

Printemps de Septembre

Toulouse, France

Group-show weariness threatened at Les Abattoirs, Toulouse's large centre for contemporary art and the heart of 'Printemps ...', yet a few things stood out. Christophe Draeger's grandiose short film *Le Radeau de la Macumba* (2004) is a spliff-fuelled look at Modernism, urban blight and horror. In sharp contrast, Marijke van Warmerdam's short film loop *Met Lasse Handen* (No Hands, 2004) follows a bike trip through the Dutch countryside that features a sudden flight above the fields and trees in a graceful, dream-like motion (from the viewer/cyclist's perspective). Both pieces are smart looks at the lure of fantasy (one social, the other private), and each fit within Bustamante's theme.

Frieze, Jan/Feb 2005

Modern Painters, February 2005

MARTIN HERBERT

september's spring spanking (and some art)

The 2004 Printemps de Septembre

walls rather than in adjacent rooms. But there were also marvellous inclusions such as Anne Dumez's quietist photographs, which, with their emptied-out iconography (women sit with their backs turned to viewers in drab laundrettes, or stand blankly on street corners) strive for a zero level of communication and affect. Christoph Draeger and Gary Breslin's installation *Le Radeau de la Macumba* (2004), a video with accompanying sculptural tableaux, almost justified the wrenching theme on its own. As zombies reveal themselves to a young couple who are spooking a modernist building erected on a burial ground, our relation to the filmic referent — the archetypal teen horror flick — collapses just as surely as does the participants' to reality, and as does culture's man to modernism.

PRINTEMPS DE SEPTEMBRE 2004 RENDEZ-VOUS DES IMAGES CONTEMPORAINES

Toulouse, 24.9. – 17.10.2004

von Jörg Bader

War bis dahin Christoph Draeger ein gewiefte Aufzeichner der hysterisch-paranoiden Dokumentarwelt der Tagesschauen, so scheint er mit seiner neuen, speziell für »Printemps de septembre« produzierten Videoinstallation den Weg der Dekonstruktion der Gewaltdarstellung in den Massenmedien verlassen zu haben. Mit »Le Radeau de la Macumba« beteiligt er sich selbst am Mythen-Basteln. Die Verquickung von modernistischer Architektur (in Form einer Ruine) und Initiationsriten im heutigen Brasilien mit dem Helden der aktuellen Telenovela-Szene und einer hollywood'schen Gruseldramaturgie entzaubert den Mythos nicht, sondern festigt ihn einmal mehr. Ein Studiengang im Bereich »Black Atlantic« wäre dem Künstler zu empfehlen.

Die Bustamante ist allem Anschein nach alle...

WEEKENDArts

The New York Times

THE NEW YORK TIMES, FRIDAY, APRIL 1, 2005

THE LISTINGS

Galleries: Chelsea

CHRISTOPH DRAEGER AND GARY BRESLIN, "The Brazil Project," Roebling Hall, 606 West 26th Street, (212) 929-8180, through April 9. In collaboration with Mr. Breslin, a film director, Mr. Draeger has produced a half-hour horror movie about a pair of young lovers who explore the site of a derelict, unfinished concrete building on the outskirts of Sao Paulo, Brazil. The ghostly and satanic events that occur are not very scary, but the film is absorbing to watch and it has passages of considerable beauty.

JOHNSON

Roebling Hall

Flash Art, May/June 2005

Christoph Draeger

It is not surprising that an artist fascinated with the horror and disruption wrought by real-life disasters — from the eruption of Krakatoa to the crash of TWA flight 800 — would turn his attention to the fictional violence of the horror film. For the exhibition "The Brazil Project," Christoph Draeger, along with filmmaker Gary Breslin, produced his own train wreck in a 30-minute film that pays homage to this terror-driven genre.

Set in and shot on location in São Paulo, Brazil, the narrative of *Constructio Infernalis* is uniquely situated amidst the country's failed experiments in social engineering through modernist architecture. The plot follows two students, Caio and Lucia, who dare each other to visit the abandoned Paço des Artes, designed by Caio's architecture professor and rumored to be haunted. With their barely veiled allusions to Oscar

Niemeyer, the Brazilian architect renowned for designing sculpturally striking but unlivable concrete buildings, Draeger and Breslin's narrative unfolds in one such horrifyingly obsolete construction.

True to the genre, the young couple's trespassing leads to their demise with enough Catholic-infused symbolism along the way, literally spilling off the screen and into the gallery (Draeger reconstructs the ritual sandbox used in the film by a group of glue-sniffing Exú cultists). And while homage is everywhere in the film (with a cameo by Brazilian horror icon, Zé do Caixão), a provocative critique of modernism's naïve utopianism is perhaps more pretense than content.

—Melissa Friedling

CHRISTOPH DRAEGER and GARY BRESLIN, *Constructio Infernalis*, 2005. DVD, 29 mins. Courtesy of the artists and Roebling Hall.

