



## **TORONTO INTERNATIONAL ART FAIR**

### **SPECIAL INTERNATIONAL VIDEO PROJECT AT CANADA'S ART FAIR.**

**Art Toronto 2008, the 9<sup>th</sup> annual Toronto International Art Fair  
October 2<sup>nd</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> 2008  
Metro Toronto Convention Center, Toronto, Ontario. Canada.**

#### **For immediate release:**

**Invisible Cities:** Curated by Micaela Giovannotti, this video exhibition entitled "Invisible Cities" is inspired by the book of the same name by Italian novelist Italo Calvino. The book is a collection of short stories following the travels of young Marco Polo and is rich in its description of the cities he visited during his journey to the old emperor Kublais Khan. Calvino explores this theme of cities in a dialogue format: cities and memory, cities and desire, cities and design, trading cities, hidden cities, destroyed cities and rebuilt ones.

Working with the themes and notions found in the book, Ms. Giovannotti has incorporated a selection of videos by international artists into three projections in which she explores the contrasts between an urban landscape and the utopian realm. Visitors will witness memories and experience on one hand and the virtual or digital alternatives on the other, resulting in a critical dissection of current urban societies in a global community.

Curator Micaela Giovannotti currently lives in New York but travels and works globally with recent exhibits and projects in New York, Miami and Prague.

The Toronto International Art Fair is Canada's premier art fair for modern and contemporary art and brings together over 100 international galleries underlined with a current and dynamic cultural program of speakers and special projects.

For more information: [www.tiafair.com](http://www.tiafair.com)

## Invisible Cities - Participating Artist Statements:

### A selection of the Participating Artists and their Statements:

Douglas Gordon *Bootleg (Empire)*, 1998  
Courtesy of the Artist and Gagosian Gallery

"I did a version of Empire, which was called Bootleg Empire, it is almost like the amateur version of the auteur masterpiece - it's very shakily done. I lived in Berlin for a while and I went to see Warhol's Empire and I thought 'I may never get to see this again', so I filmed it for an hour went to the pub and then came back and filmed it for the last hour. So mine only lasts for two hours - so it's like 'the best of' or something. But quite often my version is seen with his films in exhibitions, which is kind of funny as mine is slightly more dramatic as it is shaky and there are shadows of people walking in front of the camera"[1] -Douglas Gordon

[1] Wainwright, Jean. "Talking Art: Interviews with Artists since 1976". Dec/Jan 02-03 / No 262, pp1-4.  
<http://www.artmonthly.co.uk/jean.htm>

Mark Lewis *Children's Games, Heygate Estate*, 2002  
Courtesy of the Artist and Monte Clark Gallery Vancouver/Toronto

In *Children's Games, Heygate Estate*, Lewis moves the camera through elevated walkways of a 1960s social housing project in London. Lewis has hired children to play games throughout the site creating a "near-document" of what this environment would look like today if this socialist model had not failed. Instead, the housing project is now the site of crime and drug abuse and is not safe for children to be playing games outdoors.

Stefano Cagol *The flu ID*, 2006  
Courtesy Priska C. Juschka Fine Art, New York

Stefano Cagol focuses his lens on an underground cross-roads of modern Tokyo where distracted pedestrians flow at different speeds as an audio narration from the *Invisible Cities* book, taken from the *Isidora* chapter, engenders anxiety and confusion. Every individual is anonymously portrayed in a completely aseptic non-place, intensely focused on a mundane, routine journey.

Rob Carter *This England?*, 2007-2008  
Courtesy of the Artist

Inspired by the book *From the Pilot's Seat, This England?* stop-motion and digital animation contains a nostalgic series of aerial photographs of England taken just after the end of World War II, along with poetic quotes chosen by author Cyril Murrell. Partially an odd glimpse of the destruction and bankruptcy of the country at that time, the video mainly focuses on the romance of its historic and natural riches and the artist's comprehension and memory of his 'homeland'.

Minouk Lim *New Town Ghost*, 2005  
Courtesy of the Artist

Like a contemporary minstrel, a rapper screams her protesting poetry on an open truck driving around streets of urbanized and gentrified Yeongdeungpo, an area in Seoul. Through this visceral song, Minouk Lim comments on Korean modernization process and all the ghosts that left behind..

Tadashi Moriyama *Flight Home*, 2006  
Courtesy the Artist and Bonellicontemporary, Los Angeles

*Flight Home* is a journey hovering between inner and outer worlds inspired by a 13-hour flight back home. While the body is still and the airplane is flying hundreds miles per hour, the imagination wanders through storyboards of virtually generated cityscape and reality seen through a computer screen. The work is also homage to Walter Benjamin's *the Arcades Project* and Stanley Kubrick's 2001 *A Space Odyssey*.

Jakub Nepras *TRIP*, 2008  
Courtesy Vernon Projekt, Prague

In the animated video of Czech artist Jakub Nepras, a city resembles a complex assembly line. Elements from our contemporary hi-tech urban experience as keyboard parts, microchips and sound amplifiers depict an alienated cityscape.

Cheryl Pagurek *Passage*, 2007  
Courtesy of Patrick Mikhail Gallery, Ottawa

Passage evokes several layers of time and place through video imagery and sound. Its ephemeral quality evokes the 'present-ness' of the disappearing past, referencing the artist's familial history through archival film footage. Present-day video footage follows richly coloured light and shadow patterns appearing around Pagurek's house and outside on her street throughout the course of the day, meanwhile, black and white archival film footage provides fleeting glimpses of Jewish life during the early part of the last century.

Kelly Richardson *Ferman Drive*, 2005  
Courtesy Birch Libralato, Toronto

*Ferman Drive* is a simple tracking shot, taken from the window of a car easing down the gentle slope of an archetypal suburban street. Almost nothing remarkable happens until the very end, at which point the video turns from documentary to magic realism: blurring fact and fiction, memory and documentary - leaving us uncertain how to 'believe our eyes'. Loaded with double-meanings, it is impossible to read the work as plausible without seeing it as preposterous, to read it as playful and absurd without seeing it as macabre.

Corin Sworn *The Atmosphere of an Architecture*, 2006  
Courtesy of Blanket Contemporary Art, Vancouver

*The Atmosphere of an Architecture* (2006) arises out of testimonies gathered on the Internet from security guards working at the Toronto Dominion Towers, the last buildings that Mies Van der Rohe worked on during his lifetime. While a narrating voice describes inexplicable hauntings that guards on patrol have experienced, the camera follows a security guard's regular night route through vast office layouts, devoid of human beings, while some papers rustle as if a wind has passed through, perhaps a pencil drops to the floor, or we pass a drawer left open in an otherwise tidy desk. The presence of ghosts, their trespassing, is only suggested but an ominous sense of order's undoing permeates throughout.

Mariana Vassileva, *Journal, 1990-2005*  
Courtesy of DNA, Berlin

I feel, therefore I am. In this regard, the skin acts as the frontier between the individual and our surroundings. Touch confirms our existence. "Through sight, through touch, through sympathy, through work in general we are with the others. All relationships are transitive. I touch an object and I see another person, but I am not that person. I am completely alone" – extracted from the book *The Time and the Other* by Emmanuel Levinas.

In the video "journal" I feel my way past various locations led by a different destination. I am both adult and child at the same time. This is a method not just of feeling, but also transforming the contour of the self. Our skin is a border crossing.

Julia Willms *Revision*, 2007  
Courtesy of GAM | Obrist Gingold Galerie, Essen

*Revision* (2007) addresses the difference between the acts of seeing and perceiving. There is a triangle relationship between the urban public space, a private interior and a natural environment, with no clear distinction between their borderlines. Urban architecture behaves much like a natural force, with rooms being flooded by pulsing red lights, street lamps providing sunshine and facades or entire interiors slowly melting away into exteriors.