



The Western Front

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>Envelope-to: mail@sparwasserhq.de
>Date: Thu, 11 Sep 2003 12:39:56 -0700
>Subject: Re: "old habits die hard"
>Cc: admin@front.bc.ca
>To: Sparwasser HQ <mail@sparwasserhq.de>
>From: Jonathan Middleton - Exhibitions <exhibitions@front.bc.ca>
>
>Hi,
>
>Yes - we'd be happy to participate. Thank you. Is there any other
>information that I should pass on to the artist I ask to
>participate? (ie. exact exhibition dates, artist fees (?), anything
>else?)
>
>Thanks,
>
>
>Jonathan Middleton
>Director/Curator
>Western Front Exhibitions Programme
>exhibitions@front.bc.ca

The Western Front

>Founded in 1973, the Western Front is one of Canada's first
>artist-run centres, with an international reputation for its ongoing
>role as a laboratory for challenging and contemporary artistic
>practice and performance. Growing out of the commitment of its
>founders, the Western Front is dedicated to encouraging and
>promoting the role of the artist in determining the cultural
>ecology, to support research and development in contemporary
>artistic forms, and to create an interdisciplinary environment that
>sustains local, national and international artistic communities
>through presentations and exchange. The Western Front Society has
>five programs that focus on the production and presentation of
>exhibitions, performance art, new music, media including video,
>audio and telecommunications, publications, spoken word, and a
>bi-monthly arts magazine. Through a residency program, local,
>national and international artists are invited to create new works
>in this interdisciplinary environment.

“Mirror, mirror on the wall”

Nicole + Ryan

>Mirror, mirror on the wall was shot as part of a series of work that
>derived from a road trip taken by us from Vancouver down through to
>Tijuana. Much of the work performed looked to investigate states of
>anxiety and paranoia particular to post 9/11 America and was made
>manifest through our exploitation of the West coast landscape. Our
>primary point of reference for this video was a billboard work from
>1976-77 by Ed Ruscha entitled The Back of Hollywood (Hollywood
>Rear-View Mirror). The billboard was executed backwards so that it
>would only look 'right' when leaving L.A. Our video superficially
>adopts the Pop artist's billboard form to the effect of amplifying
>his lighthearted critique of Los Angeles and Hollywood to a position
>of critical ambivalence. In a sense we are attempting to
>rearticulate or up the ante of both Pop art's historical
>indifference and Hollywood cinema's obsession with endgame
>narratives to critical effect given the extraordinary sense of
>vulnerability felt by many people post 9/11. In Mirror, mirror on
>the wall the 'Hollywood' landscape shakes and one might conclude
>that it is the result of an earthquake (the area sits on the San
>Andreas fault line) or perhaps the heavy beating of an anxious
>viewer's heart. After a couple of minutes the viewer may syncopate
>to the regular beat of the landscape as produced by a popular house
>music track played in our rental car. This reading might be aided by
>the fact that our viewpoint can only be (easily) attained through
>driving and the image likely made in the side view mirror of the
>car. We look to disrupt Hollywood's incessant representation of it's
>own annihilation by never allowing the 'money shot' to occur. The
>landscape is continually destabilized by way of generic house beats
>in the looped video and affirmative redemption post 'annihilation'
>is postponed for the moment. The work also interested us in light of
>Hollywood cinema's seemingly dominant role in shaping
>culture/identity vis a vis Lacanian theories of subject formation.
>What does one see when the mirror comes loose from the wall? Our
>position as emerging artists in Vancouver is also not lost on us
>with the side-view mirror used to re-examine Pop strategies and the
>work positioned in a dialectical relationship with Jeff Wall's
>landscape manual.
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