



**Street surveillance:** Can You Help? Sally Mannall creates her own mystery at the scene of a crime in busy London.

# Real-life images

By ANNE MARSH

**E**XPLORATIONS of "photography and the archive" have become commonplace in post-modern art. It's all about investigating the policing of society through photographs and the philosophical and political implications of such practices.

The argument goes something like this: Photography is steeped in ideology. Apart from the predatory action of the photographer, there is the commonsense acceptance of the photograph as a true record of reality.

Photographs of criminals and crimes, pictures of the insane and the homeless, anthropological photographs of "primitive" cultures and physiognomic studies of races, sexes and classes are all supposed to represent a "true" picture of reality, but they all depend on the construction of a "norm", and on who conforms to the "ideal" and who doesn't.

Elizabeth Gertsakis looks back to the photographic archive on animal and human locomotion created by Eadweard J Muybridge last century.

Muybridge plotted accurate physical movement by means of photographs taken against a white grid.

It was all very enlightening for the 19th-century audience because it

## REVIEW

### exhibitions

#### Idealism and Deformity

By: Elizabeth Gertsakis

Where and when: Irene Sutton Gallery, June 12

#### For Lack of Evidence

By: Sally Mannall

... we all fall down

By: Alex Rizkalla

Where and when: Both at the Australian Centre for Contemporary Art; until July 6

proved that the human eye is fallible. Despite the breakthrough in seeing, this scientific method has been discredited because it is seen to be part of the grand cataloguing system of the human sciences, driven by the same ideology which supports eugenics.

Gertsakis re-photographs Muybridge's pictures, juxtaposing the ideal body type with the deformed body.

These are then framed in the context of photographs taken from the artist's Greek family album. The result is a visual analysis of the insidious ideology behind the archive.

ALEX Rizkalla is seduced by the macabre and uncanny aspect of the medical archive. His slide installation consists of a bank of quirky projectors from the 1960s which shine images of women exercising upon a wall of enamel pots and pans.

This is juxtaposed with a gallery of photographs, glass vitrines and medical cabinets housing shiny surgical instruments, syringes, latex and prostheses of various sorts.

*FOR Lack of Evidence* approaches the issue of surveillance from a more contemporary perspective.

Sally Mannall takes rubbings of signs placed by the London police at the sites of violent crimes. Each sign describes an incident and calls for evidence from the public.

Mannall mixes and matches the signs to produce dense overlays of text which create abstract puzzles.

It's a kind of vigilante action which aestheticises evidence that does not exist, a sort of sinister poetry which enlivens debates on surveillance.