

SPACE

PRESS RELEASE

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Urban Pornography: October 25-December 1

Doug Aitken, Jordi Bernadó, Oliver Boberg, Laura Carton, Lourdes Grobet, Hong Hao, Naoya Hatakeyama, Todd Hido, William Jones, doreen morrissey, Jean-Luc Moulène, Warren Neidich, Catherine Opie, Bill Owens, Lisa Roy, Alex Slade

Featuring project room installations by **Jonah Freeman** and **Michael Phelan**

"The city is made and made over into the simulacrum of the body, and the body, in its turn, is transformed, 'citified' urbanized as a distinctively metropolitan body."

-Elizabeth Grosz

Urban Pornography examines the contemporary staging of the urban condition photographically. The recordings of banal structures and spaces range in approach from cynical to nostalgic, recovering obscure, in-between sites -- domestic facades, billboards, cruise interiors, in a process of sensationalizing an abjected ordinary. In revealing the prosaic and spectacularizing the banal, the images of global metropolises represented by this group of artists, serve to critique the perversion of repetition, sameness, predictability, and excess of "the city."

In the tradition of California, Catherine Opie's Bel Air homes, Doug Aitken's vacant billboards, Alex Slade's abandoned estate lots, doreen morrissey's rest-stops, and William Jones', Todd Hido's, and Bill Owens' documentation of suburban real estate obsessively and ambivalently record tragic, lost, or liminal spaces, creating theatrical images particular to a kind of affluent/abject American aesthetic.

In examining Hong Hao's monumental Beijing highrises and their bizarre presence relative to the urban environment, Naoya Hatakeyama's imaging of Tokyo's urban sprawl, Jean-Luc Moulène's homage to Berlin, and Lourdes Grobet's Mexico City monuments, the operations of the photographic -- to frame, capture, fix, and spectacularize -- are perplexed when dealing with this everyday subject matter. What does it mean to spectacularize the banal? What does this repetitious imaging of the quotidian of urban appearance and experience reveal?

Oliver Boberg's constructed models of cryptic architectonic spaces are photographed as elements of masqueraded metropoli. In fabricating faux structures, a negation of specificity of place tends to collapse the represented terrain into the vague. His strategy of the simulacrum produces complex relationships between the constructed and the real of the urban environment.

Laura Carton's process of downloading pornographic images from the internet which are then laboriously disembodied via digital manipulation, produces uncanny domestic interiors. Lisa Roy's garish and glossy monumental images fetishistically mirror the kind of disco-modernist mode of lavish design located in casinos and cruise ships. Jordi Bernadó documents Barcelona's bizarrely Roccoco and luxuriant-obscene interiors of peep shows and brothels in a highly formal fashion. Warren Neidich's Parisian sex shop facades abstractly project via mirror reflection the interior goings on, mapped onto the skin or surface of the building.

Jonah Freeman's video projection *In and Out* presents a visual and psycho-social critique of the architecture of hotels, framing the theatrics and excesses of their interiors. This work bears the formal sensibility of his architectural photography, now put to music and motion. His new installation reflects the mediations of artifice and constructedness of both space and subjectivity characteristic of his larger practice.

Michael Phelan's new work entitled *Desert Landscape* utilizes an appropriated decorative element from a fish tank. This image, originally a backdrop for an aquarium, is produced here as a photographic mural or recontextualized wallpaper - a kind of artificialization of the natural. Indexing his quintessential aquarium cum minimalist stack sculptures, Phelan continues his engagement with the suburbia-Americana readymade, characterizing the perversity of conventional taste and desire.

Urban Pornography is made possible, in part, by contributions from the Cultural Services of the French Embassy (www.frenchculture.org), Stephen Wirtz Gallery, Riva Gallery, and Nathalie Angles.

Special thanks to Peter Zellner, Architect, Exhibition Advisor.

Project Space: Selected by Ali Subotnick: Daniel Roth

Untitled (Town Hidden Under Concrete, In the Brain of the Owl), 2001

In his first New York installation, Daniel Roth's photographs, drawings on vellum, and videos of his birthplace, Germany's Black Forest, examine the unpredictable relationships between man, nature, and architecture, both real and imaginary.

ARTISTS