

Contact:
Mark Linga
617.452.3586
mlinga@mit.edu

NEWS RELEASE

MIT List Visual Arts Center presents
the first museum survey exhibition of
the works of Belgian artist David Claerbout,
designed and organized by the Centre Pompidou, Paris, France
(February 8-April 6, 2008)

Opening Reception: Friday, February 8, 2008, 5-7PM

Cambridge, MA–January 2008. The MIT List Visual Arts Center (LVAC) is pleased to present the first museum survey exhibition featuring the works of Belgian artist David Claerbout. Since 1996, David Claerbout (b. Kortrijk, Belgium, 1969) has created works that navigate between the still and the moving image and between photographic and digital techniques. He has developed a type of photography in motion, a "moving still," into which, since 2004, he has introduced narrative elements. Filmed in architectural settings representative of modern culture and the contemporary urban context, Claerbout's works often explore the passage of time and the unfolding of space.

Kindergarten Antonio Sant'Elia, 1932 (1998), a moving and still image, is based on a 1932 photograph of the opening of architect Giuseppe Terragni's kindergarten Antonio Sant'Elia in Como.

Four Persons Standing, 1999, features a projected image of people standing outside a modernist building. Upon closer inspection, one notices that the women and men are in styles of dress from different eras, contradicting the notion of photography's ability to capture a single moment in time.

Vietnam, 1967, near Duc Pho (reconstruction after Hiromishi Mine), 2001, depicts a plane shot down by friendly fire during the Vietnam War. This comes from a famous black-and-white photograph taken by war reporter Hiromishi Mine. Claerbout filmed the landscape thirty-three years later, and combined the two into a subtle moving and still image.

A highway overpass sheltering a homeless sleeper serves as the compositional setting for *The Stack, 2002* but the landscape and sleeper depicted become secondary to the real protagonist of the work, time, as the sun's light is diminished over 36 minutes of approaching twilight.

-more-

Bordeaux Piece, 2004, is comprised of a sequence of seven shots, each shot lasting two-three minutes to create an ambiguous short narrative. Although Claerbout based his story on Jean-Luc Godard's *Mépris (Contempt)*, the plot is not important. The same sequence of shots was taken every ten minutes, in the changing light of a single day, seventy a day in total. Shooting began at 5:30AM and ended at 10:00PM over the course of numerous days between mid-July and mid-August. In the final edit, the story is played out seventy times over, in exactly the same way, each time in the same light, a light corresponding to the same time of day, but on different days. Each of these cycles lasts between ten and twelve minutes, and the whole piece, which is about, and organized by, light, lasts thirteen hours and forty minutes.

In *Shadow Piece*, 2005, the viewer observes a number of passersby attempting to open a set of glass doors into the entrance hall of a building. The narrative element in the piece are the shadows themselves, which remain fixed, suggesting that time is frozen and static.

In *Sections of a Happy Moment*, 2007, Claerbout utilizes multiple cameras placed at different angles and distances to capture a fleeting moment. A Chinese family, surrounded by a plaza and an anonymous modernist housing project, responds to a ball that is suspended and floating in the air. The architecture contrasts with the intimacy of the group and the happy family scene seems at odds with the all-seeing surveillance cameras.

David Claerbout was designed and organized by the Centre Pompidou in Paris, France, where it was on view from October 2, 2007-January 7, 2008. Centre Pompidou Curator of New Media Christine Van Assche is the curator of the exhibition. The exhibition will travel to the Kunstmuseum St. Gallen, Switzerland (May-June 2008); and to the De Pont Foundation, Tilburg, The Netherlands; and the Metropolitan Museum of Photography, Tokyo, Japan in 2009.

The exhibition is accompanied by a catalogue published in two separate editions: one French and one English by JRP|Ringier. The 170 page illustrated publication was jointly produced by the Centre Pompidou, Paris with the MIT List Visual Arts Center and the De Pont Museum of Contemporary Art, Tilburg. The catalogue features essays by Raymond Bellour, Françoise Parfait, Dirk Snauwaert, and Christine Van Assche.

About the Artist

David Claerbout was educated at the Nationaal Hoger Instituut voor Schone Kunsten, Antwerp and at Rijksakademie van beeldende kunsten, Amsterdam. His work has been exhibited at The Dundee Contemporary Arts Centre, Scotland; Van Abbemuseum, Eindhoven and Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, Rotterdam, both in the Netherlands; CGAC Centro Galego de Arte Contemporánea, Santiago di Compostela, Spain; SMAK Stedelijk Museum Voor Aktuele Kunst, Ghent, Belgium; and the DIA Center for the Arts, New York.

-more-

David Claerbout is represented by Yvon Lambert Gallery in Paris and New York, Galerie Hauser & Wirth, Zurich, Switzerland and Galerie Micheline Szwajcer, Antwerp, Belgium, among others. He currently resides and works in Antwerp and Berlin.

Support for *David Claerbout* has been generously provided by Art Mentor Foundation Lucerne, Switzerland; Minister for Culture, Youth and Sports, Flemish Community; Nimoy Foundation; the Council for the Arts at MIT; the Society of Friends of Belgium in America; and the Massachusetts Cultural Council. Media Sponsor: Phoenix Media/Communications Group.



Directions:

The MIT List Visual Arts Center is located in the Wiesner Building, 20 Ames St., at the eastern edge of the MIT campus. It is in close proximity to Kendall Square, Memorial Drive, and the Longfellow Bridge.

By T, take the red line to the Kendall/MIT stop, follow Main St. west to Ames St., turn left, and walk one block to the cross walk. The MIT List Visual Arts Center housed in a building identifiable by its white gridded exterior, will be on your left. Signage is on the building.

By car, coming across the Longfellow Bridge or from Memorial Drive, follow signs for Kendall Square. Limited metered parking is available on Ames Street. A parking garage is located at the Cambridge Center complex (entrance on Ames between Main and Broadway) during business hours and on campus after business hours and on weekends.

Information: 617.253.4680 or <http://web.mit.edu/lvac>

All exhibitions at the MIT List Visual Arts Center are free and open to the public. Wheelchair accessible. Accommodations are provided by request.

-end-