



Western
Front

303 East 8th Avenue
Vancouver, British Columbia
V5T 1S1 Canada

Tuesday to Saturday
Noon to 5:00 pm PST

January 17th - February 22nd 2014

Escape Scenes

Julia Feyrer

Escape Scenes

In Julia Feyrer's *Escape Scenes*, the elements of cinema are constituted in fragments: a silent 16mm film loop provides the setting, cyanotype photograms serve as a lead character, an audio installation provides the soundtrack, and an artist's publication acts as the script. Through the dialogue of these semi-autonomous works, the exhibition itself is a loop of its own making, with each of these components containing and reflecting its own complexities.

The Pedestrians: Left Head, Right Head, Left Body, Right Body, Left Foot, Right Foot, is a series of framed wall sculptures containing cyanotype photograms of parts of the artist's body: silhouettes of her face, head, arm, chest, back, and feet. Each element of their construction is uniquely considered: the glass in the frame is customized by 'slumping' it into a mold to create an impression (complete with hand prints and question marks); the handmade wooden frames are built from the aged two-by-fours that once framed the back of the artists truck, and are lined with mirrors. Depicting a subject's body, these works can also be understood as material bodies, and—with their molded glass 'lens', inlaid mirrors, and contact print 'film'—also suggest the body of the camera. Through the lens of each embossed question mark, role-playing die are magnified revealing a string of queries: who, what, where, when, why, and how. When paired with the corporeal

image fragments, the die beckon an imaginative reconstruction, evoking the game of chance that is always in play when working with analogue images.

Directly across from *The Pedestrians* questions remain open as we see ourselves implicated in the narrative. In the work *Optical Soundtracks: Left Commentary, Right Commentary, Left Music, Right Music, Left Sound Effects, Right Sound Effects*, visitors are reflected in a panorama of mirrors each one corresponding with the cyanotype photograph across from it, and to the 16mm film. Produced in collaboration with Vancouver artist Pietro Sammarco, each of the mirrors has been modified to function as a speaker, emitting the aural elements usually married to a film. Conventionally, an "optical soundtrack" is a waveform embedded directly on the celluloid of the filmic print, and is read and broadcast by the projector. In Feyrer's exhibition, the optical soundtrack is physically separated from the film, with mirrors reflecting the experiences in the gallery alongside music and voice, entangled in conversation.

Similarly, the script, taking the form of a publication, offers no clear narrative path, and is made up of the ruins of other movie scripts pointing readers towards a web of cinematic tropes.

The silent 16mm film itself—the eponymous *Escape Scenes*—is projected on a loop at the rear of the gallery. It was shot from the back of Feyrer's pick-up truck as she drove from the centre

of downtown Vancouver towards its periphery, and is comprised of six scenes, each shot at a different point in this journey and foregrounding a different sculptural scenario built inside the bed of the truck.

Each sculpture, anchored in a box framed with meter sticks, serves as a kind of portal that informs its ever-changing background. The sculptural foreground is active too: kaleidoscopic scenes include locks and chains; a miniature wrecking ball and accompanying mini brick wall to be destroyed; an incomplete puzzle of the Parthenon; homemade fake latex vomit containing plastic novelties, pieces of candy, knick knacks and detritus from the artist's studio; pennants made from Kool-Aid packs and designer ziplock bags; and a mesh veil adorned with chewing gum, matches, and broken plastic rulers. All objects are activated by the wind and the movements of the artist's truck. These imaginary and everyday ruins confront a distracted gaze, symptomatic of travel in the urban environment, with allegorical images that inhabit the view, but can never be read in particular terms.

Following each rear-facing shot is a corresponding scene looking forwards through the cab of the truck. Windows catch reflections of trees and buildings, and we glimpse the artist in the rear-view mirror as she glances back at the assemblages behind her. In order to make the film, Feyrer rigged up a system to operate her wind-up Bolex film camera from the driver's seat, using a road bike

break lever connected to a cable release. This provisional trigger—along with the metre stick frames and the thirty-second limitation of each take of the artist's wind-up camera—serve as reminders that both the process of image-making and the measurement of time and space are imprecise and highly mediated processes. Looking backward and forward, the looping traveler never quite leaves the city. *Escape Scenes* inhabit an unfixed space between static and moving images, where makeshift narratives reveal the fantasy logic of their own construction.

Artist Biography

Julia Feyrer (b. 1982 Victoria, BC) currently lives and works in Vancouver. She received her Meisterschülerin from the Städelschule in Frankfurt, Germany in 2010, and her Bachelor of Fine Arts from the Emily Carr Institute of Art and Design in Vancouver in 2004. Recent solo and two-person exhibitions include *Bottles Under The Influence* (with Tamara Henderson) at the Walter Phillips Gallery, Banff (2013); *Alternatives and Opportunities* at Catriona Jeffries, Vancouver (2012); *Irregular Time Signatures* at Johan Berggren Gallery, Malmö (2011); and *The Poodle Dog Ornamental Bar* at Artspeak, Vancouver (2010).

Acknowledgements

Special assistance by Pietro Sammarco and Wesley Mulvin. Artist book published by Perro Verlag.

List of Works

1. Julia Feyrer

Script Ruins

Artist book

26 pages

2014

2. Julia Feyrer

The Pedestrians: Left Head, Right Head, Left Body, Right Body, Left Foot, Right Foot

Set of six cyanotypes, dice, aged fir, slumped glass, mirror inlay

Each 16 x 22 x 3 in

2014

3. Julia Feyrer and Pietro Sammarco

Optical Soundtracks: Left Commentary, Right Commentary, Left Music, Right Music, Left Sound Effects, Right Sound Effects

Six-channel audio, mirrors, tactile transducers

Each 16 x 22 x 3 in

2014

4. Julia Feyrer

Escape Scenes

16mm film, 4 min 37 sec

2014

