

18 September - 28 November 2010

Emily Wardill
“windows broken,
break,
broke together”

zie ommezijde voor nederlands

de Appel Jongensschool / Boys' School

Eerste Jacob van Campenstraat 59

open: Tues till Sun 11am - 6pm

18 September - 28 November 2010

Emily Wardill
“windows broken,
break,
broke together”

Opening 17 September, 6pm

Structured around an ongoing dialogue between British artist Emily Wardill and artist/curator Ian White, the solo exhibition "windows broken, break, broke together" is the most extensive exhibition of Wardill's films to date. Described as 'brilliant cinematic labyrinths. Visually striking and playfully rigorous' the films occupy wildly different stylistic positions as a means of re-animating the ways in which form can become the unquestioned carrier of meaning - by the way in which meaning is implied through metaphor or example, inscribed by case studies, fictionalised in props or interpreted in art criticism, status symbols and as the evidence of crime.

Wardill poses fundamental questions about perception, representation, the relationship between politics and linguistics and probes the mysteries and mechanisms of human communication, reconfiguring ideas of and as experience. Sound and music are an integral part of the work.

Three public lectures by Emily Wardill and Ian White mark the beginning, middle and end of the exhibition. Conceived as a triptych they respond to the themes of the show in both form and content, proposing three different routes through the work on display and three different attempts at embodying knowledge. The lectures also provide the structure for the publication "We are behind" that accompanies the exhibition, published by **de Appel** arts centre and Book Works, London.

Sunday 19 Sept.

4 pm Public lecture "The Object"
by Emily Wardill and Ian White
and Book Launch "We are behind"

Sunday 24 Oct.

3 pm Free guided tour
4 pm Public lecture "The Window"
by Emily Wardill and Ian White

Sunday 21 Nov.

3 pm Sunday School: one work of the exhibition is subject of a close reading by Jacob Korczynski (participant **de Appel** Curatorial Programme 2010/2011)
4 pm Public talk "The Theatre"
by Emily Wardill and Ian White.

Sunday 28 Nov.

3 pm Free guided tour

Reservations: reservation@deappel.nl.

Emily Wardill (UK) is a London-based filmmaker. She has exhibited widely in the UK and internationally, including solo projects at The Showroom, London (2009) the ICA, London (2008), Fortescue Avenue / Jonathan Viner, London (2005, 2006), STANDARD (OSLO) (2008) and the performance event "The Feast Against Nature", at PS1 Contemporary Art Centre, New York (2004). She has shown at Tate Britain, Film Festival Oberhausen, Whitechapel Art Gallery, Witte de With, the London and New York Film Festival, MOCA Miami, has been shortlisted for The Future Generation Art Prize and Jarman Award and will be showing at The British Art Show and MIT List at the end of 2010.

Ian White (UK) is an artist, curator and writer based in Berlin and London. As a curator he specializes in artists' film and video, being Adjunct Film Curator at the Whitechapel Gallery, London. He curated "Kinomuseum" (2007) and "Whose History?" (2008) for the Oberhausen International Short Film Festival and was associate curator on "The Secret Public: The last days of the British underground 1978-1988", Kunstverein Munich and touring, 2006. His most recent solo exhibition - a series of performances - was held at the daadgalerie, Berlin, July 2010. He is the facilitator of the LUX Associate Artists Programme.

1. Born Winged Animals and Honey Gatherers of the Soul

2006, 16mm, 9'

The film is composed of black leader intercut with a series of images, glimpses of an area in east London defined as being within earshot of the bells of St Anne's Church, Limehouse, taking place as the bells strike noon. As such, visually and phonetically it attempts to translate an excerpt from the prologue to "On the Genealogy of Morality" (1887) by nineteenth-century German philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche in which he argues that humans have never been able to find out who they really are and that in the attempt to do so - to count the 'twelve quavering bell strokes of our life' - we inevitably lose ourselves. We miscount.

Over the black sections of the film an intimate, crackling fire is heard. Images including the alien skyscrapers of London's Docklands, a woman crossing an empty street, people wandering by a canal, a telephone engineer (the familiar here made strange) appear in- and out of sync with the sound of the church's bells that in turn are distorted to the edge of recognition.

2. **Basking in what feels like
"An Ocean of Grace" I soon
realise that I am not looking
at it, but rather, I AM it,
recognising myself**

2006, 16mm, 8'

Together with "Ben" (2006), the film explores the relationship between physicality and representation - between language and image. Rather than constructing metaphors through which reality might be understood and onto which they are applied instead the film's subject is the study of a focus group, witnessed from behind a two-way mirror. It becomes an example of the way in which speaking subjects (these teenage girls that we see speaking, but do not hear) become images. Their becoming-surface in this way is echoed throughout the film's persistent looking at other kinds of reflective surfaces - from the mirrors in an empty nightclub to the glass walls of corporations - such that representation itself becomes a function in the equation rather than a replacement of it.

3. Ben

2006, 16mm, 10'

Shot in colour on a set that was built to look as though it is shot in black and white, the film is a companion work to "Basking in what feels like 'An Ocean of Grace' I soon realise that I am not looking at it, but rather, I AM it, recognising myself", that throws the latter's contemporary descriptions into historical relief. The film re-inhabits one of Freud's famous psychological case studies and hypnosis is used to prove 'negative hallucination' (where the hypnotized subject becomes convinced they see an object that is not actually there). Two voices are heard on the film's soundtrack, that of the hypnotist and a teenage girl reading a case study that is the description of a man (Ben) being offered up as a story/subject for diagnosis. 'Characters' move around, dressed in stylistically esoteric costumes that point back to an Expressionist aesthetic and also occupy a strange, amateur baroque present. The 'authority' of the case study, the rickety construction of the set and the faltering voice over maintain a precarious sense of balance.

4. SEA OAK

2008, 16mm Installation, 51'

A 16mm projector is spotlighted in the middle of the room, staged like a sculpture. It projects no images. The black leader that is playing carries only a soundtrack - a compilation of extracts from interviews conducted with researchers at The Rockridge Institute, a left-orientated think tank in Berkeley, California. From 2001 until its closure in April 2008, here they examined contemporary political rhetoric with special emphasis on the employment of metaphor and framing. How, for example, the word 'bird' conjures a similar, prototypical image in the common imagination but more dangerously, how metaphor and framing became political tools deployed in and through a strategic rephrasing of Republican discourse, based on such a principle. Language itself is described as a masking structure for religious sentiment and value judgements, constituting a new kind of political power. SEA OAK places trust in this analysis of language as the political left's means to unravel its submerged power of persuasion.

5. The Diamond (Descartes' Daughter)

2008, 16mm, 10'

"Descartes' Daughter" plays with the flipside of "SEA OAK", replacing trust in rationalism with an exploration of its opposite, or its loss. It is inspired by the mythical story that French philosopher, mathematician and physicist René Descartes constructed a mechanical toy as a surrogate after the death of his own daughter, only for this animated machine to be thrown overboard by superstitious sailors during inclement weather on his final journey to Sweden. A girl is seen playing a Nintendo Wii in a homemade costume that Étienne Jules Marey would dress the subjects of his chronophotography to map (or mechanise) their movements. She is in a darkened room, pinned in by lasers - a recreation of the scene from an unlocatable film where lasers protect a diamond that is about to be stolen. Language shatters like light refracted through a crystal, sentences repeat, are amended and the voice we hear skips as though trying to jump across the scratch of a programming error.

6. Sick Serena and Dregs and Wreck and Wreck

2007, 16mm, 12'

Inspired by the use of paradigms in contemporary political theory, they are here traced back to ways in which stained glass windows were a vehicle for communication in a largely illiterate medieval society. Details of the windows reveal a peculiarly contemporary, radical kind of fragmentation. Figures and signs are extrapolated into a oblique yet melodramatic narrative of desire, exchange and representation. By turn highly stylized and slapstick it is played by actors on specially constructed sets that share a similar hybrid aesthetic to the costumes worn in Ben, here rendered spectacularly in colour.

7. GameKeepers without Game

2009, video projection with 5.1 sound,
72'

Set within the structure of a feature length melodrama the film is formally based on the Spanish dramatist Pedro Calderón de la Barca's play "La vida es sueño" (Life is a Dream). Its narrative traces the difficult return of a child who had been banished from the family home, translating this into contemporary British context. Acted scenes against a bright white ground where nothing and nobody touches each other alternate with still shots of objects that fluctuate between status symbols, evidence of crime and theatrical props. A drumming sound track builds up and breaks down like the building of a house, the effect of which is physiological.

Starting times:

11:10, 12:30, 13:50, 15:10, 16:30

Colofon/phon

Productie/Production: Tony Hofman,
Pers & PR/Publicity: Hiske Zomer
Opbouw/Technical Realisation:
Que peut un homme
Teksten/Text: Ian White, Emily Wardill
Redactie/Editing: Ann Demeester,
Gerbrand Korevaar, Hiske Zomer
Vertaling/Translation: Liesbeth Harmsen
Ontwerp/Design: Will Holder
Druk/Printing: Drukkerij de Beste

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