

There are familiar places that, on reflection, viewed with the necessary distance or up close, may seem to have a surprising strangeness that can change our perception appreciably, almost as if we had never seen them before. Rediscovering them like this, from another point of view, what are we to make of these places we live in, these spaces that are ours and that may shape us without our knowing it? ///

Under the title *Space/Time*, we are presenting an inaugural program of films on this way of relating to the world. For it, we have brought together five short films, by five Canadian and international artists: Khrystell Burlin, Thomas Köner, Gareth Long, Leighton Pierce and Floria Sigismondi. Each work selected investigates our awareness of being in these familiar yet unreal landscapes, in which we dwell and which dwell in us. ///

First we have the silent gaze of Gareth Long, which slowly sweeps across the panorama of a suburb under construction, a still-undefined space rapidly being urbanized. In passing, it captures fleeting silhouettes, figures that glide through the image and the landscape, without any point of anchorage at which to rest, without any hold on this world in the process of becoming. ///

Leighton Pierce's look tenaciously tries to remain firmly anchored in this world. His entire artistic approach conveys a wish to secure a purchase on the present. In the course of a walk, he creates an anamorphosis of everything around him. The way his images are elaborated illustrates a desire to be fully engaged with a present moment, a desire to capture the intensity of an experience that is already slipping into the past, and to give it form. ///

Khrystell E. Burlin takes us on an endless race, a flight with no way out, through a maze of corridors. He expresses confinement, compartmentalization, isolation. His images offer no opening, no horizon. They suggest an existential pondering of human relations and individuality. Burlin's corridors symbolize the boundaries of our inner world. ///

The poetic intensity of Thomas Köner's stare reconstructs the passage of time in an urban landscape. He captures moments which he juxtaposes —the past instant with the present one, and then the next, in a succession of states of consciousness, a continuum of distinct moments that fit into a whole to give shape to the experience of time passing and express the span of a night in a snow-covered, urban landscape. ///

Finally, Floria Sigismondi draws us into a ravaged reality, a vision of apocalypse. Her dark, intense, surrealistic aesthetic transforms the miniature paradise of a children's playground and recess time into an utterly destroyed world where there is no longer any place for the carefree life.

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KHRYSTELL BURLIN *Theseus*, 2004, 5 min

In an environment made up exclusively of narrow corridors, this video creation depicts a flight with no way out. Inspired by the myth of Theseus, who braves the Minotaur then manages to escape from the labyrinth thanks to Ariadne's thread, Burlin presents two individuals who meet and pass without really seeing each other, wrapped up in their own worlds, prisoners of their own individuality. He uses different editing techniques based on superimposition and stroboscopic effects. The music is by Alor. /// Khrystell Burlin, born in 1975 in Condom, a town in Armagnac, France, has lived and worked in Montréal since 2000. After graduating from the Bordeaux conservatory and embarking on a career as a composer of electronic music, he then turned to video and film production. A decisive moment for him was meeting Jean Piché, under whose direction he earned a master's degree from the Université de Montréal. His film debut at the 2002 edition of the Elektra festival in Montréal was followed by screenings at several major festivals throughout North America, Europe and Asia. He has also created work for the Cirque du Soleil (*Moment Factory*).

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THOMAS KÖNER *Suburbs of the Void*, 2004, 14 min

This film consists of 2,000 webcam pictures recorded by a traffic surveillance camera in a city in northern Finland, close to the Arctic circle. Köner collected these images via the Internet. Initially, we see an anonymous, snow-covered urban intersection at night. There is no traffic, there isn't a living soul. The only movement comes from the glow of the street lamps and the fluctuations in its intensity, then from the timid light of the dawn that finally makes inroads into the darkness of night. Köner composed a sound track that sketches out a memory of the place. ///

Thomas Köner, born in 1965 in Bochum, Germany, lives and works in Dortmund. Since his time as a student at the music college in Dortmund and the CEM-Studio in Arnhem, he has dedicated himself to intensive sound research, ultimately achieving a certain sonic presence that allows and even elicits a state of total consciousness. In 1994, he began composing sound tracks and live electronic music to accompany screenings of old silent movies at the Louvre museum. He founded *Porter Ricks* in 1996 and established a reputation as a producer of progressive techno music. As a result of his interest in combining visual and auditory experiences, he has worked increasingly in video, film and sound installation. He has won many awards, including the Golden Nica Prix Ars Electronica 2004 and the New Media Prize at the Montreal International Festival of New Cinema and New Media in 2000. *Suburbs of the Void* has been nominated for Berlin's Transmediale 2005 Award.

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FLORIA SIGISMONDI *Sigur Rós, Untitled #1, 2003, 6 min 33 s*

This music video won the prize for Best Video of 2003 at the MTV Europe Music Awards. The video was for the third album of the Icelandic group Sigur Rós, released in October 2002—a lyric-less, title-less album, identified by the () signs. Sigismondi created a dark world in which the normal suddenly turns into devastation. She draws us into an unreal place where the children wear gas masks during recess, where the snow is black, as are the snowmen, and where the playgrounds are strewn with skeletons of abandoned cars. ///

Floria Sigismondi, born in 1965 in Pescara, Italy, lives and works in Toronto and New York. Her family immigrated to Canada when she was two years old. She studied at the Ontario College of Art and Design. On graduating, she quickly launched a successful career as a fashion photographer and, within a year, had also directed her first music videos. She is known internationally for her work with David Bowie, Leonard Cohen, Marilyn Manson and Björk. She won a Juno in 2004 for her music video with Christina Aguilera. She has shown her photographs in group exhibitions since 1998, and received her first solo exhibition in 1999, at London's Institute of Contemporary Arts. In 2001, the Museum of Contemporary Canadian Art, Toronto, devoted an exhibition to her work. Her second photo album, entitled *Immune*, is in production.

Continuous showings on the hour.

January 12 to 30 and March 25 to April 10, 2005

Running time: 58 minutes


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GARETH LONG *Still Life: Urban Sprawl*, 2003, 8 min 45 s

Urban Sprawl is part of the *Still Life* series, works presented as videotapes which, strictly speaking, they are not. They are in fact photographic stills, collected by hand and reworked with imaging software. Because the "tape" is created from photographs, all the motion is stopped, and all gestures are suspended. The two precepts of video—movement and time—come into play, without interpenetrating. Long describes *Still Life: Urban Sprawl* as a remix. In the editing process, the artist has discreetly introduced actual video segments to focus attention more on the static elements. ///

Gareth Long was born in 1979 in Toronto, where he continues to live and work. He is the youngest artist in the group, and has just completed his studies at the University of Toronto. In the spring of 2001, he co-founded 640 480, a collective of young artists dedicated to video, which has organized some twenty events since it was formed. In 2003, Long won the Vtape Emerging Artist Award. His work explores the nature and concepts of video art and challenges the limits of the medium.

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LEIGHTON PIERCE *Fall (Three Parts)*, 2002, 13 min

Shot in the South of France in fall 2001, *Fall (Three Parts)* presents three short walks by the artist in a village by the sea, during which he observes the places through which he wanders, and captures the world around him through a small glass ball grasped between two of his fingers. In this way, he miniaturizes the world and literally holds it in his hand. The sound track is a composition that seems to come from the images. However, Pierce actually uses the sounds to create another landscape, a soundscape, in order to isolate the emotional potential of the images. ///

Leighton Pierce, born in 1954 in Rochester, N.Y., lives and works in Iowa City and New York. He studied music composition, jazz and electronic music before he began making films. Pierce strives to capture an immediate emotional state and transpose it to time, usually by filming seemingly mundane scenes. The sound tracks are never based on the sounds heard while the image was being recorded. His films and videos have been shown in major art museums and film festivals around the world, and have won numerous awards. Since 1997, he has taught film and video production at the University of Iowa.

