



Obra Social
Fundación "la Caixa"



Runa Islam, *Tuin*, 1998. Installation, 16mm film, DVD. Colour. Sound. 6 min, loop. Courtesy of the artist and White Cube

THE CINEMA EFFECT

ILLUSION, REALITY AND THE MOVING IMAGE

R E A L I S M

Press Dossier

CaixaForum Madrid

28 January - 24 April 2011

CaixaForum Madrid hosts the first part of an exhibition that explores the influence of the cinema and the image on contemporary culture

The Cinema Effect. Illusion, Reality and the Moving Image. Realism

The cinema is everywhere nowadays: on television, on computers, on mobile phones, etc. And the cinematic language has become crucial to understanding contemporary art and culture. "la Caixa" Social Outreach Programmes presents a new exhibition exploring the cinema's influence on the construction of our visual culture. *The Cinema Effect. Illusion, Reality and the Moving Image* is divided into two parts, *Realism* and *Dreams*. This distinction is made in order to focus on the two dimensions that the cinema has occupied since its birth: "dreams", as exemplified in the films of Georges Méliès; and "realisms", as seen in the Lumière brothers' documentaries. To reflect on these two branches in the cinematic arts, the exhibition features a selection of works by contemporary artists who work with documentary images and multimedia installations to speak to the spectator about universal ideas: the image of the present, the construction of memory, subjectivity, simulation... *Realism*, the part presented at CaixaForum Madrid, considers the ways in which the visual support can alter not only how we see reality but also what reality actually *is*. The artists represented in the show explore how the moving image can be used to entertain, to deceive and to complicate the way in which we navigate reality. *The Cinema Effect. Illusion, Reality and the Moving Image. Realism* features works by Paul Chan, Ian Charlesworth, Omer Fast, Runa Islam, Isaac Julien, Julian Rosefeldt, Mungo Thomson and Kerry Tribe.

The curators of the exhibition *The Cinema Effect. Illusion, Reality and the Moving Image. Realism*, an exhibition jointly organised by "la Caixa" Social Outreach Programmes and the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC, are Kerry Brougher, Anne Ellegood, Kelly Gordon and Kristen Hileman. The show will be open to the public at CaixaForum Madrid from 28 January to 24 April 2011. The second part of the exhibition, *Dream*, will open at CaixaForum Barcelona in May, as part of LOOP Festival 2011 programme.

Madrid, 27 January 2011. Isabel Salgado, Assistant Director, Culture Department, Fundació "la Caixa"; and Kelly Gordon, Associate Curator, Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC, this morning presented the exhibition *The Cinema Effect. Illusion, Reality and the Moving Image. Realism* at CaixaForum Madrid. Through a selection of works by artists who are rather under-represented at contemporary art galleries in Spain, *The Cinema Effect...* presents a novel exploration of the powerful influence that images exercise on our culture today.

The exhibition *The Cinema Effect. Illusion, Reality and the Moving Image* is produced by "la Caixa" Social Outreach Programmes and organised by the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden of the Smithsonian Institution (Washington, DC) with the support of the Broad Art Foundation and the Audrey and Sydney Irmas Charitable Foundation and the cooperation of the Holenia Trust in memory of Joseph H. Hirshhorn, the Friends of Jim and Barbara Demetron Endowment Fund and the Hirshhorn Trust.

One of the goals that "la Caixa" Social Outreach Programmes pursues is to make contemporary art more widely known, breaking down the barriers that often prevent such art from reaching wider audiences. To this end, the organisation's cultural programme focuses particularly on the most recent artistic productions, both in the exhibitions programmed and in the acquisition policy followed with regard to the Contemporary Art Collection.

More than twenty years ago now, in Barcelona, in 1990, "la Caixa" Social Outreach Programmes presented *Passages de l'image*, an exhibition organised jointly with the Centre Georges Pompidou which became recognised as a reference in the field of the new artistic languages. In 2005, the two institutions once combined to produce an ambitious new project on video: *Video Times. 1965-2005*, which reconstructs the history of video art.

The *Video Times* exhibition, precisely, provided a reference when it came to organising *The Cinema Effect. Illusion, Reality and the Moving Image*, presented for the first time in Spain by "la Caixa" Social Outreach Programmes. The new show is complemented by an extensive programme of parallel activities that include, particularly, the film season *Alternate Currents. Transfers between Experimental and Commercial Film*. The film programme will feature showings of works by such directors as Apichatpong Weerasethakul and Matt Reeves, amongst others. The parallel activities also include *Special Effects*, a contemporary art workshop conceived especially for the occasion.

From Méliès and Lumière to Facebook and YouTube

The cinema is everywhere nowadays: on television, on computers, on mobile phones, etc. We can all make a film of our lives. And the cinematic language has become crucial to understanding contemporary art and culture. *The Cinema Effect. Illusion, Reality and the Moving Image* explores the influence and impact of the cinematic on the way we construct our visual culture.

The exhibition is divided into two parts, *Realism* and *Dream*, which can be seen in Madrid and Barcelona respectively, one after the other. These subtitles refer to the two dimensions that the cinema has occupied since its birth, and which can be identified even such early works as the films made by the Lumière brothers and Georges Méliès. Louis and Auguste Lumière represent the urge to capture things that happen, whilst Méliès saw the cinema as illusion and fantasy, mental projection and the exploration of imaginary universes.

Today more than ever, Lumière and Méliès go hand-in-hand. Reality and fiction become mixed, confused. From the images we constantly see on Facebook and YouTube to the audiovisual fiction that contaminates broad swathes of our lives, everything is constructed. Sets, dramatisations and montages are everywhere.

The Cinema Effect. Illusion, Reality and the Moving Image combines the spectacular nature of the works featured in the show with reflection on this duality, which runs through 20th- and 21st-century audiovisual genres right down to today's video art and installations.

The works selected are by contemporary artists who work with documentary images and multimedia installations. These are recent works (in the case of the show at CaixaForum Madrid, only one piece was produced before 2000), works that speak to the spectator about universal ideas: the image of the present, the construction of memory, subjectivity, simulation...

Realism

CaixaForum Madrid hosts *Realism*, the first of the two parts that comprise the exhibition. *Realism* —a term that, at first glance, suggests, not so much the real in itself, more a mediation or interpretation of the real, an aspiration to the real— is something that we find not only in the productions of visual artists, fiction

writers and film directors, but also in the work of historians, journalists and documentary makers.

Everything that presents images of the world (from artists showing their works in museums to users who post their videos on Facebook, YouTube, etc.) reveals its own version of *realism*. The worldwide popularity of television reality shows suggests that audiences accept that what they see has been cut, edited and programmed to exaggerate dramatic effects and to present a stylised vision, a formula, of what we call *realism*. Spectators are becoming increasingly aware that most art and popular culture productions, whether they are labelled as “real” or as “fiction”, are, in fact, an ambiguous combination of the two concepts.

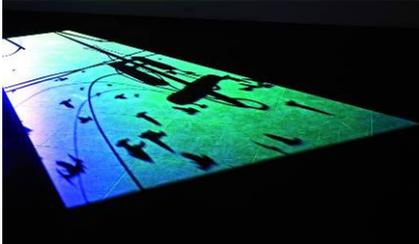
The exhibition *Realism* explores ways in which the visual support can alter not only the way we see reality, but also what reality actually *is*. The works featured in the show, by a selection of international artists, focus on ways in which the moving image can be used to entertain, to deceive and to complicate the way we navigate reality. By creating works that appropriate cinematic strategies or reference well-known events and cultural sources, these artists encourage us to reflect critically on the habits that condition our perceptions of reality.

Works

Paul Chan (Hong Kong, China, 1973)

1st Light, 2005

Projection, digital animation. Colour. Silent. 14 min, loop



Projected in a continuous loop, this computer animation, portraying the artist's vision of an apocalyptic event, takes us on an endless cycle from dawn to dusk and back again, and from tranquillity to disaster. In the images, a series of consumer products rise into the air, whilst human bodies fall in the opposite direction. This reversal between product and person suggests a cause-and-effect relationship between our excessively commercialised world and the crisis.

Ian Charlesworth (Liverpool, United Kingdom, 1970)

John, 2005

Single-monitor installation, video transferred to DVD. Colour. Sound. 13:28 min

Filmmakers and television and advertising executives have recently been recruiting the working-class youth of Belfast and Northern Ireland in general to “play” themselves on camera. Charlesworth captures one, John, during an audition as he struggles to follow off-screen directions to “act” like himself, including pretending to fight with his girlfriend, confronting a perceived adversary and dealing with a drunken parent.



Kerry Tribe (Boston, United States, 1973)

Double, 2001

Single-monitor installation, video transferred to DVD. Colour. Sound. 10:25 min

In order to make this video, the artist placed an advertisement and hired five actors who resembled her to “play” her on film. The actors each had conversations with Tribe and then were filmed playing the role of “video artist.” They engage in everyday activities and discuss their life and work based on their memories and interpretations of Tribe’s background, life choices and desires.



Runa Islam (Dacca, Bangladesh, 1970)

Tuin, 1998

Installation, 16mm film and DVD. Colour. Sound. 6 min, loop.



In *Tuin*, the artist recreates a sequence from Rainer Werner Fassbinder’s film *Martha* (1974), featuring a 360-degree turn of the camera when the male and female leads meet for the first time. In the original, the production mechanisms are hidden, but in Islam’s remake the slow-motion video loops reveal the circular rail used for the travelling camera shot, as well as the film crew recording the scene.

Julian Rosefeldt (Munich, Germany, 1965)

Lonely Planet, 2006

35mm film project, video transferred to DVD. Colour. Sound. 16:18 min, loop.

Rosefeldt portrays a typical back-packer who is following instructions gleaned from a Lonely Planet travel guide. This is clearly a Western traveller, with his backpack decorated with images of Che Guevara, his bandana and his flip-flops, traversing modern India. During the course of his journey, which becomes ever more surreal, doubts spring up about his identity, as to whether he is a “real” person or a “fictitious” character, as the camera moves from close-up to wider shots, revealing the film-making equipment.



Isaac Julien (London, United Kingdom, 1960)

Fantôme Créole, 2005

Installation, 16mm film, transferred to DVD. Colour. Sound. 23:27 min



Julien spreads his meditation on the cinema, the landscape, character and the metaphor across four screens and two continents, filming on location in Burkina Faso and northern Scandinavia. In this changing scene, two figures appear: a woman, who at times calls to mind the polar explorer Matthew A. Henson, crossing both frozen wastes and arid landscapes; and a “trickster”, who explores both traditional African architecture and urban spaces.

Omer Fast (Jerusalem, Israel, 1972)

Godville, 2005

Video installation. Colour. Sound. 51 min

The characters featured in *Godville* are residents of Colonial Williamsburg, a popular tourist destination that recreates the colonial capital of Virginia in the 18th century. Fast interviewed a “housewife”, a “militiaman” and a “slave”, asking them about both their real lives and the roles they play. The line between performer and self is complicated as each subject blends historical fact, subjective interpretation, the vagaries of memory, and performative flourish. Fast’s aggressive editing emphasizes the power of the filmmaker over the representation of his subjects.

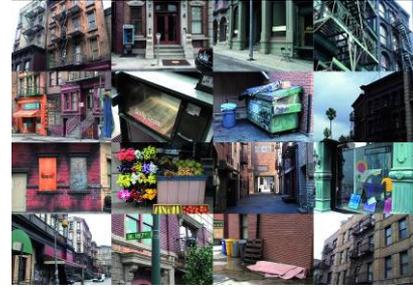


Mungo Thomson (Woodland, California, United States, 1969)

New York, New York, New York, New York, 2004

Projected installation, DVD. Colour. Sound. Paramount: 9:49 min, loop. Fox: 6:31 min, loop. Universal: 8:59 min, loop. Culver: 3:40 min, loop.

In Thomson's four-screen installation, series of looped images, seemingly of New York street scenes, are revealed to be Hollywood sets. A palm tree in the background, fake fruit in a shop window and the exposure of a seemingly solid building as a mere façade alert the viewer to the deception.



The Cinema Effect.

Illusion, Reality and the Moving Image.

Realism

28 January - 24 April 2011

CaixaForum Madrid

Paseo del Prado, 36
28014 Madrid

Times

Daily, from 10 am to 8 pm

“la Caixa” Social Outreach Programmes Information Service

Daily, from 9 am to 8 pm

Tel.: 902 22 30 40

www.lacaixa.es/obrasocial

Admission free to the exhibition

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<http://www.lacaixa.es/obrasocial>

Multimedia press room

<http://press.lacaixa.es/socialprojects/>

PARALLEL ACTIVITIES

INAUGURAL LECTURE

Reflections on the Cinema Effect

Kelly Gordon, Associate Curator, Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington DC

January 27 | 6.30 pm

FILM SEASON LINKED TO THE EXHIBITION

Alternate Currents.

January 31 - February 28

Counter cinema or avant-garde cinema? There are two ways of understanding so-called *experimental cinema*. The first defines it as an exercise in resistance against the hegemony of commercial cinema and its pre-fabricated ways. The second, on the other hand, understands experimental cinema in the most advanced, almost military, sense of the word “vanguard”: those that go first, blazing a trail, exploring the possibilities and the terrain for those that will come later. From this second position it is easier to understand and explore the inevitable crossovers between the two, the fusion and contagion that occur between commercial and experimental cinema. And it is this mixed terrain that this brief film season seeks to explore, presenting a programme of films that illustrate the transfers that take place between these two approaches to filmmaking.

Coordinated by: **Gonzalo de Pedro**, film critic and member of the editorial board of *Cahiers du Cinéma-Spain* and the Punto de Vista Festival selection committee; and **Garbiñe Ortega**, curator, contributor to ARTIUM, Vitoria, currently working in the United States at such centres as the Pacific Film Archive, the San Francisco Cinematheque and the Flaherty in New York City.

Monday, January 31 | 7 pm

- ***Tropical Malady***. Thailand (2004), 118 min
Apichatpong Weerasethakul
- ***At Land***. USA. (1944), 15 min
Maya Deren

Monday, February 7 | 7 pm

- ***Cloverfield. USA. (2008), 85 min***
Matt Reeves
- ***Notes on the Circus. USA. (1966), 13 min***
Jonas Mekas

Monday, February 21 | 7 pm

- ***Nobody's Business. USA. (1996), 60 min***
Alan Berliner
- ***Home Stories. Germany (1990), 6 min***
Matthias Müller

Friday, March 4 | 7 pm

- ***Los muertos. Argentina (2004), 78 min***
Lisandro Alonso
- ***Nijuman no Borei (200.000 fantasmas). France (2007), 10 min***
Jean-Gabriel Périot

Places limited

Activity free of charge

All showings in original version with Spanish subtitles

Ticket office open from 6.30 pm

GUIDED TOURS OF THE EXHIBITION

Guided tours for the general public

28 January - 24 April 2011

Times: Tuesdays and Thursdays, at 7 pm

Wednesdays and Fridays, at 1 pm

Saturdays, at 11 am and 6 pm

Holidays: no tours

Registration at reception, half an hour before the tour begins.

Activity free of charge. Places limited

Guided tours for groups, by arrangement

28 January - 24 April 2011

Minimum 10 people, maximum 30

Advance booking: 91 330 73 23

Groups with their own guide should also reserve visiting time

Price: €1/group

Dramatised guided tours for schools

31 January - 17 April 2011

Second and third cycle of primary education, ESO compulsory secondary education, baccalaureate and vocational training

Times: Tuesday to Friday, at 10 and 11.30 am.

Duration: 1 h 30 min

Groups: maximum 30 pupils

Price: €18/group

FAMILY ACTIVITIES

Special Effects

Flying, turning into a dwarf or a giant, falling from the seventh floor without coming to harm, changing face, travelling from Madrid to Tibet in a flash, dancing in the rain... Anything and everything is possible at the cinema. Do you want to try these special effects?

From 12 March 2011

Family workshop, ages 5+ years

Times: Saturdays, from 11 am to 2 pm and from 4 to 8 pm; Sundays and holidays, from 11 am to 2 pm

Activity free of charge. Places limited

ACTIVITIES FOR THE ELDERLY

Coffee-debate with the arts

12 February - 19 April 2011

Time: Tuesdays, at 5 pm

Registration: 913 307 300

Minimum 10 people, maximum 30

Activity free of charge. Places limited