

# Espace Croisé

centre d'art contemporain

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Press Kit



Exhibition

**Rachel Reupke**  
24 Hour Fresh Air

3 february - 7 april 2007

**private view friday 2 february at 19:00** attended by the artist  
presentation to the press at 18:00

# Rachel Reupke

## 24 Hour Fresh Air

**private view friday 2 february at 19:00** attended by the artist  
presentation to the press at 18:00

Tuesday to Saturday, 14:00-18:00 and by appointment for groups  
free entrance

Rachel Reupke's video work exists somewhere between film, photography and painting. Landscapes, meticulously crafted from a combination of live footage and stills photography, depict scenes from a post-industrial age. Transport networks, energy supply and the leisure industry are all subjects that her work has explored with a kind of backhanded romanticism.

CGI blockbusters, automobile advertising, spaghetti westerns, webcams, postcards, and the paintings of Bruegel and Friedrich are all reference points for the work, as scenery and vistas are manipulated and improved to the point of hyperreality. These ideal, or idealised, spaces suggest the cognitive gap between the reality of today and the possibilities for tomorrow.

Under the collective title "24 Hour Fresh Air" Rachel Reupke has created new work for Espace Croise resulting from time spent in Beijing, China in 2006. The phrase is borrowed from a property developer's construction hoarding, one of a thousand such billboards that intrude on the city's streets. These advertisements render the future of the city an illustrated insert into the reality of its present, just as the city's maps pre-empt the completion of building projects in order to keep up with the relentless pace of change. This constant visual overlay of proposed onto existent gives the impression that time is being compressed, and that tomorrow might actually be running concurrently with today.

Three projections *Now Wait for Last Year*, *Untitled*, *24 Hour Fresh Air* will be exhibited.

Rachel Reupke was born in Henley-on-Thames, England in 1971 and lives and works in London. Recent exhibitions include *Une vision du monde*, La Maison Rouge, Paris; *Terra Infirma*, Espai d'Art Contemporani de Castelló, Spain and *The Mind Is A Horse*, (*Part Two*), Bloomberg Space, London.



### *Now Wait for Last Year*

2007, DVD projection, 8min, loop

*Now Wait for Last Year* takes the idea of a Beijing developer's billboard as the starting point. In a hybrid of an architect's visual and a municipal video, city buildings are presented one after another in single-shot fixed frames, both monumental and unreal. Photographic in nature, but with visible post-production, these images resist being located in a specific time or place. A collaged aesthetic coupled with the incongruous design of some of the structures leave the viewer to question whether these buildings actually exist in present day Beijing, are plans for future developments, or sheer fantasy.



## Untitled

2007, DVD projection, 4 min 50, loop

This video shows a famous view across the river to the Pudong district of Shanghai. Though the skyline is barely ten years old and still in development, the scene has both the nostalgic feel of an early twentieth century sci-fi illustration and the self-conscious air of a pre-designed photo-opportunity. As a tug boat slips into view with a huge advertising screen on deck, the viewer's focus is pulled between the city vista and the on-screen presentation. This video within the video shows a public information film about a proposed building project: the future as both premonition and promotion, superimposed on an already unreal present.



### *24 Hour Fresh Air*

2007, DVD projection, 4 min 40, loop

*24 Hour Fresh Air*, with a title inspired by an advertising slogan, presents the illustrated future of Wangjing, a residential district of Beijing. Using found images gleaned from billboards and posters on the street, this video, or rather 'presentation', appears to announce a promising new society filled with lifestyle choices - a modern arcadia of high-rises, shopping malls and parkland. Faith in the vision falters however as language fails, symbolic motifs seem unreadable and the architecture remains generic. Half true record, half faux artifact, *24 Hour Fresh Air* deals with the visual rhetorics - commercial, civic and utopian - which frame our futures.

## Rachel Reupke

### 24 Hour Fresh Air

Mo Gourmelon : You define your work somewhere between film, photography and painting. What do you mean ? What are your influences and references ?

Rachel Reupke : In one sense, the work is literally a combination of video and photography with a good deal of image manipulation, which, in its process, feels very close to painting. But it's not just about production methods - the work itself is *about* cinema, and photography, especially commercial photography (postcards, advertising etc), which in turn have been influenced by the history of painting.

I'm particularly interested in very early filmmaking. The kind of work made (by the Lumiere brothers, for example) before editing or camera movements had been developed, and films were simply single shots - views or panoramas. I find the restriction of creating a whole work using a single image fascinating, where all action or narrative has to be told within this one frame. The use of special effects or trick photography in this period also influences my work - like watching a card trick, there is a fundamental human pleasure in knowing you're being duped!

The subject of landscape is also integral to the work so other influences I could mention would be Bruegel, or Werner Herzog and Alfred Hitchcock's use of landscape as protagonist rather than a mere backdrop. The novelist J G Ballard and his preoccupation with technology and its effect on social structures has also had an impact.

MG : In 2006, you spent several weeks in Beijing. Which were the circumstances of this residency? Did you have expectations or preconceptions about China and Beijing ? How did you approach this city ?

RR : The residency was an Arts Council Fellowship, organised by Gasworks in London with funding from Triangle Arts Trust. I was given a place to live and work for 2 months which I shared with chinese artist, Wang Xiaolu. I had wanted to go to China for a long time but actually I had very little idea of what to expect, so arrived with an open mind and no real plan for what work I was going to make there.

On first impression Beijing was quite a shock. I wasn't prepared for its size, or the scale of the architecture, or the volume of traffic or the pollution - daunting, but exhilarating too. My approach to making work was to do a kind of cursory 'sweep' of the city noting down possible locations to shoot (places I had seen from the road or train), then I would return by bike to explore in detail.

MG : What is the starting point of *24 Hour Fresh Air* ?

RR : It is impossible as a first time visitor to Beijing not to be a little overwhelmed by the amount of construction taking place, especially now, in preparation for the 2008 Olympics. I became interested in the public face of this development boom - the urban planning exhibitions, show homes and billboards, illustrations of building projects and lifestyle orientated taglines everywhere. I've always been interested in science fiction and especially in the act of visualising the future and in Beijing there it was - a city whose future was illustrated, printed and on display in every neighbourhood.

## Rachel Reupke

Born in 1971 in Great-Britain

Lives and works in London

### Selected exhibitions

- 2007 Espace Croisé, Roubaix
- 2006 *A Season in Hell*, Danielle Arnaud Gallery, Londres/London  
*His life is full of miracles...*, Site Gallery, Sheffield, Angleterre/England  
*Une vision du monde*, la collection Lemaître, la Maison Rouge Fondation Antoine de Galbert, Paris
- 2005 Terra Infirma, Espai d'Art Contemporani de Castelló  
Randonnée, Sonar, Museu d'Art Contemporani de Barcelone/Barcelona  
The Mind Is A Horse, Part Two, Bloomberg Space, Londres/London  
Biennale of Contemporary Art Prague 2005, National Gallery, Prague
- 2004 Tour-isms, Fundació Antoni Tàpies, Barcelone/Barcelona  
Hohe Berge, Tiefes Tal, Autocenter, Berlin  
Once Seen, Oslo Central Station, Oslo ; Tromso Kunstforening, Tromso
- 2003 Video Lisboa, Galeria Zé dos Bois, Portugal  
After Nature, CCA, Glasgow, Écosse/Scotland  
Moving-Places, Plymouth Arts Center, Angleterre/England  
Artists' Film & Video Programme, Site Gallery, Sheffield, Angleterre/England  
The Entangled Eye, Danielle Arnaud Gallery, London ; Gallery Speak For Tokyo  
LUX Open 2003, Royal College of Art, Londres/London  
Video Store, Foxy Productions, New York
- 2002 Evolution 2002 : Process, Leeds City Art Gallery, Angleterre/England  
Less is a bore, humans need more !, The Mission, Londres/London
- 2000 The Poster Show, Cabinet Gallery, Londres/London

### Selected screenings

- 2005 As If By Proxy, Redux, Londres/London  
Vidéo et après, Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris  
Ann Arbor Film Festival, Michigan, USA (Judge Emeritus Award)  
International Film Festival Rotterdam, Pays-Bas/Netherlands
- 2004 Moving Landscapes, Filmuseum, Vienna, Autriche/Austria  
Seoul Film Festival, Corée/Korea  
Cinematexas 9, USA (Special Jury Award)  
Media City Festival, Ontario, Canada (Hounoury mention)
- 2003 Viper Basel 2003, Suisse/Switzerland  
15th Filmfest Dresden, Allemagne/Germany  
International Film Festival Rotterdam, Pays-Bas/Netherlands

### Awards

- 2004 *Tignes* funded by London Artists' Film and Video Award, Film London
- 2003 *Pico Mirador* commissioned by DRU, The Media Centre, Huddersfield  
*Parc Naturel* funded by Musée d'Art Moderne Grand-Duc, Luxembourg

### Public collections

Musée National d'Art Moderne, Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris

During the exhibition

## JOHAN BERARD TIMER

15 february - 10 march 07  
Private View - wednesday 14.02.2007 19 h - 7 pm



*Timer* (2005) is an animation which deconstructs one hour of work time. The numerals of this "chronometer" are represented by office spaces arranged in an open-plan and seen from a shot looking vertically down. When the animation is activated a space-time dialectic develops as we watch. For here the representations of time and space become one. This animation has three different modes of operation (minutes, seconds and hundredths of a second), corresponding to three hierarchical levels in a company. For example, cleaning women sweep at a rhythm of hundredths of seconds, while upper managers have a much larger space and work at a rhythm of one action a minute. So there are three reading times in which these space-times (the offices) appear and disappear; in some ways this demonstrates the demands of yield and flexibility dictated by the contemporary workplace.

Johan Bérard was born in Istres in 1977. An ex-student of the Fresnoy school, he now lives in Lille.

## IDEAL #09

13 - 31 march 07

We liked these films in total subjectivity without trying to find links between them. Different worlds to be explored.

### Sabine Gruffat & Ben Russell

*Michoacan : La Muerta*, 2006, 8 mn

Makeshift folklore for an uncertain world. Shot in the Mexican state of Michoacan and constructed using the same techniques employed in the Surrealist parlor game of the Exquisite Corpse, this video holds a mirror up to the unseen, hallucinates and reflects it back into the everyday forever and ever and ever. The film is about 'tourism' in every sense of the word: the fascination and fear of the strange/other, the obsessive need to document and record experience, and the destabilizing effect of foreign environments on identity. Real and imagined characters populate this work, and their roles are continuously reversed making it difficult for the viewer to decide which is real and which is the imaginary. SG & BR

### Alice Anderson

*Souffler n'est pas jouer*, 2005, 14 mn

This tale is the story of a metamorphosis that aims to win back the love of a father. Here it is a question of the father - daughter - mother bond which weakens and warps at the end of childhood. A bond that, in any case, is fatal to their original relationship. AA



## Raphaël Zarka

*Rooler Gab*, 2004, 7 mn

Raphaël Zarka is interested in the signs of urban spread where nature retrieves its rights. After a trip on the Aérotrain (*Pentacycle*), the artist discovers another aborted project. We follow the path of a dog masterfully filmed with cross shots. However, at each turn during this descent, the camera seems to want to show us something else. The vestiges of a strange abandoned skate park are the real subject of the film. One climbs up to this utopia project, on the edge of scrubland, with the help of a ski lift. This wavy circuit adjusts the irreconcilable: nature and urban signs. Even its designer thinks it was invented too soon.

## Paco Joya

*X point*, 2006, 8 mn

*X Point* is the reading of a teenager's life depicted in his own words. He reveals secrets and experiences from his life in the form of a confessional. This video piece revolves around the idea of an individual battling with the values of the society in which he lives, but the video piece has been edited in a way which opens up different possible readings. The images depict a world in an almost dream-like fashion; but are they real or just his imagination? The video piece has been filmed using entirely mobile phone video technology that provides a specific character to the image. PJ

## Sabine Gruffat & Ben Russel

*Michoacan : El Traidor*, 2006, 8 mn

This video is divided into two parts. Both Michoacan : La Muerta and Michoacan. El Traidor should be screened in the same program, ideally separated by other short films. SG & BR

## Federico Solmi

*King Kong and The End Of The World*, 2005, 4 mn 28

*King Kong and The End Of The World* was made in collaboration with New-Zealand based 3D artist Russell Lowe. It plays with several icons of mass culture :the commercial brands, emblems of high culture as Guggenheim Museum, mingled with some props and *attrezzos* common his works : the monstrosity of the phallus, hypertrophy used as fetish by other *outsiders* as the decadent illustrator Berdley or the draftsman Nazario. It is easy to deduce King Kong functions as the alter ego of the artist, who frequently recognizes the profound influence in his work by the fact of living in New York. King Kong, besieged and trapped by the urban scope, losses control and destroys even what he loves (the Gagorian Gallery) until he is shut and killed. The rage and impotence, felt before such an insane and voracious society, fores the artists to reward him by representing the city under a rain of urine... Solmi's work is fresh and expresses through fantasy the defenceless feeling before the neurotic urban scope.

## Jean Charles Hue

*Quoi de neuf docteur?* 2003, 8 mn 30

Michto production

Maurice is a young traveller (Yénniche/Gypsy). He likes to tease his nieces and Chiara, the pit-bull bitch. Maurice is afraid of the police on motorbikes since he drives without a licence and is terrified of green monsters... He also likes to poach rabbits at night, but above all, Maurice likes life and life likes him. JCH