

Victoria Miro Gallery

Press Release

Doug Aitken: I don't exist

18 October to 6 December 2003

I don't exist, Doug Aitken's first solo show in the UK since exhibiting at the **Serpentine Gallery** in 2001 features the London premiere of the video installation *interiors*, lightboxes from Aitken's *plateau* trilogy and a radical new photographic sculpture.

The artist has said of *interiors*, " *I wanted to make a series of stories all set in different locations throughout the world, from scenes in Tokyo high-rises to vast helicopter factories, or ghetto streets. In each location we follow an individual, each person very disparate and isolated in their separate environments, but at a certain fleeting moment their stories begin to collide into a single collective synchronicity. Sound and image suddenly lock and merge, generating a momentary sense of order in the chaos. Through polyrhythmic moments the stories merge as one unified fast moving amplified "post-pop" moment. They then collide just as quickly and break apart again in their separate paths.*"

Viewers will navigate a cruciform structure of translucent screens on which four non-linear stories are projected on a loop, three at a time on three screens, the segments moving in clockwise fashion and creating a 360 degree experience. Scenes are endlessly introduced in changing order, emphasising the fractured narrative and creating a grey area between repetition and individuality. In each case the isolated and very particular inner life of each protagonist - a young woman playing handball, a man rapping to himself in the streets of LA (André Benjamin from Outkast), a technician tap dancing in a helicopter factory and a Japanese auctioneer rapid-firing words in a trance like state - is set against the cold post modern wastelands and faceless features of the built urban environment. The disparate filmic narratives and scenes are eventually unified through a fusion of visuals and sound.

The lightboxes forming the *plateau* series present three futuristic versions of a sprawling fictional metropolis where identity is lost in a barrage of corporate branding. Human presence has been eradicated and we are left only with birds who are the sole nomadic messengers and squatters in a meta-civilisation. Constructed entirely out of packaging from four of the world's foremost and instantly recognizable logos – FedEx, IBM, Macintosh and Coca Cola – the buildings depicted present disorientating and impossible perspectives, a labyrinthine and fragmentary space without clear definition, where structures move in an endless grid-like formation. The new photographic work - a perspex construction in space - acts as an anchor for the show, solidifying in sculptural form Aitken's views on the fragmentary nature of perception.

Based in Los Angeles and working in film, video installation, photography, sound and also the written word, Aitken came to prominence at the 48th *Venice Biennale* in 1999 where he won the *International Prize* for the much lauded video installation *electric earth*. Since then his work has been seen in major solo exhibitions at institutions as diverse as the **Wiener Secession**, **Kunst Museum Wolfsburg**, the **Serpentine Gallery**, the **Louisiana Museum**, Humlebaek, **Tokyo Opera City Gallery**, **The Fabric Museum and Workshop**, Philadelphia, **Kunsthau Bregenz**, the **Fondazione Sandretto Re Rebaudengo**, Turin and **Kunsthalle Zürich**. A solo presentation will inaugurate **The National Gallery of Victoria**, Melbourne later this year.

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