



Melbourne International Arts Festival

## Visual Arts Program 2005

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# Callum Morton

Catching up with Fantasy:  
the World of Callum Morton

Charlotte Day

In one of Callum Morton's early models, *The Heights* (1995/2004), a scaled-down section of a balcony from a generic block of flats was attached to the gallery wall at first-floor height. *The Heights* merged so seamlessly with its surroundings that the viewer could have been forgiven for overlooking it, just as it is common to overlook similar vernacular architectural forms and patterns designed to order and contain rather than stand out in the real world. Although presented as uninhabited, the constrained space of Morton's balcony highlighted the concept of habitation. It caused the viewer to consider architectural standards and the ways in which bodies may be required to fit into architecture, rather than vice versa. *The Heights* located the viewer on the outside, left wondering about the lives of those behind the balcony's closed doors – what it would be like to be on the inside.

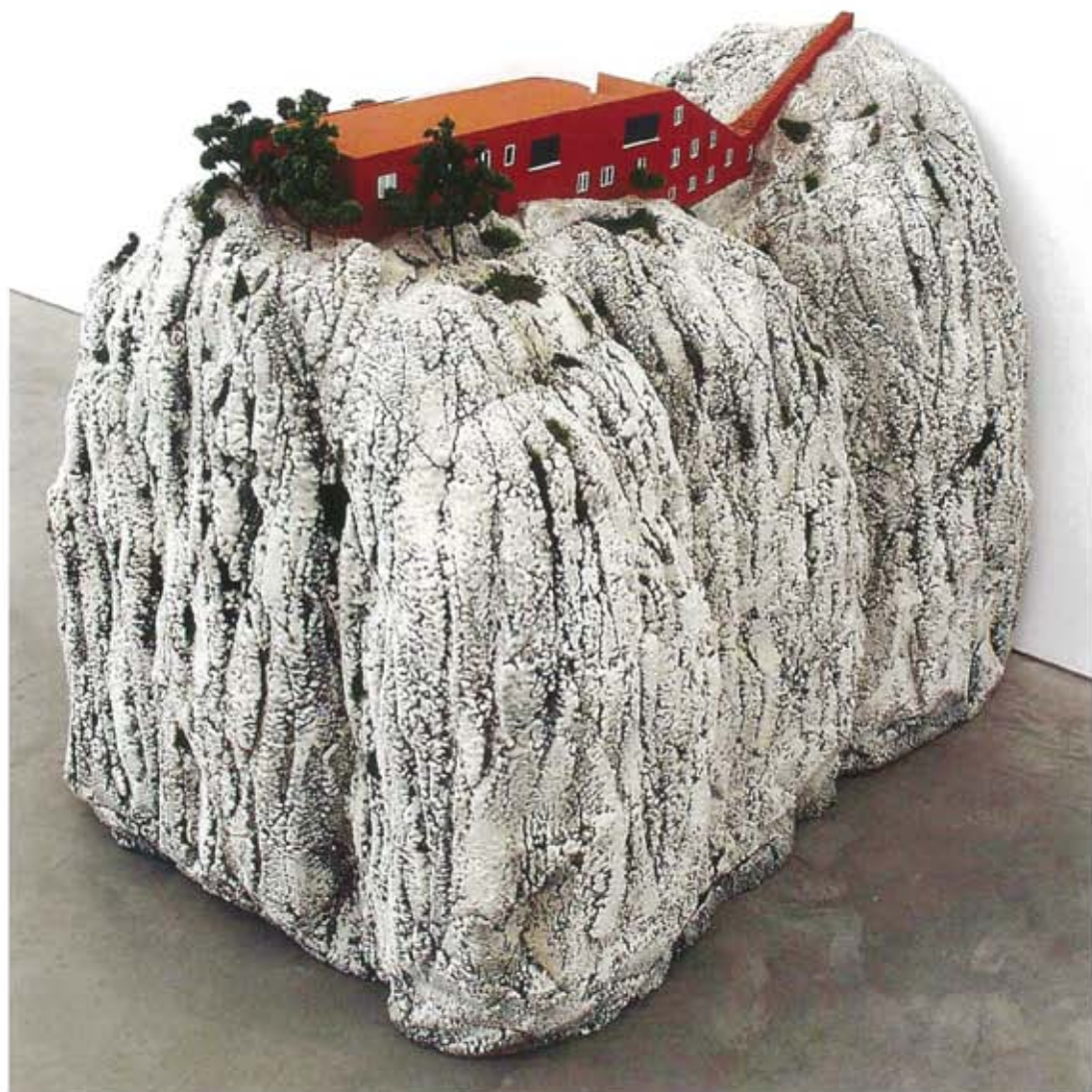
Morton has made scaled-down models of buildings of increasing specificity, including landmark modernist projects such as the United Nations headquarters in New York (*Untitled*, 2003) and Habitat in Montreal (*Habitat*, 2003), as well as a number of famous architect-designed houses. His models are pitted against their original, idealised designs and their official architectural histories are contrasted with real stories of habitation and the fate of buildings. Increasingly, the colours and sounds of life appear to be leaking from these buildings – through cracks in blinds, from under doorways, and through paper-thin walls – and are no longer able to be constrained by the architecture designed to contain them. Through these models, we become aware of a failed architect-client relationship (*International Style*, 1999); retreats that imprison rather than inspire (*Oh Brigitte*, 2001); and buildings that fail the test of time (*Gas and Fuel*, 2002).

As well as what goes on *within* architecture, Morton has looked at what happens to architectural concepts and designs out in the world, over time and across different

applications. In his ongoing print series that commenced with *Local+or General*, he shows designs as they are applied to the mass market, and ultimately franchised. These images draw a correlation between many of the principles championed by modernism for the good of society and the conditions that have resulted in the proliferation of commercial enterprise and business interests in our time. The images are both fantastical and compelling because of the fusion between original vision and new purpose, however great the philosophical divide might seem between them. For example, Mies van der Rohe's venerated Farnsworth House, a prototype of planar design and transparent living, is the perfect model for a 7-Eleven convenience store (*Farnshaven, Illinois*, 2001) while the formal concerns of the Rietveld House become neat and engaging detailing in a Toys "R" Us store (*Toys "R" Us, Utrecht*, 2001).

In *Local+or General* and the more recent print series including *Interbau Wow Wow*, utopian designs are related to the theming of buildings in order to draw attention/distract, entertain and regulate interaction. Morton's recent project, *Tomorrow Land*, for the 11th Triennale India (2005), provided the ideal opportunity to extrapolate the roots of this relationship between theme parks and architectural utopias using Le Corbusier's Chandigarh, near New Delhi. Like Walt Disney, Le Corbusier believed in the fantasy of building a perfect world for the inhabitants of his city (he based his city of the future on an idealised and romantic image of Punjabi village life)<sup>1</sup>. Like Le Corbusier, Disney believed that the world he created was in many respects more real than the 'fantasy world out there' where 'people had hatreds and prejudices'<sup>2</sup>. In a series of prints and a model, Morton presented Chandigarh as a film set, and its buildings were re-imagined as various worlds from Michael Crichton's futuristic film, *Westworld* (1973), which is in turn about a perfect world set in a theme park. In *Tomorrow Land* Morton articulates the difficulty in differentiating between real and

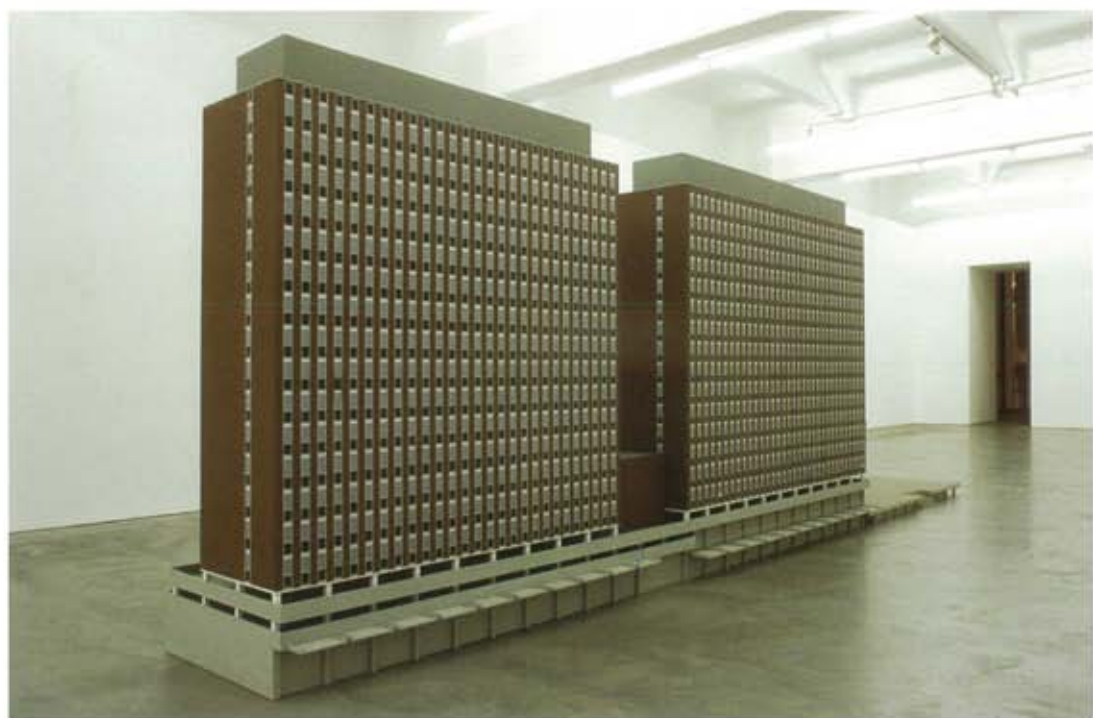




*Oh Brigitte* (2001), wood, perspex, polystyrene, high-impact polyurethane coating, metal, plastic, acrylic paint, light, sound. 120 x 170 x 120 cm. Collection of Anna and Morry Schwartz, Melbourne. Image courtesy the artist and Anna Schwartz Gallery (Melbourne). Photo: Robert Colvin



*Tomorrow Land* (2004), from the series *Tomorrow Land*, digital print, 94.5 x 170 cm, edition of 15. Image courtesy the artist and Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery (Sydney), Anna Schwartz Gallery (Melbourne), Gimpel Fils (London), Karyn Lovegrove Gallery (Los Angeles)



*Gas and Fuel* (2002), wood, acrylic, aluminium, synthetic polymer paint, light, sound, 220 x 91 x 600 cm. Corbett Lyon and Yueji Lyon Collection, Melbourne. Image courtesy the artist and Anna Schwartz Gallery (Melbourne). Photo: Robert Colvin



*Corridor* (2004)  
Photo: Callum Morton



# Fiona Tan

## Coming out by the Way of the Bow

Olivia Meehan

Fiona Tan's first encounter with Japan is marked by her video installation work, *Saint Sebastian*, in which she captures the beauty, tension and potency of a traditional Japanese coming-of-age ceremony. Each year the Toshiya archery contest takes place in the Sanjūsangen-dō temple in Kyoto and is held in conjunction with the occasion of *Seijin no hi*, Japan's national Coming-of-Age Day. The origins of the Toshiya contest date back to the Edo period (1600–1858), when samurai warriors competed by shooting arrows down the main hall of the temple to display their great skill in the tradition of *kyūdō* ('way of the bow'). Today the contest invites the finest young archers from all over Japan to enact a rite of passage through a practice that requires aptitude, patience and spiritual maturity.

Tan's decision to focus only on the initiation of female archers presents an intriguing contrast of ideas in both form and content; the elegant, graceful young women practising a characteristically masculine sport. The disparity is augmented by Tan's use of *cinéma vérité* – a technique derived from documentary filmmaking. Tan presents an 'outside' and an 'inside' view of the archers with the intention of getting at a 'hidden' truth; achieving this largely through the juxtaposition of scenes, images, natural sound and imposed soundtrack, and the deliberate omission of voice-over narrative. The framings remain close and tight throughout, never revealing the target and never venturing far beyond the waist of each archer.

The archers can be seen from behind, displaying the many folds of colourful traditional kimono; shiny black hair tied up and decorated with ornaments, the nape of the neck accentuated by the large gap between the collar of the kimono and the body. One is left begging to see the face of a woman; even a glimpse would satisfy. Tan appears to be withholding a secret from her audience. The sequence plays over the murmur of an unseen crowd, which increases at a steady pace

until it sounds like a roar. And yet the young women do not waver, as each one takes her grip below the princess curve of a large bamboo bow, fluently drawing a feathered arrow and pausing only momentarily before letting go.

This 'outside' view of the young women is so tantalisingly close and yet so far off. Tan releases a degree of the tension by exposing an 'inside' view. The camera focuses on the face of a young woman long enough to stir curiosity and a sense of desire, yet not long enough for the viewer to locate it within the context of the archery competition. Tan concentrates on small details, slowing the motion for the blink of an eye, the slight biting of a lip, and the quiver of a feather against an archer's pale cheek. All of these 'inside' images are supplemented with a soundtrack that builds gradually from the small sound of a cricket to an omnipresent hum.

Fiona Tan's documentation of this ancient Japanese art does not attempt to transcend the inherent boundaries between Eastern and Western cultures. If anything, it maintains a distance and torments the outsider with a view of that which is unattainable – or so it seems.

The undercurrent of Tan's work can be accessed, in part, by way of its title, *Saint Sebastian*. Although Sebastian has had various embodiments throughout Western history – a plague saint in medieval times, a model of Apollonian beauty for artists of the Renaissance, a decadent androgynous figure to writers and artists of the late 19th century – he has long been recognised as an unofficial patron saint of homosexuals. Precisely how this role evolved may be related to details of Sebastian's life that ultimately led to his untimely death.

According to legend, Sebastian was a favourite of the Emperor Diocletian, who appointed him Captain of the Guard in the Imperial Roman Army.

of the day. Each woman is shown with a traditional attribute that corresponds to one of the poets. One woman is poised, towards the edge of the print, with a long bow tucked under her sleeve and a quiver of arrows strapped to her back. Given the same attribute as Diana, this woman does not become the same figure: she is strong and determined-looking, but she is also beguilingly feminine.

From *ukiyo-e* comes *manga*, from which the increasingly popular Japanese *anime* was developed. In the popular anime series *Inuyasha*, an adolescent girl named Kagome falls down a well at her local temple and goes back in time, arriving in ancient Japan. On the other side she discovers what she thinks is a young boy bound to a tree with arrows protruding from his chest. Coming closer to the tree she notices his ears; she cries, "Oh, wow. Like dog ears. I think I wanna touch them".<sup>4</sup> *Inuyasha* is half-human, half-demon, and can only be healed if Kagome shoots a magic arrow at his body which will release the spell cast upon him 500 years previously. He is resurrected by Kagome, his body still as young and virile as the day he was pierced with arrows.

Unlike depictions of other saints, with their white beards and long robes, Sebastian remains a fresh-faced young soldier on the brink of adulthood. It is the essence of this very moment that Tan captures in her work *Saint Sebastian*. Tan's images present a contrast of movement and stillness. This quality can also be found in traditional depictions of Sebastian. By way of exploring Sebastian's physicality, the essence of his story is told.

In his novel *A Wild Sheep Chase* Haruki Murakami devotes an entire chapter to the beauty of a young woman's ears. He writes, "She pulled a black hair band out of her handbag. Holding it between her lips, she pulled her hair back with both hands, gave it one full twist and swiftly tied it back. She was at one with her

ears, gliding down the oblique face of time like a protean beam of light. 'These are my ears in their unblocked state', she said. Then she hid those marvels of creation behind her hair again and returned to ordinariness."<sup>5</sup> It is precisely this level of detail that Tan achieves in her images, from an aesthetic and a cultural perspective. The spiritual and technical aspects of *kyūdō* are deeply rooted in Tao and Zen philosophy, constituting an indissoluble unity. According to Japanese tradition, the foundations of all *dō* disciplines can be applied to everyday life and are not limited to one single moment, such as releasing an arrow and hitting a target. Murakami's characters possess a degree of this understanding and exist in the world with what seem like special powers. Tan renders her archers in much the same way.

Sebastian faced his fear without resistance, and in effect the arrow aided his transcendence from ordinary to extraordinary. Tan's *Saint Sebastian* offers the opportunity to witness an act symbolising a particular transition that, in some cultures, goes unacknowledged, or occurs in private, small ways. In *Saint Sebastian* the occasion is unabashedly decorative, and yet at the same time pared down to an essence.

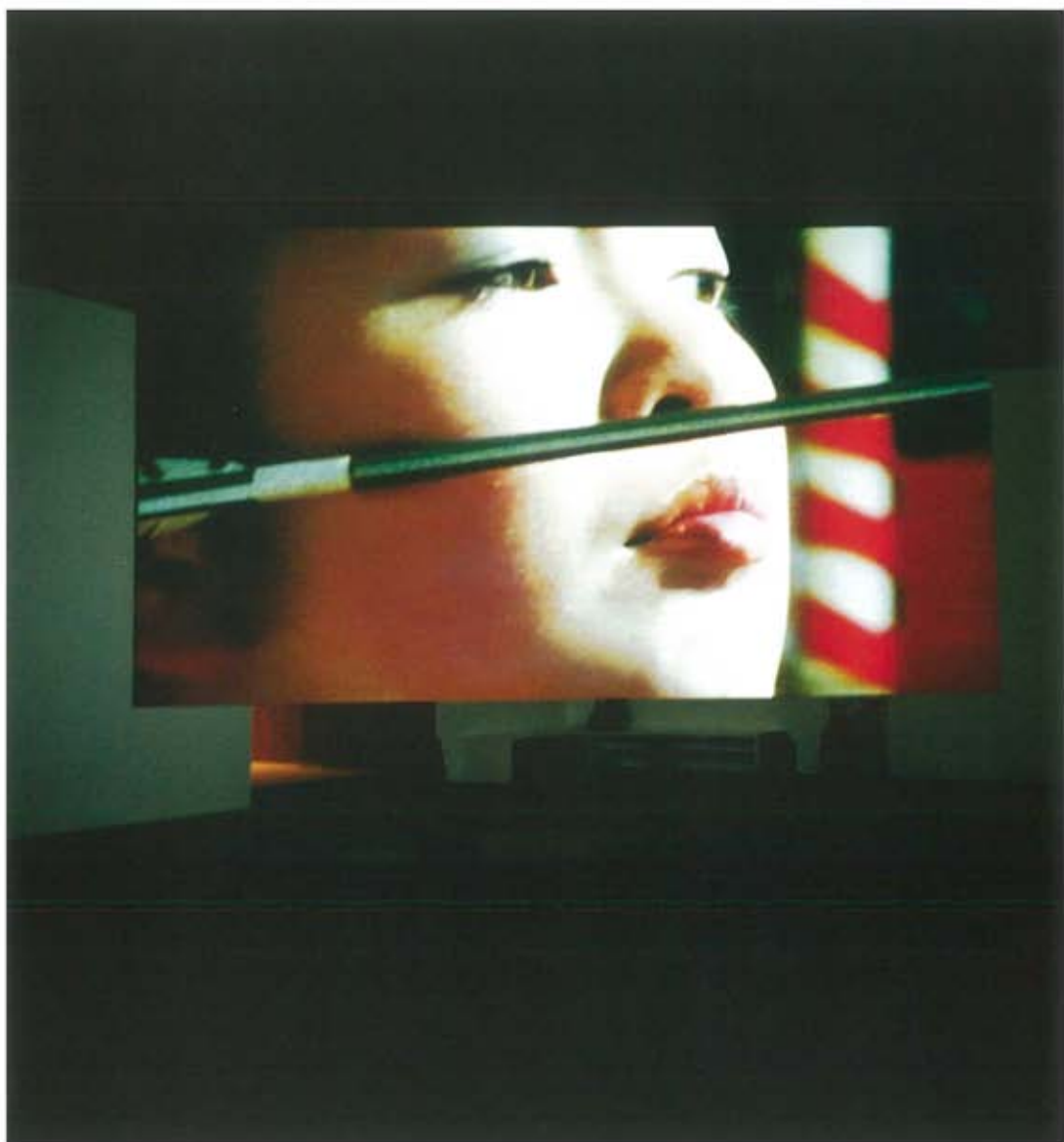
<sup>1</sup> Guido Reni, *Saint Sebastian*, c. 1615. Oil on Canvas, 1,300 x 990 mm. Pinacoteca Capitolina, Rome

<sup>2</sup> Richard E Spear, *The 'Divine' Guido – Religion, Sex, Money and Art in the World of Guido Reni*. London/New Haven, Yale University Press, 1997, pp. 67–76

<sup>3</sup> Kitagawa Utamaro, *A Travesty of the 'Six Poets'*, c. 1790, published by Tsutaya Jusaburo. Woodblock (dipych print), 367 x 239 mm each

<sup>4</sup> Rumiko Takahashi, *Inuyasha* Vol. 1, Yumiri TV, 2000

<sup>5</sup> Haruki Murakami, *A Wild Sheep Chase*, translated by Alfred Birnbaum. London, Vintage Press, 2003, pp. 37–38



*Saint Sebastian* (2001), video installation.  
Courtesy the artist and Frith Street Gallery (London).  
Photo: Fiona Tan



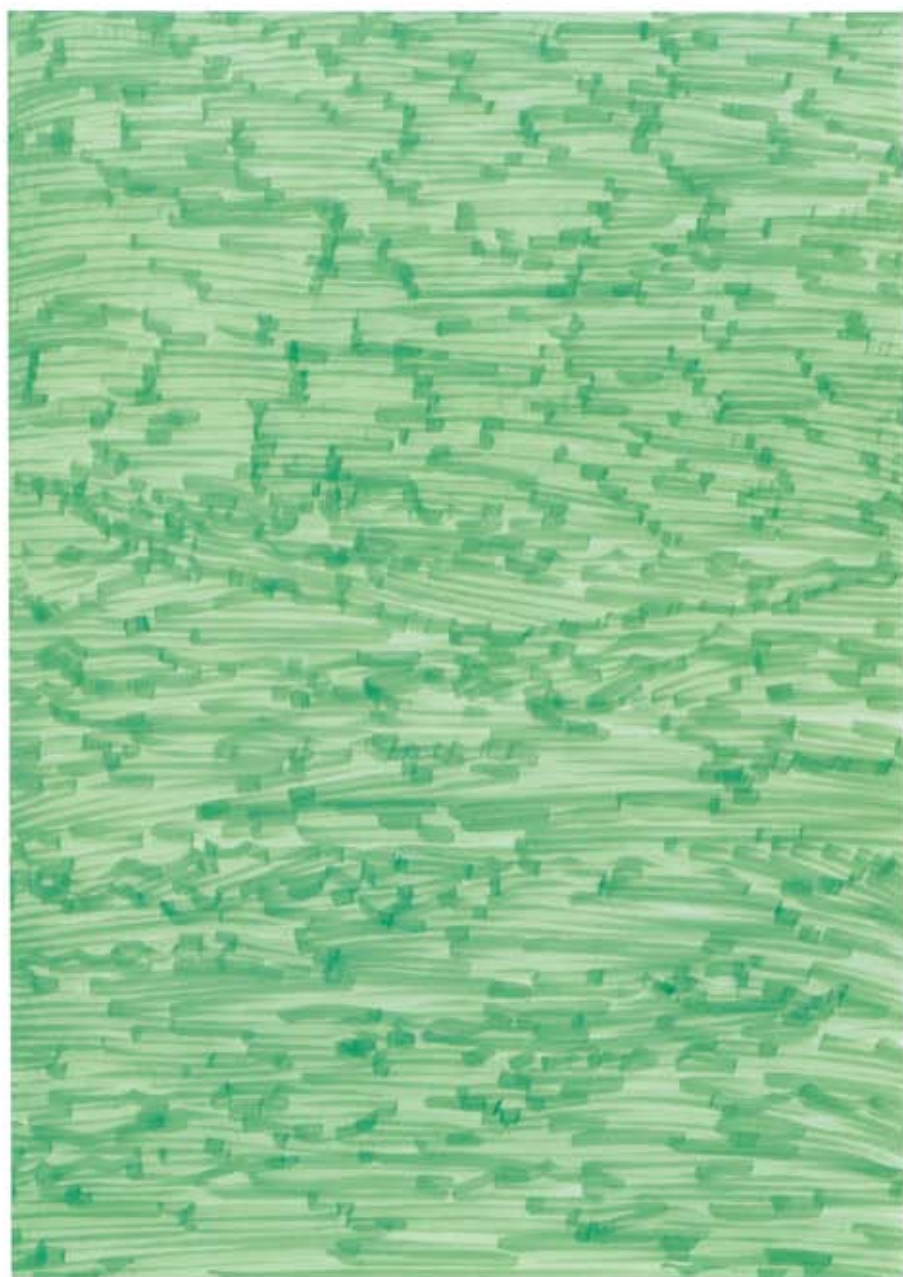
Still from *Saint Sebastian* (2001), video installation.  
Courtesy the artist and Frith Street Gallery (London).

Martin Creed





*Work No. 447* (2005), marker pen on paper, 29.7 x 21 cm.  
Courtesy the artist and Hauser & Wirth Zürich London.  
Photo: Jon Etter, Zürich



**Work No. 459** (2005), highlighter pen on paper, 29.7 x 21 cm.  
Courtesy the artist and Hauser & Wirth Zürich London.  
Photo: Barbara Gemy, Zürich



I don't know what I want to say, but, to try to say something, I think I want to try to think. I want to try to see what I think. I think trying is a big part of it, I think thinking is a big part of it, and I think wanting is a big part of it, but saying it is difficult, and I find saying trying and nearly always wanting. I want what I want to say to go without saying.

Martin Creed, 2001

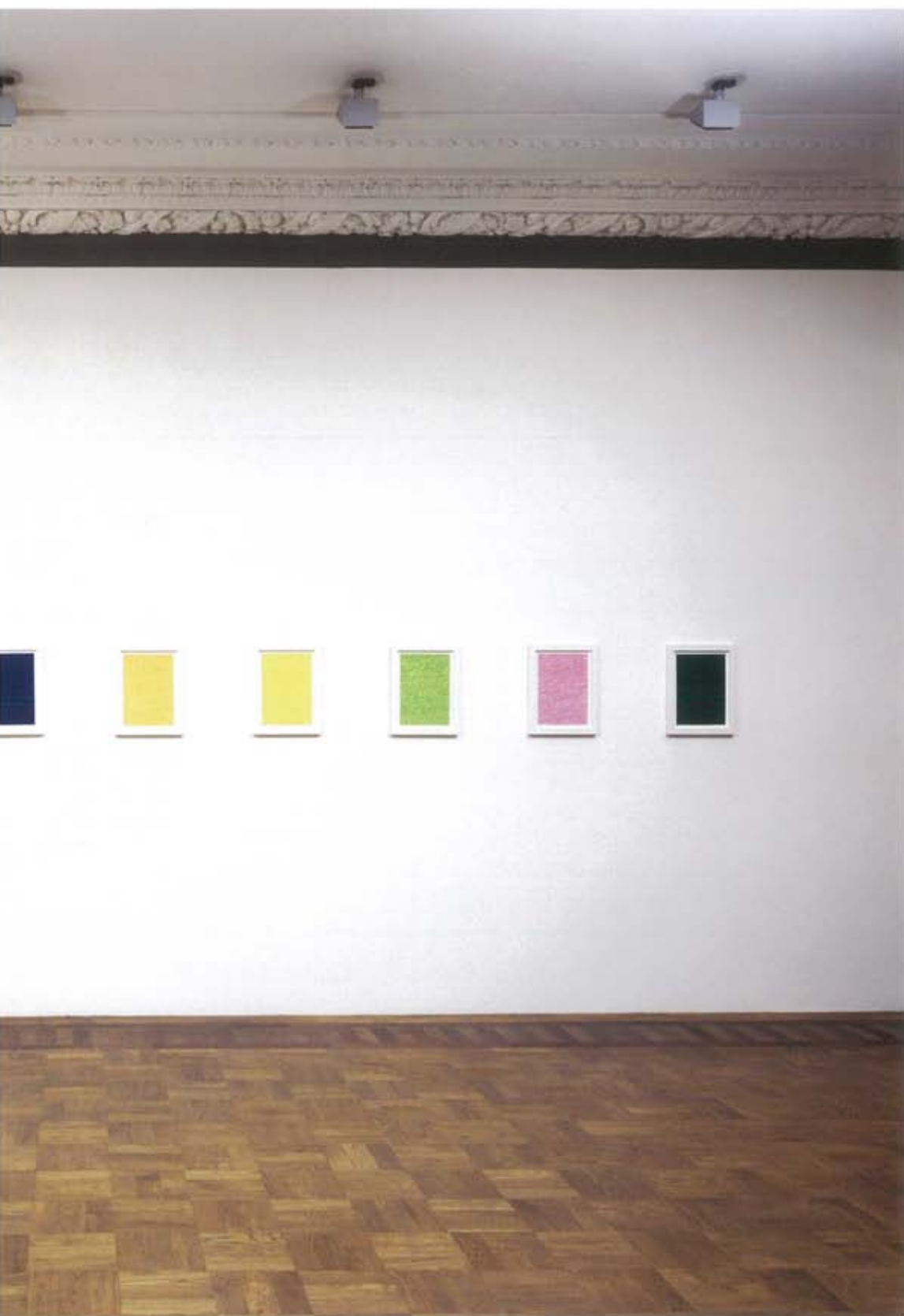


*Work No. 180: Largo, larghetto, adagio, andante, moderato, allegro, presto, prestissimo* (1995-2004), eight metronomes, dimensions variable, edition of three. Courtesy the artist and Hauser & Wirth Zürich London. Photo: Barbara Gerny, Zürich





*Work No. 88* (1994), paper, approximately 5cm ø, unlimited edition.  
Published by Imprint 93, London. Courtesy the artist and Hauser & Wirth Zürich London. Photo: Martin Creed





Work No. 436 (2005), highlighter pen on paper, five parts, each  
29.7 x 21 cm. Courtesy the artist and Hauser & Wirth Zürich London.  
Photo: Jon Elter, Zürich



*Work No. 203: EVERYTHING IS GOING TO BE ALRIGHT* (1999), white neon, 0.5 x 13 m, installation at The Portico, Linscott Road, London. Commissioned by Ingrid Swenson. Courtesy the artist and Hauser & Wirth Zürich London. Photo: Hugo Glendinning



*Work No. 115: A doorstop fixed to a floor to let a door open only 45 degrees* (1996), material variable, dimensions variable. Courtesy the artist and Hauser & Wirth Zürich London. Photo: Martin Creed





# Daniele Puppi

Daniele Puppi's  
Velocity and Intensity  
Juliana Engberg

A colossal, sneaker-encased foot stomps loudly on the basement floor at the Lisson Gallery, London. Actually not loudly, but thunderously; a sound more akin to an acoustic 'boom boom boom'. The foot descends from an upper floor to launch its massive attack, in which one, as spectator and participant, is made to feel daunted and impinged upon, like some entrapped Lilliputian creature.

The elements of tremendous sound and gigantic size push a force into the minimal white cube of the gallery space in a way that is totally thrilling. The kinetic of the action is compulsive and precise, and designed to redefine the spatial and visual dimension – which it does brilliantly.

The giant foot and the leg that thrusts it into the gallery space is Daniele Puppi's *Fatica n. 25*. The Italian *fatiche* (or phonetically rendered 'fatica') can be translated as 'effort'; and as the title suggests, it is a physical exertion and force, an action and energy. As referenced by its catalogue number, 25, it is part of a series of such actions which the artist has made his endeavour.

Because of the way Puppi uses the cubic limits of the gallery's white space as a kind of ready-made sculptural and architectural delineation, one could swiftly assign to *Fatica* a pedigree within the minimalist canon. And to a certain extent there is a strain of minimalist aesthetic in the work. But if we limited our understanding of this work to the category 'minimalism', which carries with it a reference to a particular American/Germanic modern classicism, we would miss the point of Puppi's far more ornate heritage.

The predominant aesthetic in Puppi's work is more appropriately attached to an Italianate trajectory, which can be traced from Hellenic sensuousness through to the Baroque pathology, and from the Futurist manifesto of dynamism which is carried forward into the libido explorations of artists such as Lucio Fontana and Giovanni Anselmo. In Puppi's works can be found the turbulent attitude of the Italianate, which, as Achille Bonito Oliva has suggested, "shakes space to the point where objects are brought together through acceleration..."<sup>1</sup>

In this sequence of agitated artistic gestures, the classical frame of rationalist, Euclidian architecture that exemplifies the classical, Renaissance, neo-classical and modern space becomes overcharged, challenged, and "blown up"<sup>2</sup> by the demonstrative action of the organicism in the ornate tendencies of Italian art. The one is played off against the other in a fabulous tension.

In Italian modernism, Lucio Fontana was to explore the force of this tension in works that massed matter like a knot of muscular stress, in which clay was made to act in a way that was animate and powerful: an explosion of the cube. In his later works, for which he became best known, Fontana evolved this exploration of velocity and matter by cutting incisions and punching ruptures into the classical, minimal surface of the stretched, architectural canvas, to create potent acts of spatial extension.



*Fatica n. 25* (2004), video installation.  
Courtesy the artist and Lisson Gallery (London).  
Photo: Dave Morgan



*Frammento/Fatica n.19* (2003).  
retouched colour photograph, 124 x 150 cm.  
Courtesy the artist and Lisson Gallery (London)



*Fatica n. 19* (2003), video installation.  
Courtesy the artist and Lisson Gallery (London)



Work-in-progress, *Fatica n. 27* (2005), video installation,  
Commissioned by Melbourne International Arts Festival.  
Courtesy the artist and Lisson Gallery (London)



# Van Sowerwine

The Little Girl in  
Van Sowerwine  
Juliana Engberg

The idea of 'cute', a diminutive word derived from the word acute, brings with it an original meaning closer to canny, cunning, or quick-witted, even conniving. It is most certainly knowing, and not necessarily innocent. Cute has undergone a significant personality change since it was first applied to the little girl or, sometimes, boy. The Victorian era's fixation upon the cult of the child and its preference for big innocent eyes, elfin features and a slightly precocious, even subtly sexually seductive appearance, were precursors to a craze for the cute throughout the 20th century. Examples of this obsession are John Millais' *Bubbles* painting, the chiaroscuro-esque photos of Julia Margaret Cameron, and the more private captivations of Charles Dodgson (Lewis Carroll).

The Victorians' adoration of the child signifies a significant shift from earlier times when offspring were considered a priority for survival and an important bolster to the family's ability to earn money and maintain a steady labour force. In those times of uncertain health, and before the advent of vaccinations and cures for epidemics, the desirability of numerous progeny was tied to economics and the survival of the fittest. Pre-Victorian children were believed to have been born into original sin as the products of base desires and necessity and were, by the laws of nature, subject to attrition.

With the economic shifts which occurred as a result of the industrial revolution, along with philosophical enquiries which pronounced children to be innocents – susceptible to corruption, but not original sinners – we see children made to perform a romantic attitude of virtue. The Victorians wanted their children to be cute as a sign of perpetual youth; romantic and protected within the concepts of fantasy. But already the clouds of doubt were looming over this fantasy of the blameless child whom, even with eyes so wide, did not see or participate in the adult world around them.

By the beginning of the 20th century the emergence of psychoanalysis put the concept of the pure child under tremendous pressure. The concepts of innate character and even, provocatively, the idea of children using their own form of sexual manipulation in a conniving and calculated way gave newer, yet more accurate meaning to the idea of cute.

No wonder then, that the 'cute', for the better part of the 20th century, finds itself most significantly manifest through media and commercialism. As faith in pure innocence is replaced with a concern to protect the concept of purity through projection onto the child – and also a concern for protection of the child – we witness the need to purchase facsimiles and symbols of innocence. Enter Shirley Temple, the kewpie doll, and the baby pageant: the commodification of the cute for adult consumption and gratification, which has little to do with the reality of the child.

Meanwhile, back in the therapy session, Freud follower and revolutionary child psychologist Melanie Klein found a use for toys as potent playthings, through and upon which children can act out their anxieties. Klein developed the theories of progression and regression to account for the child-instincts within each of us, and from which few of us emerge unscathed. The dramas of the domestic, which once remained hidden behind drawn curtains and civility, now emerged as acted-out scenarios of the psychological and pathological.

Concepts, previously dismissed, of the possibility of the 'evil' child emerged in the later part of the 20th century. In film, the cute was transformed into the grotesque and demonically inhabited: in *The Exorcist*, for instance, poor Linda Blair was made to spew bile – and blasphemy! The news media were quick to announce the existence of inherent evil in children who killed. The cute had come the full etymological circle.

As C Fred Alford has written, "...withdrawal, emotional aloofness, hyporeactivity (emotional flatness), sex without emotional involvement, segmentation and partial involvement (lack of interest and commitment to things outside oneself), fixation on oral-stage issues, regression, infantilism and depersonalisation...are many of the same designations that...describe the culture of narcissism. Thus, it appears that it is not misleading to equate narcissism with schizoid disorder."<sup>1</sup>

Melanie Klein believed that we are born with a fragile, brittle, weak and unintegrated Ego. Therefore the most primordial human fear is the fear of disintegration (death). The infant is therefore forced to employ primitive defence mechanisms to cope with this fear, with the result being aggression generated by the Ego. The Ego splits and projects this fearful part (death, disintegration, aggression). It does the same with the life-related, constructive, integrative part of itself. As a result, the infant views the world as either 'good' (satisfying, complying, responding, gratifying) – or bad (frustrating). Klein called this idea 'the good and the bad breasts'.

The child then proceeds to introject (internalise and assimilate) the good object while keeping out (defending against) the bad object. The good object becomes the nucleus of the forming Ego. The bad object is felt as fragmented. But it has not vanished: it is there that the phantasm lies. The fact that the bad object is 'out there', persecutory and threatening, gives rise to the first schizoid defence mechanisms. Foremost amongst these is the mechanism of 'projective identification' (so often employed by narcissists). The infant projects parts of herself (organs, behaviours, traits) onto the bad object. This is the famous Kleinian 'paranoid-schizoid position'. The Ego is split.

Sowerwine's *Sharper than a Serpent's Tooth* (2005) is an operatically scaled, epic tragedy in the vein of the Greek, and a modern fable in the way of the therapy session. Implicated in each is a loss of innocence as projected through the narcissistic play of the cute and its etymological double, the cunning; the self and same as described by Klein's regressive/progressive little-girl personality: Electra writ large. And as the children's rhyme goes: 'When she was good she was very, very good, but when she was bad, she was horrid.'

<sup>1</sup> C Fred Alford, *Narcissism: Socrates, the Frankfurt School and Psychoanalytic Theory*. Yale University Press, 1988. Also see Melanie Klein, *Love, Guilt and Reparation; And Other Works 1921–1945 (The Writings of Melanie Klein Vol. 1)*. The Free Press/Simon and Schuster, 1972.



*Sophie #7*, from *Sharper than a Serpent's Tooth* (2005) (detail),  
digital image. Image courtesy the artist and Stills Gallery (Sydney)



*Play With Me* (2002) (detail, installation).  
Image courtesy the artist and Stills Gallery (Sydney)





*What Big Eyes You Have* (2004), installation.  
Image courtesy the artist and Stills Gallery (Sydney)

#### **Fiona Tan**

##### **Saint Sebastian (2001)**

Video installation with two WXGA projectors, two DVD players, two DVDs, two amplifiers, eight hi-fi audio speakers, double-sided projection screen. Approx. 425 x 239 cm

Courtesy of the artist and Frith Street Gallery (London)

Fiona Tan was born in Pekan Baru, Indonesia, in 1966, grew up in Melbourne, and currently lives and works in Amsterdam. She studied at the Gerrit Rietveld Academie, Amsterdam (1988–92) and at the Rijksakademie van Beeldende Kunst, Amsterdam (1996–98). Her film works have been presented at major exhibitions including Documenta 11 (2002), the 49th Venice Biennale (2001); the Istanbul Biennial (2003) and the Yokohama International Triennial of Contemporary Art (2001).

Recent solo exhibitions have included *Saint Sebastian* at the Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal, Canada (2005); *Countenance* (and other works), Museum of Modern Art, Oxford, UK, and at Baltic Art Center, Visby, Sweden (2005); *Correction*, Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, and also at the New Museum of Contemporary Art, New York and UCLA's Hammer Museum, Los Angeles (2004); and *Fiona Tan*, IASPIS Gallery, Stockholm (2004). Recent group exhibitions include *Shadow Play*, Kunsthallen Brandts Klædefabrik, Odense, Denmark (2005); *Time Zones*, Tate Modern, London (2004); and *+Witness*, Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney (2004).

Fiona Tan is represented by Frith Street Gallery (London).

#### **Acknowledgments**

Fiona Tan wishes to thank Chris Fox, Livio Comba, Shinji Kohmoto, Kyoto, Frith Street Gallery (London), Soen Houw and Lesley Tan.

#### **Martin Creed**

##### **The Lights Off, Work No. 270 (2005)**

Materials variable, dimensions variable

Courtesy of the artist and Hauser & Wirth (London, Zürich)

Martin Creed was born in Wakefield, England, in 1968 and lives and works in London. He studied at the Slade School of Fine Art, London (1986–90) and won the Turner Prize in 2001. He has presented numerous solo exhibitions and projects in Europe and North America including *Art Now: Martin Creed, Turner Prize 2001* at the Tate Britain, London; and has most recently exhibited at Gavin Brown's Enterprise, New York (2005).

Selected group exhibitions include the Biennale d'art contemporain de Lyon, France (2005); *Monuments for the USA*, CCA Wattis Institute for Contemporary Arts, San Francisco (2005); *Nothingness*, Galerie Eugen Lendl, Graz, Austria (2004); *Live*, Palais de Tokyo, Paris (2004); *State of Play*, Serpentine Gallery, London (2004); and *Shine*, Museum Boijmans van Beuningen, Rotterdam, the Netherlands (2003).

Martin Creed formed his band, owada, in 1994 and released the album *nothing* in 1997. Since 1999 he has been working solo and his recordings have included *EVERYTHING IS GOING TO BE ALRIGHT*, The Pier Trust, London (1999); *I Can't Move*, Art Metropole, Canada (1999); and *I Don't Know What I Want*, Serpentine Gallery, London (2004). He will be performing with his band in association with the exhibition.

Martin Creed is represented by Hauser & Wirth (London, Zürich).



# Melbourne International Arts Festival

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# Acknowledgements

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**Charlotte Day** is a project manager for the 2005 Visual Arts Program, and an independent curator.

**Olivia Meehan** is a project manager for the 2005 Visual Arts Program, and is currently completing a Master of Art Curatorship at the University of Melbourne.

The Visual Arts team would like to thank all the artists for their enthusiasm and commitment, and for making such significant contributions to this year's Visual Arts Program. Thanks also to our friends and colleagues at ACCA and to colleagues in public institutions and private galleries who have assisted with many aspects of the program.

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We also thank the dedicated installation crew from ACCA – Wanda Gillespie, Matt Hinkley, Susan Jacobs, Danny Lacy, Heather May and Ned Needham – and the invigilators and volunteers without whose assistance the show would not go on.

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**Daniele Puppi**

Fatica n. 27 (2005)

Video installation with three video projectors, three DVD players, three DVDs, one amplifier, four audio speakers, one sub-woofer, one video mixer

Courtesy of the artist and Lisson Gallery (London)

Daniele Puppi was born in Pordenone, Italy, in 1970 and currently lives and works in Rome and London. He graduated from the Accademia di Belle Arti di Roma in 1996. He has exhibited widely in Italy and in Europe, with solo exhibitions including *Fatica n. 25*, Lisson New Space, London (2004); *Fatica n. 19*, Sprovieri, London (2003); *Fatica n. 21*, MART Museo Arte Moderna e Contemporanea, Trento, Italy (2003); Magazzino d'Arte Moderna, Rome, Italy (2002); *Fatica n. 14*, Galleria Massimo De Carlo, Milan, Italy (2001); *Eldorado*, Galleria d'Arte Moderna e Contemporanea, Bergamo, Italy (2001); and Galleria Franco Noero, Turin, Italy (1999).

Selected group exhibitions include at Lisson Gallery, London (2004); Sprovieri project space, London (2004); *Forse Italia*, Stedelijk Museum Voor Actuele Kunst, Gent, Belgium (2003); BIG Torino 2002, Biennial Internazionale Arte Giovane, Turin, Italy; EXIT: *Nuove Geografie della Creatività Italiana*, Fondazione Sandretto Re Rebaudengo, Turin, Italy (2002); Premio Querini Stampalia – furla per l'arte, Fondazione Querini Stampalia, Venice, Italy (2002); and *Killing me softly*, Kunsthalle, Bern, Switzerland (1999).

Daniele Puppi is represented by Lisson Gallery (London).

**Van Sowerwine**

Sharper than a Serpent's Tooth (2005)

Digital prints on vinyl installed on three billboards at Republic Tower, Melbourne. Side: 375 x 348 cm. Main: 790 x 670 cm. Above: 492 x 118.5 cm

Courtesy of the artist and Stills Gallery (Sydney)

Van Sowerwine was born in Melbourne in 1975 and currently lives and works in Brisbane. She has an honours degree in Media Arts from the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology (2001). Her short animated film *Clara* was an official selection and won a special mention at the 2005 Cannes Film Festival. Her solo exhibition *What Big Eyes You Have* was presented at West Space in Melbourne in 2004.

Van Sowerwine's work has been included in video exhibitions, events and screenings including the Basics Media Festival, Gallery 5020, Salzburg, Austria (2005); *Move on Asia*, Tokyo Wonder Site/remo, Osaka, Japan, and +Gallery, Aichi, Japan (2005); Anne Landa Award, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney (2004); Media City Seoul New Media Biennale, Seoul Museum of Art, Korea (2004); and the 2002 Reanimate International Festival of Web-Based Animation, Rotterdam, the Netherlands (2002).

Van Sowerwine is represented by Stills Gallery (Sydney).

**Acknowledgments**

Special thanks to Jon Billington, Fiona Edwards and Camilla Hannan.

# List of Works/Biographies

## **Callum Morton**

### **Babylonia (2005)**

Wood, polystyrene, epoxy resin, acrylic paint, light, carpet, mirror, sound. 1,300 x 750 x 320 cm

Courtesy of the artist, Anna Schwartz Gallery (Melbourne) and Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery (Sydney)

Callum Morton was born in Montreal, Canada, in 1965 and currently lives and works in Melbourne. He studied architecture and urban planning at the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology (RMIT) before completing a BA in Fine Art at the Victorian College of the Arts (1988) and a Masters in Sculpture from RMIT (1999). In 2005 he represented Australia at the 11th Triennale India in New Delhi, where he won a Golden Medal. He is the inaugural recipient of the Helen Macpherson Smith Commission (2005) and was a Samstag Scholar at Art Center College of Design in Pasadena, California (2004–05).

Callum Morton has exhibited extensively in solo and group exhibitions in Australia and internationally, including *Archetypes*, Charles H Scott Gallery, Vancouver (2004); *Public/Private: The Auckland Triennial*, New Zealand (2004); *Callum Morton: More Talk About Buildings and Mood*, Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney (2004); *Face Up*, Hamburger Bahnhof, Berlin (2003); *Fieldwork: Australian Art 1968–2002*, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne (2002); *Signs of Life*, Melbourne International Biennial (1999); and *International Style*, Santa Monica Museum of Art, Los Angeles (1999).

Callum Morton is represented by Anna Schwartz Gallery (Melbourne), Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery (Sydney), Karyn Lovegrove Gallery (Los Angeles), and Gimpel Fils (London).

### **Acknowledgments**

Callum Morton wishes to thank Chris De Campo, Marco Fusinato, Richard Giblett, Polly Hellier Morton, Trudy Hellier, Kim Hellier, Beverly and Russell Hellier, Stuart Koop, Luke Pither, Andrew Hazewinkel, Peter Heraud and the team at C5 Systems, Nick Hubicki, Geoff Lowe, Nick Mangan, the Morton clan, Ian, Rhana, Samm, Cass and Kobi, Jacqui Riva, Julie Spencer, Ronnie van Hout and Rod Waith. Thanks to Anna Schwartz and Roslyn Oxley for their continued support.







*Sophie #8*, from *Sharper than a Serpent's Tooth* (2005) (detail), digital image. Image courtesy the artist and Stills Gallery (Sydney)



*Sophie #6*, from *Sharper than a Serpent's Tooth* (2005) (detail),  
digital image. Image courtesy the artist and Stills Gallery (Sydney)

Which brings us to Van Sowerwine and her expanding cast of characters: little girls with baleful eyes, cute looks, and loads of play accoutrements, which can be marshalled to the cause of the symbolic and the pathologically metaphoric.

The little girls in Van Sowerwine's animated interactives and photo-scenarios seem to embody the paradox of the cute. Their innocence is overplayed and suspect; their vulnerability has an aspect of self-knowledge; their actions are provocative and seductive, which leads to a loaded, dangerous set of circumstances. These kids are too cute for their own good. As adults we don't know whether to feel maternal, paternal or manipulated. Certainly we are implicated in an uncomfortable set of feelings. Sowerwine's little girls elicit a mixture of pity, fear and pleasure, which announces a kind of malevolence in the core of our selves.

How responsible, for instance, are we when we sit in Sowerwine's cubby house (*Play with Me*, 2002) and interact with the animated girl who wants to play with us, and how far do we go once we realise that each of our play choices leads to self-harm in the child doll? We make her drink Drano, select the option which causes her to cut her eyes out, instruct her in acts of ever-increasing violence. Like the classic psychological experiment in which college kids were asked to electrocute subjects and continued to do so despite their obvious pain, this work brings out the worst in us. Sowerwine's willing little girl seems to be seeking our assistance to become a victim. She wants our attention. She will suffer to get it.

*Play with Me* prompts us to ask questions about our own motivations, and that of this cute kid who wants to be harmed. Do we carry out these violent actions because she is too cute and symbolically too good, making us feel less perfect? Or is it just fun to control and hurt? Is the little child inside ourselves regressing in the face of opportunity? These are bleak things to contemplate.

On the Republic Tower billboard site in Melbourne, Van Sowerwine's newest little girl looms above us at gigantic scale. Menacingly, she brandishes a fork in one uplifted hand. Wounds are apparent on her jumper. Her eyes are fierce and focused beyond us to a place outside our range but inside her mind. She appears to be inhabiting one of those schmick inner urban apartments – all designer gray and clean lines – and yet the sophisticated, adult calm of such an interior seems to be shattered by an unspecified act of domestic violence.

The little teddy, faithful companion and symbolic of fraternal devotion, which lies discarded in another part of the scene; a ball of string, also cast asunder; and a puddle of spilt milk indicate a tantrum or hissy-fit has taken place. But the fork suggests worse.

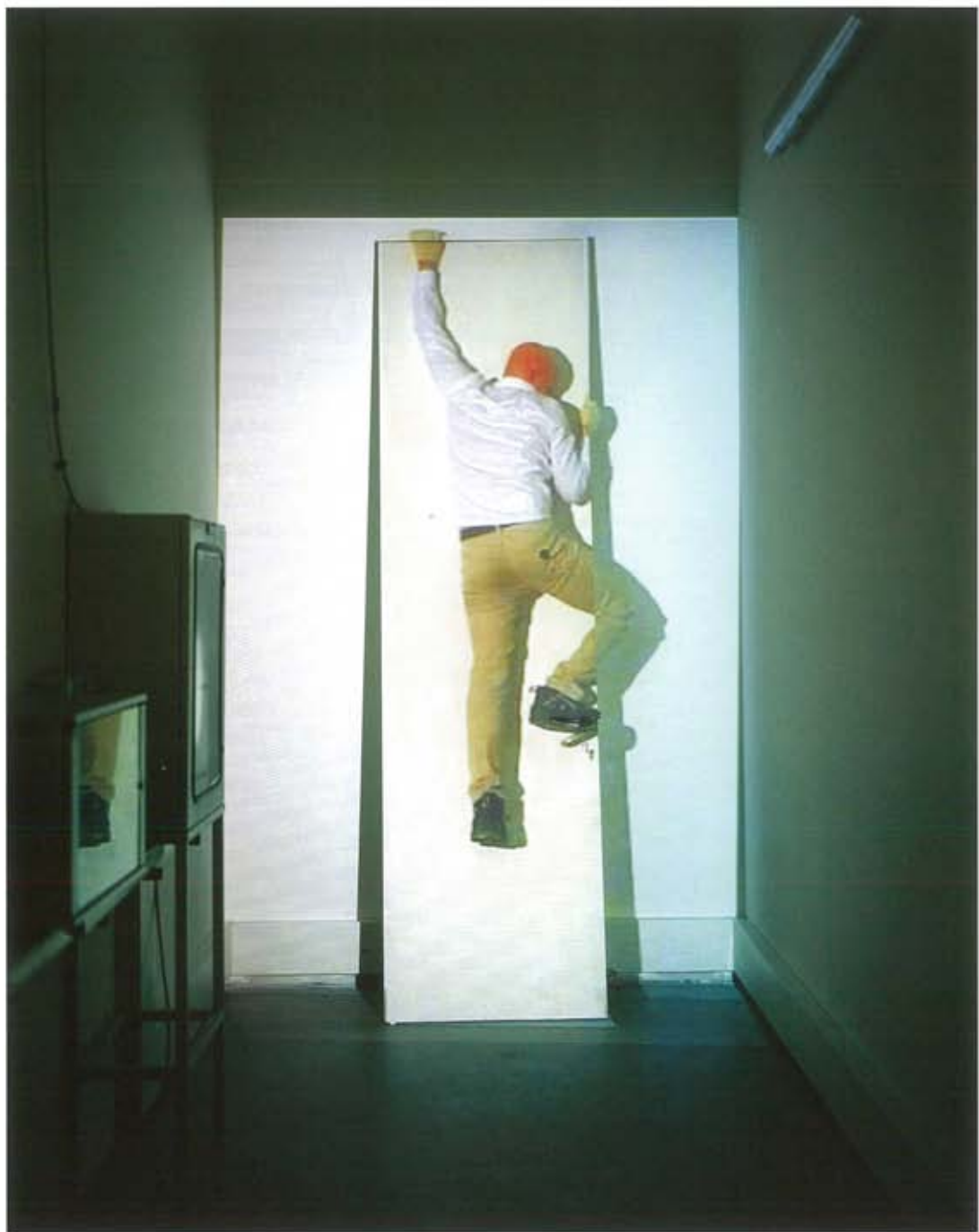
Above the large little girl lies another – a *doppelgänger* – who has slumped and fallen against the wall, clutching her stomach; she shows the same wounds as the first girl on her jumper. Is this a narcissistic play – a form of self-loathing resulting in self-destruction? Sowerwine's little girl is both victim and perpetrator in this scenario: the flung teddy, which might have offered comfort and occasion for hugging, like the spilt milk, indicate a kind of maternal failing which has been carried through to the self.





*Fatica n. 4* (1997), video installation.  
Courtesy the artist and Lisson Gallery (London)





*Fatica n. 18* (2002), video installation.  
Courtesy the artist and Lisson Gallery (London).  
Photo: Tommaso Mattina



*Fatica n. 25* (2004), video installation.  
Courtesy the artist and Lisson Gallery (London).  
Photo: Dave Morgan

Fontana's works join with those of Alberto Burri and his punctums of melted plastic; Piero Manzoni and his scatological excesses; Giovanni Anselmo and his injections of self into the field of the viewer; and even with Yves Klein's leap into the void; to create a legacy for Daniele Puppi's newest additions to the investigation of space and matter.

Philosophy, since Aristotle, has been preoccupied with the stability of forms. Classicism devotes itself to the rewarding certainty of geometric solids – Platonic shapes. However, the Italianate investigation of space seeks to prove that space can extend beyond the unadventurous geometric limits. In philosophy, as described by Gilles Deleuze, this analysis and exploration would accumulate as a series of events that prove the absolute necessity of instability: as a kind of velocity and intensity. Deleuze would link this to Spinoza's concept of Substance, which is a "present infinity made up of infinitely small material elements in agitation and characterized neither by their form nor function but by degrees of speed and slowness".<sup>2</sup>

Puppi's project is to actualise a series of events that provoke space to extend itself through his performative, punctive gestures and activate the viewer's field of vision in ways that release spatiality from its normative boundaries. As Puppi describes his approach: "The creation and construction of my work is a synthesis of the several aims I set myself in confronting space: to produce a movement which holds the space and simultaneously involves all its points; to find a means of being able to 'appear' at any point; to construct a new space 'adjacent' to the space already consolidated."<sup>4</sup>

Puppi's work for Melbourne International Arts Festival, *Fatica n. 27*, is still under wraps as this catalogue goes to print. But it is certain to shake space to the point where objects are brought together through acceleration and pulled apart again by action, in an effort to re-create a spatiality exploded by the dynamic events of velocity and intensity.

<sup>1</sup> Achille Bonito Oliva, 'Minimala', in *Minimala: An Italian Vision in 20th Century Art*, Electra, Milan, 1999, p. 18

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid*, p. 19

<sup>3</sup> Jean Khatfa (ed), *The Philosophy of Gilles Deleuze*, Continuum, London/ New York, 1999, p. 29

<sup>4</sup> Artist's statement, 2004





*Work No. 312: A lamp going on and off* (2005), material variable, dimensions variable, edition of ten. Courtesy the artist and Hauser & Wirth Zürich London. Photo: A. Burger, Zürich.



*Work No. 79: Some Blue-Tack kneaded, rolled into a ball, and depressed against a wall (1993), Blue-Tack, diameter approx. 1 cm, edition of three. Courtesy the artist and Hauser & Wirth Zürich London. Photo: Martin Creed*

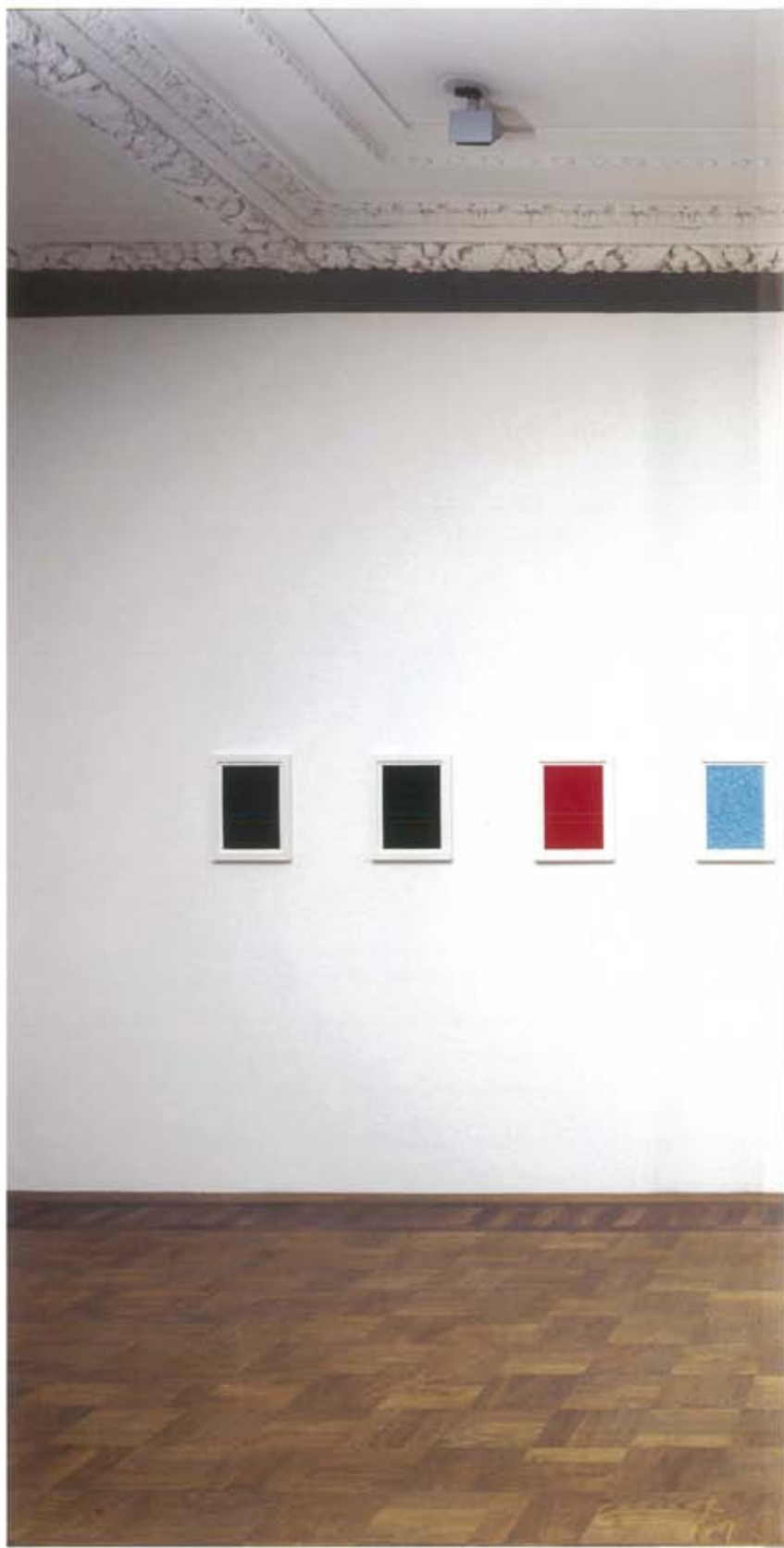




*Work No. 200: half the air in a given space* (1996), white 12" balloons.  
Installation at Galerie Analix, Geneva. Courtesy the artist and Häuser &  
Wirth Zürich London © Martin Creed



*Work No. 340: A sheet of paper folded up and unfolded (2004), paper, 29.7 x 21 cm. Courtesy the artist and Hauser & Wirth Zürich London. Photo: Barbara Gerny, Zürich*



*Work No. 373* (2004), marker pen and highlighter pen on paper, ten parts, each 29.7 x 21cm. Courtesy the artist and Hauser & Wirth Zürich London. Photo: Hugo Glendinning



*Work No. 374* (2004), white neon, 15 x 64 cm, edition of three.  
Courtesy the artist and Hauser & Wirth Zürich London.  
Photo: Hugo Glendinning



*Work No. 295 (detail)* (2003), C-type print, 4 parts; each 40 x 40 cm.  
Courtesy the artist and Hauser & Wirth Zürich London.  
Photo: Martin Creed



*Work No. 370* (2004), balls of various kinds, installation view at Hauser & Wirth, London. Courtesy the artist and Hauser & Wirth Zürich London. Photo: Hugo Glendinning

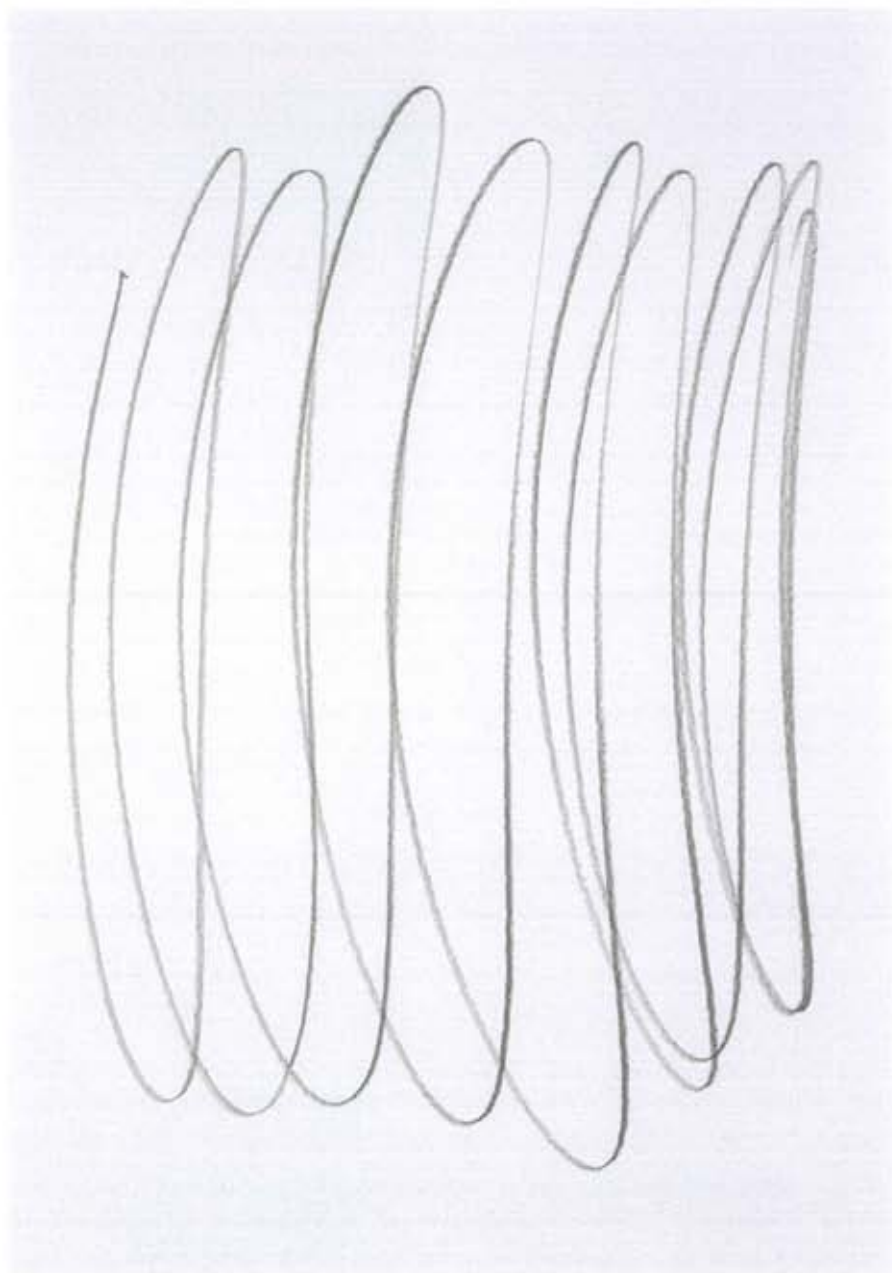




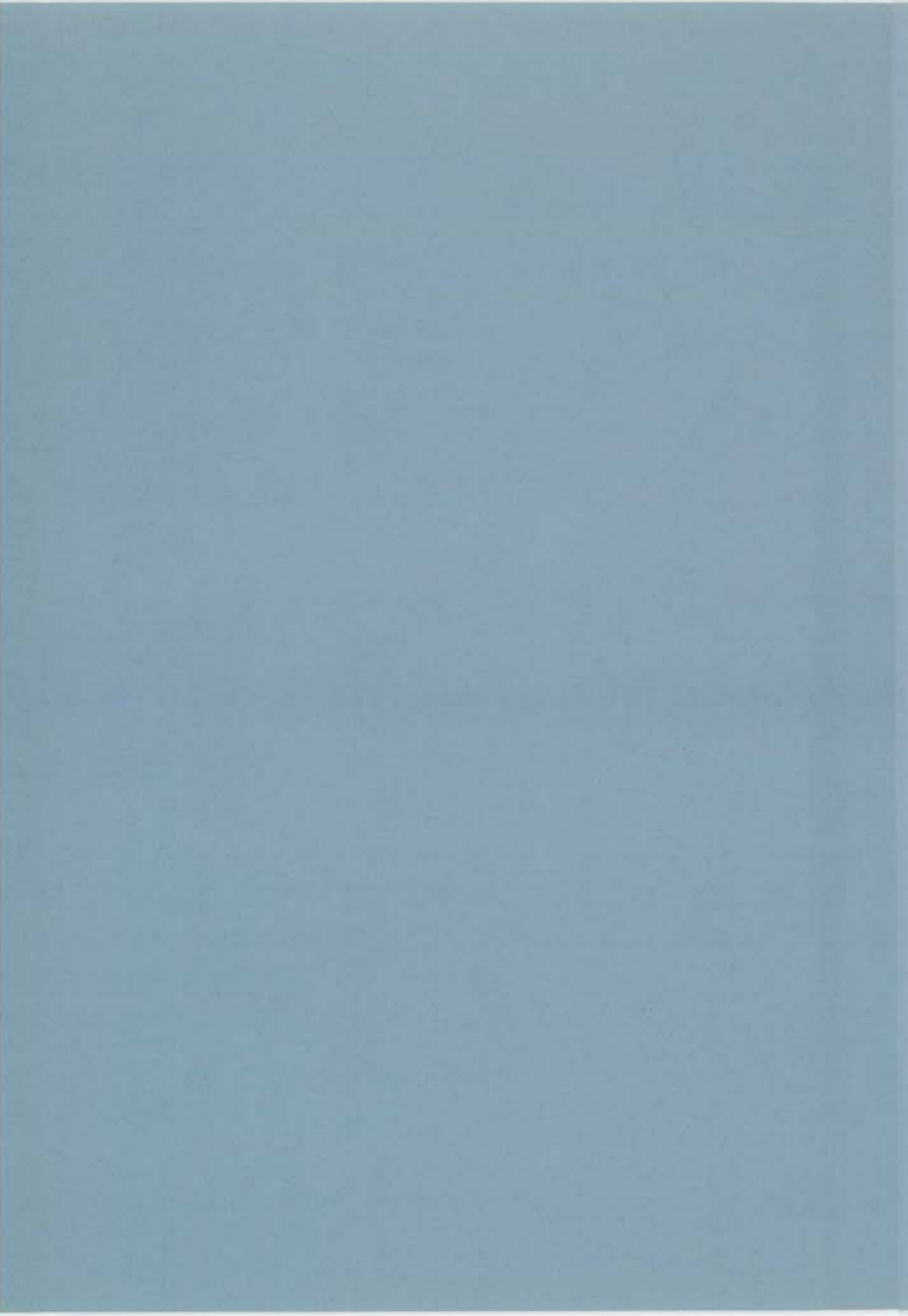
**Work No. 372** (2005): wood, metal, dimension variable.  
Courtesy the artist and Hauser & Wirth Zürich London.  
Photo: A. Burger, Zürich



**Work No. 455** (2005), marker pen on paper, 29.7 x 21 cm.  
Courtesy the artist and Hauser & Wirth Zürich London,  
Photo: Jon Elter, Zürich



*Work No. 439* (2005), pencil on paper, 29.7 x 21 cm.  
Courtesy the artist and Hauser & Wirth Zürich London.  
Photo: Barbara Gerny, Zürich





*Saint Sebastian* (2001), video installation.  
Courtesy the artist and Frith Street Gallery (London).  
Photo: Jean Brasile/Villa Arson, Nice



Still from *Saint Sebastian* (2001), video installation.  
Courtesy the artist and Frith Street Gallery (London)



Sebastian led the army for a short period before confessing his Christianity to the Emperor, who was so displeased that he ordered Sebastian be shot to death by his fellow archers. Sebastian was left for dead; however, he survived, having been nursed by a devout gentlewoman named Irene. Upon discovering this, the Emperor ordered a second execution, and this time Sebastian was beaten to death by soldiers at the Hippodrome in Rome. Sebastian's intimate encounter with danger was the result of a deep spiritual maturity. His initiation into adulthood took place the instant he stepped aside from the protection of the army and positioned himself as an outsider. His legend symbolises a kind of 'coming out'.

During the 19th and 20th centuries a homosexual cult of Saint Sebastian emerged in literature, largely informed by Renaissance depictions of the saint. In Yukio Mishima's novel *Confessions of a Mask* (*Kamen No Kokuhaku*, 1949) the adolescent hero Kochan experiences a sort of 'coming-of-age' when he comes across Guido Reni's painting of the martyrdom of Saint Sebastian (c. 1615).<sup>1</sup> Overwhelmed by Reni's image of the beautiful young Sebastian bound naked to a tree trunk – his strained chest and tense abdomen pierced with arrows – Kochan locates a desire from within. In the face of Sebastian's supreme state of agony, he comes to realise the intensity of this desire and willingly acts upon it, reaching a sublime state of ecstasy and thus a heightened understanding of himself. In fact, Mishima identified so strongly with Reni's image that he had his photograph taken posing as Saint Sebastian, bound to a tree and pierced by arrows.<sup>2</sup>

As derived from classical Greek mythology the arrow, together with the bow, is a symbol of love, potency, and also disease. In Western art, the arrow is the attribute of Cupid, who possessed two sorts of arrows: one made of gold, which encouraged love; and one made of lead, that drove love away. According to Ovid's

*Metamorphoses*, Apollo was pierced in the heart by one of Cupid's golden arrows, while the nymph Daphne was struck by a lead arrow. Immediately the god was overcome with love for Daphne; and yet she was repulsed by the thought of loving him. From the moment Apollo caught sight of her bright eyes, her ripe, full lips, her hair falling over her bare shoulder – he could only imagine that that which was hidden from view was more beautiful still – he fell hopelessly in love with her. Daphne avoided Apollo until one day he came so close to her that in an act of desperation, to flee the god, she begged her father, the river god Peneus, to transform her being into a tree forever. It is said that the heartbroken Apollo henceforth made his sacred arrows from her bark, and adorned his head with a crown made of leaves from her branches.

The goddess Diana is also attributed an arrow. Commonly recognised as the athletic, virgin huntress, Diana is depicted in sculpture and painting as tall and slender; she wears a short tunic and her hair is pulled back from her face. Supposedly the twin sister of Apollo, she was worshipped by the Romans as an earth goddess and is identified with Luna, deity of the sky. This notion of Diana and Luna as opposing and complementary forces is not unlike the Tao idea of Yin and Yang, an understanding of which is imperative to *kyūdō*. The two complementary forces, Yin (Earth) which characterises dark, deep, female principles and Yang (Sky) which characterises light, creative, male principles, pervade and are contained within each of the archers' movements.

The symbol of the arrow is also present in various forms of Japanese art. It was incorporated into many ancient *nō* plays and can be found in *ukiyo-e* of the Edo period. One example is Kitagawa Utamaro's wood-block print *A Travesty of the 'Six Poets'* (c. 1790)<sup>3</sup>, which illustrates the six most famous Japanese poets of the ninth century, in the form of the six most beautiful women

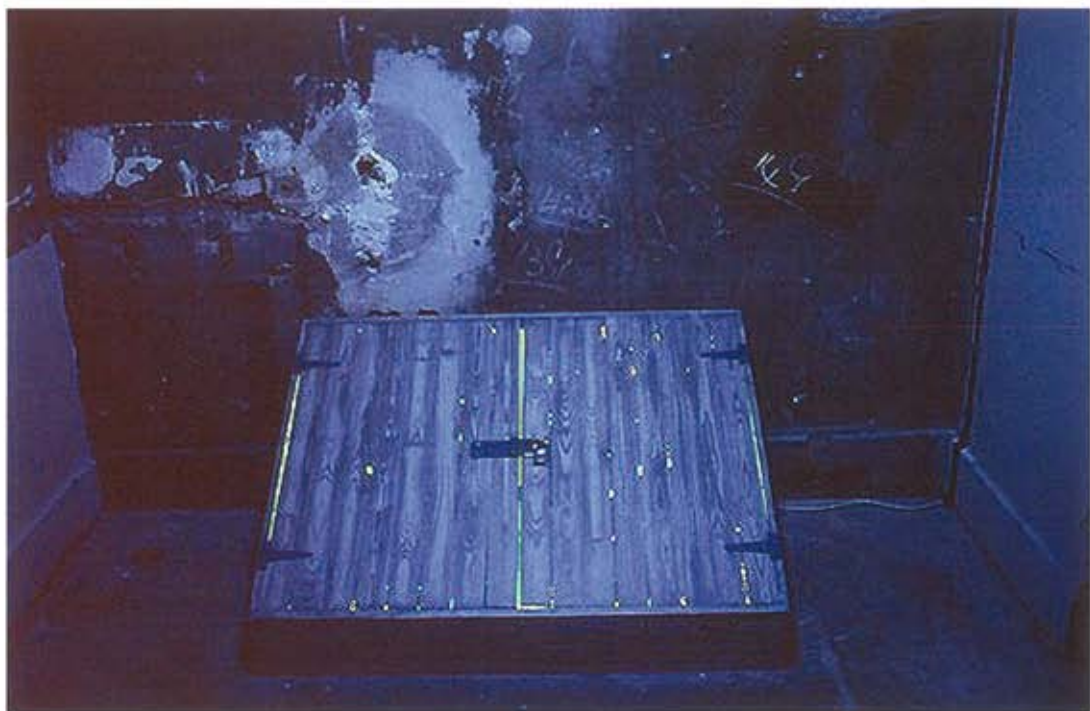




*Tropicana* (2003), from the series *Interbau Wow Wow*, digital print, 94.5 x 170 cm. Image courtesy the artist and Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery (Sydney), Anna Schwartz Gallery (Melbourne), Gimpel Fils (London), Karyn Lovegrove Gallery (Los Angeles)



*Farrshaven, Illinois* (2001), from the series *Local+or General*, digital print, 59.4 x 85 cm, edition of 30. Image courtesy the artist and Rostyn Oxley9 Gallery (Sydney), Anna Schwartz Gallery (Melbourne), Gimpel Fils (London), Karyn Lovegrove Gallery (Los Angeles)



**Cellar** (1998), wood, acrylic, synthetic polymer paint, motor, light, sound, 40 x 80 x 150 cm. Image courtesy the artist and Gimpel Fils (London). Photo: John Brash



model/fantasy, and between illusion and delusion, in an increasingly complex and expanding web of associations and reflections.

Architecture has always provided the set for the unfolding drama of everyday life in Morton's projects. Although he references specific buildings and the events that have surrounded them, more often than not the 'life' portrayed in Morton's models is generic or constructed rather than individualised. He draws on clichés, film plots and literary works for words and dialogue to project a voice of humanity. He creates scenes and then builds up an expectation of something about to happen, or indicates that the time is already past. Some works lead inwards to a psychologically charged interior world filled with anxiety and fear of the unknown. In others, we remain excluded, 'confined to the outside' in an increasingly homogenised environment.

Morton's ambitious new work *Babylonia* (2005) takes us offshore for the first time. It is a 13-metre-long island built within the large gallery at the Australian Centre for Contemporary Art. Not a tropical island that you might holiday on: Morton's island is a barren rock, more reminiscent of the isolated island of Michelangelo Antonioni's film *L'Avventura* (1960), in which the lead character disappears, becoming present again only through her absence for the remainder of the film. Morton's title *Babylonia* suggests his island could be a metaphor for presence and absence in other ways too, its name referencing one of the most successful and powerful ancient cities, and one that suffered eventual collapse. In Judaism, Babylon becomes a metaphor for exile – representing those who lived inside the city of man and outside of the city of God. Islands have always been political places too-perfect: natural havens with borders to protect and secure, and places of confinement and isolation.

At first, Morton's island appears as stone-faced and impenetrable as some of his buildings. But in the

style of one of those classic scenes in a James Bond film such as *Goldfinger* (1964), the island is shown to be a camouflage for something going on within. A small door is open to one side, and for the first time in Morton's work we are granted access to the interior – a long, narrow corridor with closed doors running along each side and mirrors at each end that open the space up to infinity. This could be a hotel or apartment corridor; either way we have entered a transitional space that is inside yet remains external to the interior rooms. Knowing that Morton has modelled this space on a corridor of the ill-fated hotel in Stanley Kubrick's *The Shining* (1980) suggests that it is as much a psychological as a physical space. Like the characters in *The Shining*, we move along the corridor waiting for something to happen. Gradually the sound of chanting and praying is audible from under the doors. The individual voices increasingly mix with one another and become a babbling: a general sound of believing. It is unclear whether this is a peaceful haven for people who share similar values, or a place of isolation and confinement for people whose beliefs differ from the norm. It could be a tolerant and open, or a fearful and closed world. It could be a relic of a time past, that we are afraid to lose or are determined to preserve for the future. Morton leaves it up to us to decide.

<sup>1</sup> For a detailed account of *Tomorrow Land* see Stuart Koop in Callum Morton, Stuart Koop & Vikram Prakash, *Tomorrow Land: Callum Morton, 17th Triennale India 2005*. Lalit Kala Akademi, New Delhi, 2005, pp. 8–11

<sup>2</sup> Alan Bryman, *Disney and his Worlds*. Routledge, London, 1996, p. 170





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