: Double agents

The Trouble with Talkies

ADI Space, Rivington Place, 81 Rivington Street, London EC2A 3AY
Opening 20 May 6.30 – 8.30
21 May – 12 June
Thursday – Sunday, 1pm – 6pm

The Trouble with Talkies refers to a moment in the history of cinema when the introduction of sound re-cast the 'movies' as 'talkies' and gave speaking precedence over action. In *Pursuits of Happiness* Stanley Cavell writes of conversation as a way of living. When the first 'Talkies' came along they were full of people deriving pleasure from hearing themselves speak, tripping over their words, talking in unison...

This is the first exhibition curated by Double agents. It is born out of an agreement to utilise a simple mechanism to 'bring into a conversation', a work, offering its participation, maybe as an alibi, a proxy or coincidence. The works brought together here could perhaps be said to skirt around the borders and limits of conversation, the slippages, co-incidences that occur in the pursuit of a common ground through language.

The show includes the following works:

Cecily Brennan's *Collapsing Can* seems to know about that moment when there's no point talking any more. What follows from that space is a build-up of pressure until a small but definite collapse happens - a falling over with a thud that is both bleak and somehow funny at the same time.

Oendivatbemututo (Self Fashion Show) was made through the Bela Balazs Film studio (Budapest 1976) by Tibor Hajas. Using the passer by to pose for the camera, Hajas sets up an impossible situation as a voiceover directs a running commentary at them that they are unable to hear. The result is a one-sided tirade that brings into question the relationship between participant, audience and artist.

Returning, after exile, to the village where she grew up Jitka Hanzlová's photograph, *Rokytník, 1991*, shows a young girl and a goat on its hind legs holding each other, in a dance, in a field above Rokytník. A moment between talk. Complete enjoyment. Our position is more precarious: Has our return somehow precipitated their balance and intimacy? Are they doing this *for* us? *Despite* us? Will they now fall, apart?

Michel Khleifi's and Eyal Sivan's *Route 181* is a four and a half hour video-document of the film-makers' journey in 2002 from the south to the north of Israel/Palestine following the UN borders of the never implemented 1947 partition plan (resolution 181). On this virtual line, they encounter anonymous Israelis and Palestinians and listen with the ears of the other, to their stories, their experiences,

their memories of the past, their understanding of the present situation as well as their hopes for the future.

Anthony McCall's *Miniature in Black and White* (1972), a set of 81 35mm slides back-projected onto a small plexiglass screen at head height, is a very direct work, but one that expands beyond the simplicity of its medium. It acts on our experience of looking at a physical level, and draws the viewer into the complications that lie there. It exists as an insistent reminder of two things; the deceptions of the 'moving' image, and the crucial role of the physical encounter with a work.

Locky Morris's *Itch* invites the viewer to peer down the lens of a photographer's loupe, where a mound of silver shavings nests in a shallow depression on the top surface of a white plinth. Magnified, this fragile detritus, scratched off a lottery card throws into question the rhetoric of chance and predetermination.

The show is accompanied by issue two of the publication, *1+1+1*, which records and expands on this process of conversation in a series of texts by Adam Chodzko, Graham Ellard and Stephen Johnstone, Jaki Irvine, Uriel Orlow, Lisa Panting, Anne Tallentire.

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in conjunction with ADi Projects