

Between the US and the Horizon. Open from June 09 to July 31

GalerieFlorentTosin

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Richard T. Walker. the possibility of foreverness, 2011

Jimmy Durham

Born in the United States in 1940, Jimmie Durham decided to devote himself to art in the 1980s, after years as an activist in the Indian movement. The works from this early period draw on an American context, homing in on racism in all its form and raising issues to do with identity and ethnicity.

In 1994 Durham left America for Europe or more exactly for what he calls "Eurasia". This geographical shift wrought the change of context in his work that that would be seen. In the 1994 "Architecture" exhibition at the Micheline Szwjcer Gallery in Anwerp. Here he laid the groundwork for his investigations of language and architecture as structures that function as seat of power. These Eurasian decodings embody a move from the political to the poetic via the geographical, with the artist drifting over a continent whose vastness cannot be encompassed and in which, he has said, he hopes to lose himself: to lose his bearings, the better to observe.

Kent Monkman

Monkman is part of a new generation of Native American artists who has exhibited widely in museums throughout Canada. His broad practice, which ranges from figurative painting to film and performance, explores the complexities of the flawed, yet enduring myth of the American West. Taking on the artistic traditions of Western nineteenth century painting, Monkman's appropriations of 'New World' painting are meticulous recreations of large-scale, sublime landscapes. Monkman's 'trickery' only becomes clear on closer inspection: these grand panoramas, painted in acrylic not oil, are populated with cavorting 'cowboys and Indians'.

Toying with the notion of authenticity, these reimagined, often homoeroticised tableaux playfully subvert and distort traditional narratives and perceptions.

Richard T. Walker

Richard T. Walker most emphatically does want to consider the artist's, and by extension the viewer's, inner scale with comparison. He acknowledges and confronts our need to relate emotionally to our surroundings and the often false narratives we construct to allow an easy, often lazy way of doing this. He questions and undermines the desires and needs manufactured in us by popular culture. This culture - the devolved child of enlightenment romantic ideals - moulds and distorts our attempts at personal expression, colours our nascent relations and seeks to anthropomorphize the solid stuff of our day to day existence. Just as the film industry has shown us that a room doesn't just have to be a room but can expand conceptually to become a mise en scene, mirroring the characters' moods, emotions and actions, so we have all come to understand that the entire world outside ourselves can and indeed must create a mirror for our solipsistic existence.

In one of his pieces, using probably the most narrative laden place on our planet - the great American outdoors, depository of saccharine notions of home and freedom -, he examines the very subjective relations formed with this and other environments in our culture over the last 200 years.