



Nagisa Oshima, *Max, mon amour*, 1986, 35 mm, color, sound, 92 minutes. Max (Ailsa Berk) and Margaret Jones (Charlotte Rampling).

## CHADWICK RANTANEN

“Ape Culture” (Haus der Kulturen der Welt, Berlin) Squatting in the HKW, “Ape Culture” was half exhibition, half exploded zoological text. The show, which examined man’s ever-shifting relationship to apes and other primates through both scientific and cultural lenses, was generous yet concise, occasionally testing the limits of one’s concentration. The historical material—from works by Charles Darwin, Donna Haraway, and Bert Haanstra, among others—was dense and expansive, but conveniently sized for camera-phone snapshots. The art demanded an aloof eye, and felt wheeled out for research purposes, not spectacle. The installation thwarted one’s total absorption in any given work, and although I stayed for all of Nagisa Oshima’s unreal 1986 feature film *Max, mon amour*, the narrative provided no solace; it only heightened a pervasive estrangement emanating from HKW’s assemblage of restless objects, whose symbolic and cultural consequences are still evolving, casting the human race as more and more alien.