

> **SUMMER SHORTS:**

**MICHEL AUDER, FAYÇAL BAGHRICHE, STEVEN BROWER, FILIP CENEK, RICHARD FINKELSTEIN, JASON GLASSER, TOM KOTIK, NEVAN LAHART, JANINE LARIVIERE, CAROLINE MCCARTHY, PATRICK MARTINEZ, PHILLIPE MESTE, TOKI OZAKI, TERE RECARENS AND SAMUEL ROUSSEAU.**

EXHIBITION DATES: JUNE 4 – JUNE 21, 2004

GALLERY HOURS: FRIDAY TO MONDAY 1 TO 7 PM

OPENING RECEPTION: FRIDAY JUNE 4, 6-9PM

If "Summer Shorts" provides a largely light-hearted and reliably unoriginal title for the Parker's Box mini festival of short video works, the subtitles given to the three programs intend to indicate that despite the imminence of summer, there is something serious going on here too.

"Fear of Flying" is one of the most illogical of modern maladies (in the face of statistics) and is a condition that surely belies deeper fears about the dangers of our contemporary lot in life. Michel Auder's 1983 film documents the acquisition of a pilot's license and an airplane that evokes an age of happy-go-luckyism that seems somehow far away today. Three other parts of this program pre-date 9/11 by a lesser margin than Auder, including Philippe Meste's collection of missile launch footage, Samuel Rousseau's vicarious suicide via the destruction of a tape recorder, and Patrick Martinez' September 9 video, "Freestyle" in which he uses his video camera to bestow frightening aerobatic skills on large airliners. Post 9/11 works include Tere Recarens "Besenrein" (Well Swept) in which attempts are made by a parachutist/cameraman to sweep the clouds with a small plastic broom; Steven Brower shows a fragment of his epic ongoing project that documents the activities of a failed and disillusioned astronaut – both evoking a very different kind of fear of flying.

The second program offers a more psychodelic view of the world, drawing on notions of the currently awkward alliance of impossible desires for a return to the liberated attitudes of the 70's, in contrast with the new "Psycho-delia" attitude of our digital-cyber-computerized environment. While the computer-cybersphere seems to be a great leveler of banal digital effects, an increasing number of artists have emulated new technologies with primitive means, or used the potential of computers to revisit old ideas. Samuel Rousseau has experimented with both of the above in his hilarious "Technoclip"; Patrick Martinez and Janine Lariviere both revel in creating low-tech psychedelic settings for the trippy worlds of their respective videos "Liquid" and "Rolling Hills"; Toki Ozaki sings along to an Elvis Presley 45, both aurally and physically spinning, while Rick Finkelstein combines animated drawing and found footage to invoke the story of the Collier Brothers - touchingly summoning us into the strange world of the eccentric bros of hoarders who lived only for each other and their stuff.

The final program, "Observation Deck", makes allusion to the subliminal stress and modern malaise – more than most of us realize so far – of our ever more scrutinized existence in a society of increasingly ubiquitous surveillance systems. Michel Auder's films have often shown him to be an inveterate voyeur, but as such he puts himself in the position of seeking information and revelation- even if it's more for the spectator's excitement. Tom Kotik observes himself, stoically walking through mid-town listening to the hardcore reverberation of Slayer, while Filip Cenek rewinds, re-runs and finally reinterprets a mysterious piece of Czech drama. Fayçal Baghriche uses the old trick of filming the world backwards and choreographing one character going against the flow; Caroline McCarthy turns the world around, taking an innocent jacket blowing in the wind on a clothesline and turning it upside down to resemble the sinister dance of a ghostly figure, while Nevan Lahart appears in contrast to the other artists, using tongue-in-cheek cartoon techniques to make a true-faux surveillance of the "Smouldering Bush" himself.