protagonist—a knife comes through a wall to pierce her hand—and she also appears to inflict her own wounds. Onto the images, Ruilova overlays partially diegetic sounds (jarring screams and ominous heartbeats, heavy breathing and soft moans) that allude either to rough sex or to rape—but it's never clear which. Though occasionally stunned or upset, the woman rarely looks surprised by her situation; she eventually begins to fight back. All these ingredients, combined with *Goner's* shifting points of view, construct a bizarre scenario with no resolution, only an incessant tension and release.

Ruilova also presents a two-minute trailer for a work in progress, *Prop House*, 2011, as well as twenty video stills as framed C-prints, taken from *Goner* and from past works such as *Tuning*, 2001, *It Had No Feelings*, 2004, and *Meet the Eye*, 2009. The tiny size of the photographs—two by three and a half inches each—parallels the brief duration of many of the original works. By comparing spatial and temporal elements, the artist twists the traditional notion of scale, resulting in another form of disorientation.