



■ The Killing Machine and other Stories. JANET CARDIFF + GEORGE BURES MILLER

Opening: 1 February 2007, 7.30 p.m.

Exhibition dates: 2 February to 1 May 2007

Curator: Bartomeu Marí

Coproduced by: Museu d'Art Contemporani de Barcelona (MACBA),
Institut Mathildenhöhe (Darmstadt, Germany)

Since the early nineties Janet Cardiff (Brussels, Ontario, Canada, 1957) and George Bures Miller (Vegreville, Canada, 1960) have been working together on works in which they use sound and voice as raw material and main subject. Through techniques of edition and reproduction of binaural sound and the use of earphones and loudspeaker systems these works can be characterised as authentic sound sculptures.

These installations become temporal units of experience, in narrations that combine fictional stories and sound effects and question the visitor's sensory experience, opposing the sense of hearing with the sense of sight. The sculptural space is therefore transformed into a phantasmagorical or hallucinatory one where apparently contradictory cultural traditions coincide at a specific place and time. The spectator is looking at works that are difficult to classify, since they propose a collage that brings together forms of high culture such as opera, art films or literature with popular culture, B-movies, rock'n'roll or radio broadcasts.

This exhibition contains a total of ten installations that weave a fabric of independent but complementary experiences. Each work imposes a time and a rhythm of its own, and like a play is linked to the imaginative capacity of each individual, which gives rise to a host of readings. This very high reading visuality brings Cardiff and Miller's work close to literature by generating a script which can be read or interpreted according to the eye or ear of each reader-spectator. This produces stories that live side by side in time and transport the visitor to superimposed fictions: of the museum and of the works.

The installation that gives its name to the exhibition, ***The Killing Machine*** (2007), which is being shown to the public for the first time, is indeed based on a literary work: *In The Penal Colony* by Franz Kafka. It reflects on the death sentence which is in force in the United States. If on the one hand it seems to invite the spectator to approach it, on the other it arouses a feeling of rejection.

Imbalance. 6 (Jump) (1998) by Georges Bures Miller develops his interest in mechanics, the body, movement and gravity. The work consists of a television suspended from the ceiling by a cable. On the screen there is a close-up of the artist's feet as he jumps, so when the movement of the feet comes to rest on the ground the television, like a bouncing effect and through the impulse of two tyres, rises, producing a deceptive perception.

The Dark Pool (1995) is an installation in which an apparently chaotic stage set with different objects, carpets, tables and technical apparatus lit only by bulbs hanging from the ceiling allow the spectator, by his own movement, to activate sensors that emit sounds, scraps of dialogue and voices. The apparently incongruous work gives a glimpse of an elaborate metanarration that questions the notion of experience and places it between recollection of past events and confusions and associations of consciousness; in a very similar way to how Jorge Luis Borges recalls and creates mythological *places* and environments to travel through time.

In ***Playhouse*** (1997) the spectator is in a box that gives onto an architectural model of an opera house. The sound blends with a video of an opera singer to combine mystery, drama, suspense and the experience of a possible, but eventually frustrated, lovers' meeting. This failed journey is guided by Cardiff who, in a sensual voice, leads the spectator through her own apartment, inviting him to penetrate a small, private space. It is at that moment that a video of a corpulent soprano singing begins. Suddenly the visitor realises that he is not a spectator, but that the real space has subtly become a fictional one where he is just one more character.

The spectator also meddles in ***Telephone / Time*** (2004) when over a telephone, like an eavesdropper, he hears a conversation between Cardiff and a scientist about the notion of time. The narrative force of the work does not rely on the information contained in the conversation but on the fact that it is exhibited and loses its essentially private nature.

In ***The Paradise Institute*** (2001), produced for the Canadian Pavilion at the 2001 Venice Biennale, the artists delve into the work of perception and immersion of the spectator in the work. Here he is taken into a fictitious cinema with two rows of seats. From there he has a bird's eye view of a model of a large picture palace. When he puts on the earphones the showing begins. An imaginary audience is superimposed on the soundtrack of the film. The film shown is a mixture of genres: thriller, crime, science fiction and experimental cinema. Fiction and reality mingle when immersion in the film ends and other realities come into play.

Vision and sound are once again the central elements of ***Night Canoeing*** (2004). Both sound and image belong to a journey in a canoe made by the artists themselves. The atmosphere of the journey, made on a freezing winter night, with the sound of the paddles and Cardiff and Miller's occasional comments, capture the spectator and arouse a feeling of intrigue and danger which transforms the visual and auditory perception into a whole experience that mingles the visible and the imagined.

Continuing with the travel experience, the spectator can follow Bures Miller's grandfather's steps on a journey from Canada to New York in **Road Trip** (2005). Using slides of empty landscapes, the artists trace the route grandfather has taken. The slide projection goes forwards and backwards according to the artists' comments about what their order should be to correspond to the peregrination.

Opera for a Small Room (2005) is based on the –real or fictitious– figure of R. Dennehy, a collector of opera records who lived or lives in Salmon Arm. Cardiff and Miller bought his record collection, all signed by the enigmatic collector, and recreate a fiction based on a particular obsession: collecting. The work shows the room where R. Dennehy would have listened to his records. A room the spectator cannot enter, but through a system of record players, lights, loudspeakers and sound effects he is allowed to take part in the drama of an obsession and the possible hypotheses of its denouement.

Forty Part Motet (2001) translates into space the experience of a 16th century choral piece –*Spem in Alium* by Thomas Tallis, composed in 1575– sung by forty voices. The Capella dels Àngels –a similar space to the one for which the motet was conceived– is organised in eight groups of five voices –as indicated in Tallis' composition– and each group contains four male voices (bass, baritone, alto and tenor) and a boy's voice (soprano). Each voice is broadcast over a loudspeaker that has been "humanised" to allow the spectator to feel the physical presence of each singer.

For further information and/or graphic material:

Press and PR Office of the MACBA Plaça dels Àngels, 1 - 08001 Barcelona
Tel. 93 481 33 56 / 92 481 47 17 - fax 93 412 46 02 - e-mail: press@macba.es

Janet Cardiff

1957 geboren/born in Brussels, Ontario, Kanada/Canada
lebt und arbeitet/lives and works in Berlin

George Bures Miller

1960 geboren/born in Vegreville, Kanada/Canada
lebt und arbeitet/lives and works in Berlin

Einzelausstellungen / Solo Exhibitions (Auswahl/Selection)

- 2007** Institut Mathildenhöhe Darmstadt, Darmstadt
Macba, Barcelona
- 2006** Louisiana Museum, Humlebaek
Audiowalk, Jena Cospeda
Sublime embrace, Art Gallery of Hamilton, Hamilton, Ontario
Berlin Files, daadgalerie, Berlin
Forty Part Motet, Cobra Museum, Amstelveen
Ghost Machine, Videowalk, Hebbel am Ufer, Berlin
- 2005** Directions: Words Drawn in Water, Hirshhorn Museum, Washington (Cardiff)
Cardiff and Miller: Feedback and Hill Climbing, Power House Memphis, Memphis
Pandemonium, Eastern State Penitentiary Historic Site, Philadelphia
Ghost Machine, Videowalk, Hebbel am Ufer, Berlin
Kunsthaus Bregenz, Bregenz
- 2004** Cardiff and Miller: Road Trip, Galerie Barbara Weiss, Berlin
Her Long Black Hair, Audio Walk, Central Park, präsentiert von/presented by Public Art Fund, New York (Cardiff)
Janet Cardiff: Walking Thru', Thyssen-Bornemisza Art Contemporary T BA 21, Wien/Vienna (Cardiff)
Cardiff and Miller, Luhring Augustine Gallery, New York
Recent Work, Sheffield Millennium Galleries, Sheffield
Laura: A Web Project, Vancouver Art Gallery, Vancouver (Cardiff)
- 2003** The Berlin Files, Portikus, Frankfurt/Main
Janet Cardiff and George Bures Miller, Whitechapel Art Gallery, London
Janet Cardiff and George Bures Miller, Astrup Fearnley Museum of Modern Art, Oslo
(Katalog/Catalogue)
The Forty-Part Motet, Pori art museum, Pori, Finnland/Finland (Cardiff)
The Paradise Institute and other works by Janet Cardiff and George Bures Miller, Walter Phillips Gallery, Banff
- 2002** The Paradise Institute, The Power Plant Gallery, Toronto; The National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa;
Luhring Augustine Gallery, New York
Janet Cardiff and George Bures Miller, Hamburger Bahnhof, Berlin
Hautnah. Die Sammlung Goetz, Museum Villa Stuck, München/Munich (Katalog/Catalogue)
- 2001** The Paradise Institute, Kanadischer Pavillon/The Canadian Pavilion, 49. Biennale, Venedig/ Venice
(Katalog/Catalogue)
Janet Cardiff: A Survey of Works Including Collaborations with George Bures Miller, P.S.1
Contemporary Art Center, Museum of Modern Art Affiliate, New York; Musée d'art contemporain de
Montréal, Montreal (2002); Palazzo delle Esposizioni, Rom/Rome (2002/03); Castello di Rivoli, Turin
(2003) (Katalog/Catalogue, hg. von/ed. by Carolyn Christov-Bakargiev)
The Forty-Part Motet, The National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa; Salisbury Cathedral, as part of the
Salisbury Festival; BALTIC Gateshead, P.S.1 Contemporary Art Center, New York
The Muriel Lake Incident, Southern Alberta Art Gallery, Alberta

- 2000** Kunstraum München/Munich
A Large Slow River, Oakville Galleries, Oakville (Cardiff)
- 1999** The Missing Voice (Cased Study B), Whitechapel Library, organisiert von/organized by Artangel, London (Cardiff) (Katalog/Catalogue)
- 1997** „The Empty Room, Raum Aktueller Kunst, Wien/Vienna
The Dark Pool, Morris-Healy Gallery, New York
Playhouse, Galerie Barbara Weiss, Berlin (Cardiff)
- 1996** Janet Cardiff: To Touch, Gallery Optica, Montreal (Cardiff)
- 1995** The Dark Pool. Janet Cardiff and George Bures Miller, Walther Pillips Gallery, Banff (Katalog/Catalogue)

**Gruppenausstellungen/Group Exhibitions
(Auswahl/Selection)**

- 2007** Guggenheim Museum, New York
Bangkok International Art Festival, Art Center Bangkok, Bangkok
- 2006** *Touch My Shadows. New media works from the Goetz Collection*, The Centre for Contemporary Art, Warsaw
Sensorium, MIT List Visual Arts Center, Cambridge, Massachusetts
Anstoss Berlin – Kunst macht Welt, Haus am Waldsee, Berlin
Sonambiente Berlin 2006, Akademie der Künste und Berliner Festspiele, Berlin
Insight-Out, Wanas Foundation, Knislinge
Constructing New Berlin, Phoenix Art Museum, Phoenix, Arizona
Sonic Presence, Kunsthall Bergen, Bergen
Crowds/Conversations/Confessions, Art Gallery of Alberta, Edmonton, Alberta (Miller)
raconte-moi - tell me, Casino Luxembourg – Forum d'art contemporain, Luxemburg
Doku.Arts, Internationales Festival für Filme und Künste, Akademie der Künste Berlin, Berlin
Almost Cinema, Kunstzentrum Vooruit, Gent
Defining the Contemporary, The Whitechapel Auction, Whitechapel Gallery, London
The Invisible Show, Museo de Arte Contemporánea de Vigo, Vigo
- 2005** *raconte-moi - tell me*, Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec, Québec
guardini percezione del video, Palazzo delle Papesse, Siena
Manchmal weiss ich nicht, ob ich etwas wirklich erlebt oder ob ich es in einem Film gesehen habe.
30 Videoarbeiten aus der Sammlung Goetz, München, Seedamm Kulturzentrum, Paffikon
Almost, Robert Miller Gallery, New York
Avance rápido – Fast Forward. Media Art de la Colección Goetz, Centro Cultural Conde Duque, Madrid (Katalog/Catalogue)
Faces in the Crowd, Whitechapel Gallery, London; Castello di Rivoli – Museo d'Arte Contemporanea, Turin
Documentary Creations, Kunstmuseum Luzern/Lucerne (Katalog/Catalogue)
Yokohama Triennale of Contemporary Art
- 2004** 1st International Biennale Lodz, (House Burning), Lodz
Modus Operandi, Thyssen-Bornemisza Art Contemporary T BA 21, Wien/Vienna
**Die Zehn Gebote – The Ten Commandments*, Deutsches Hygiene-Museum, Dresden (Cardiff) (Katalog/Catalogue, hg. von Klaus Biesenbach)
The Future Has a Silver Lining: Genealogies of Glamour, Migros Museum für Gegenwartskunst, Zürich/Zurich (Katalog/Catalogue, hg. von/ed. by Tom Holert, Heike Munder)
The Forty Part Motet, Power Plant Art Gallery, Toronto (Cardiff)
Everything Is Connected, Astrup Fearnley Museum of Modern Art, Oslo
Videodreams: Zwischen Cinematischem und theatralischem, Kunsthaus Graz (Katalog/Catalogue, hg. von/ed. by Peter Pakesch)
- 2003** The 47th Corcoran Biennial, Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington
Somewhere Better Than This Place, The Contemporary Arts Centre, Cincinnati, Ohio (Cardiff)
Uneasy Space – Interactions with Twelve Artists, Site SantaFe, New Mexico
Performative Installation #1, Gegeben sind... Konstruktion und Situation, Galerie im Taxispalais, Innsbruck

- Fast Forward. Media Art Sammlung Goetz, Zentrum für Kunst und Medientechnologie, Karlsruhe (Katalog/Catalogue, hg. von/ed. by Ingvild Goetz, Stephan Urbaschek)
 Love Planet, Benese Corporation, Okayama, Japan
 On Stage, Kunstverein Hannover, Hannover
 Biennale Bern, Bern (Cardiff)
 Octobre en Normandie, Rouen (Cardiff)
 Brightness – works from the Thyssen-Bornemisza Contemporary Art Foundation, Museum of Modern Art Dubrovnik (Katalog/Catalogue)
- 2002** Walk Ways, Portland Institute of Contemporary Art, Portland, Oregon, organisiert von/organized by Independent Curators International, New York; Western Gallery, Western Washington University, Bellingham; Dalhousie University Art Gallery, Halifax, Nova Scotia; Freedman Gallery, Albright College Center for The Arts, Reading, Pennsylvania (Katalog/Catalogue)
 Future Cinema, Zentrum für Kunst und Medientechnologie ZKM, Karlsruhe
 (The World May Be) Fantastic, Biennale of Sydney 2002, International Festival of Contemporary Art Fantasy Underfoot, The 47th Corcoran Biennial, Washington, DC
 Sphere, Sir John Soane's Museum, London
 Do you know those moments, Astrup Fearnley Museum of Modern Art, Oslo (Katalog/Catalogue)
- 2001** Museum unserer Wünsche, Museum Ludwig, Köln/Cologne (Katalog/Catalogue)
 100 Wishes, Museum Ludwig, Köln/Cologne
 TRANS Editions, Chac Mool Gallery, West Hollywood
 9e Biennale d'Image en Mouvement 2001, Musée d'art moderne et contemporain, Centre pour l'image contemporaine Saint-Geneve, Genf/Geneva
 010101: Art in Technological Times, San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, San Francisco
 Elusive Paradise: The Millenium Prize, National Gallery of Canada, Musée des Beaux-Arts du Canada, Ottawa; Salisbury Cathedral Cloisters, Salisbury; Baltic Centre for Contemporary Art, Gateshead, NOW Festival, Nottingham; The New Art Gallery, Walsall (Cardiff) (Katalog/Catalogue)
 Black Box – The Dark Room in Art, Kunstmuseum Bern, Bern
- 2000** Mixing Memory and Desire – Wunsch und Erinnerung, Neues Kunstmuseum Luzern, Luzern/Lucerne (Katalog/Catalogue, hg. von/ed. by Ulrich Loock, Daniel Kurkakovic)
 Untitled (Sculpture), Luhring Augustine Gallery, New York
 Wonderland, The St. Louis Art Museum, St. Louis
 La Ville, le Jardin, la Mémoire – 1998, 2000, 1999, Villa Medici, Académie de France à Rome, Rom/Rome
 Tate Modern Opening, Tate Modern, London
 LIFE, After the Squirrel, Location One, New York
- 1999** Carnegie International 1999/2000, The Carnegie Museum of Art, Pittsburgh (Cardiff)
 The Passion and the Wave, 6th International Istanbul Biennial, Istanbul (Katalog/Catalogue)
 The Museum as Muse: Artists Reflect, The Museum of Modern Art, New York (Katalog/Catalogue, hg. von/ed. by Kynaston McShine)
 TALK. Show – Die Kunst der Kommunikation in den 90er Jahren, Von der Heydt-Museum, Wuppertal; Haus der Kunst, München/Munich (Katalog/Catalogue, hg. von/ed. by Susanne Meyer-Büser und Bernhart Schwenk)
 Divine Comedy, Fort Asperen, Netherlands
 Musiques en Scène, Musée d'Art Contemporain, Lyon
 Body and Sound, Musée Régional de Rimouski, Quebec
 Stumble, Trianon Gallery, Lethbridge, Alberta
- 1998** XXIV Bienal de Sao Paulo, Sao Paulo
 Voices, Witte de With, Rotterdam; Fundacio Joan Miro, Barcelona; Le Fresnoy, Tourcoing (1999) (Katalog/Catalogue, hg. von/ed. by Christopher Phillips)
 Beauty and the Banal, The Edmonton Art Gallery, Edmonton
 Wanås '98, The Wanås Foundation, Knislinge, Schweden/Sweden (Cardiff) (Katalog/Catalogue, hg. von/ed. by Marika und/and C. G. Wachtmeister)
 La Ville, le Jardin, la Mémoire, Académie de France à Villa Medici, Rom/Rome (Katalog/Catalogue hg. von/ed. by Laurence Bosse, Hans Ulrich Obrist, Carolyn Christov-Bakargiev)
- 1997** Skulptur: Projekte in Münster '97, Westfälisches Landesmuseum für Kunst und Kulturgeschichte, Münster (Katalog/Catalogue hg. von/ ed. by Klaus Bußmann, Kasper König)
 Present Tense: Nine Artists in the Nineties, San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, San Francisco (Catalogue/Katalog)
- 1996** Walking and Thinking and Walking a part of NowHere at Louisiana Museum of Modern Art, Humlebæk (Cardiff) (Katalog/Catalogue)
 Alberta Biennial for Contemporary Art, Edmonton Art Gallery, Edmonton; The Glenbow Museum, Calgary

1995

A Night at the Show, Zürich/Zurich
Think Big, Erindale College, Toronto
A Public Room, Cambridge Library and Art Gallery, Ontario; Whitby Arts Inc., Whitby, Ontario

1992

Intimacies, performance with Charles Cousins, Nelson Henricks , Jon Winet, organisiert
von/organized by The New Gallery, Calgary
Environment, The Photographers Gallery, Saskatoon