



## **Mortal Coil**

**Edith Dekyndt, Simon Faithfull, John Gerrard, Agnieszka Kalinowska**

SEPTEMBER 12 – OCTOBER 5, 2008

GALLERY HOURS: FRIDAY TO MONDAY 1 TO 7 PM

**OPENING RECEPTION: FRIDAY SEPTEMBER 12, 6-11 PM**

Parker's Box is delighted to present "Mortal Coil", an exhibition of works by four artists from Northern Europe, whose respective practices all include the use of moving images. While none of the participating artists comes from quite as far north as the Danish court where Shakespeare's Hamlet\* pronounced the famous words of the exhibition title, they all certainly understand that character's obsessions. In the very contemporary choice of techniques and images made by these artists, there is a significant grain of Hamlet's preoccupation with the fragile spiral of existence.

In 16<sup>th</sup> Century English, the word "coyle", in referring to the continuum of life's bustle, already had the connotation of repetitious action, and perhaps also already suggested the spiraling form that has become its primary definition in modern language. Contemporary art spectators may have become accustomed to viewing video works as a loop, but the relation of each of the exhibiting artists to repetition manifests itself in particularly contrasting ways, while always accentuating and heightening the effect of the images they use.

In *Grow / Finish Unit*, Irish artist, **John Gerrard's** computer-assisted images provide a detailed representation of an unmanned pig farm in Oklahoma, seen in real time over the space of 365 days. Despite appearances, there is no more repetition here than in real life, and programming means that even subsequent years will never be quite the same. The spectator never gets to glimpse the pigs, but may get to witness the occasional visits of the trucks that service the lives (and deaths) of these animals that may be our closest cousins, biologically and metaphorically. This impression of microcosm is present in a very different way in the work of Belgian artist, **Edith Dekyndt**, (who has an upcoming solo show at Parker's Box). While her video is the most abstract of the exhibition, *Slow Object 05* is at the same time a highly realist film made with the most direct and simple techniques. It shows a seemingly indefinable object that is bulbous or perhaps spherical, as it moves through an equally indefinable element. Technically more complex, British artist, **Simon Faithfull's** work, *Orbital 2*, uses highly recognizable imagery. The work (previously seen at the Venice Biennale), presents three concentric circles on a circular screen. Each circle is a section of one of three films showing a journey round a different circular road, of the kind that contours many European cities. In this way, each of the three films can be seamlessly looped, providing three endless, overlapping journeys. Polish artist, **Agnieszka Kalinowska** offers another interpretation of continuum, with an endlessly moving chain of people hanging from their feet, each one being held at the ankles by the next. The ambiguous title of this work: *Personal Doping*, seems to suggest that the only way to ignore the ultimate futility of life, is somehow to forcibly inject conviction into one's own sense of values. This struggle for self-persuasion is of course at the heart of Hamlet's *To be or not to be* soliloquy- though his thoughts would be of little use to the pigs of Oklahoma.

**Edith Dekyndt** (Belgium), lives and works in Tournai, Belgium; represented by Galerie Les Filles du Calvaire, Paris and Brussels ([www.fillesducalvaire.com](http://www.fillesducalvaire.com), [www.edithdekyndt.be](http://www.edithdekyndt.be)); **Simon Faithfull** (UK), lives and works in Berlin and London; represented by Parker's Box, Brooklyn ([www.parkersbox.com](http://www.parkersbox.com), [www.simonfaithfull.org](http://www.simonfaithfull.org)); **John Gerrard** (Ireland), lives and works in Dublin and Vienna; represented by Hilger Contemporary, Vienna, ([www.hilger.at](http://www.hilger.at), [www.johngerrard.net](http://www.johngerrard.net)); **Agnieszka Kalinowska** (Poland), lives and works in Warsaw; represented by Galerie Nachts St. Stephan Rosemarie Schwarzwaelder, Vienna ([www.schwarzwaelder.at](http://www.schwarzwaelder.at), [free.art.pl/agnieszka.kalinowska](http://free.art.pl/agnieszka.kalinowska)).

\*From *To be, or not to be*, from *Hamlet*, 3/1: "When we have shuffled off this mortal coil."

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