



November 4th 2005 – January 15th 2006



Dieter Appelt, *Cinema prisma*



Luc Delahaye

Spotless^o
for connoisseurs.^o François Curlet & Donuts

public preview :

Thursday 3rd November 2005 6pm – 9pm

press preview:

Thursday 3rd November 2005 4pm – 6pm in the artist's present

- meeting with Dieter Appelt at 4pm
- meeting with Luc Delahaye at 4.30pm
- meeting with François Curlet & Donuts at 5pm

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Presentation

La maison rouge is a private non-profit contemporary art foundation whose vocation, since opening in June 2004, has been to promote contemporary creation through temporary exhibitions.

It alternates exhibitions of private collections of international calibre with solo or thematic exhibitions. Following "L'intime, behind closed doors", "Central Station - the Harald Falckenberg collection", and "Arnulf Rainer and his collection of Art Brut", for the next few months la maison rouge is putting its exhibitions of private collections on hold. These will begin again next February with video works from the Isabelle and Jean-Conrad Lemaître collection.

Instead, from November 4th 2005 to January 22nd 2006 the foundation will host three solo exhibitions.

Dieter Appelt, Cinema Prisma

For his exhibition at la maison rouge, Dieter Appelt and curator Françoise Paviot have grouped together works spanning the different disciplines which the artist has developed over the past thirty years: sculpture - notably a wooden tower standing several metres high which Dieter Appelt will construct specifically for the exhibition - photography - with several complete series of up to three hundred-plus shots - music and film - with screenings including previously unreleased material at la maison rouge and at the Centre Georges Pompidou.

Luc Delahaye

La maison rouge presents recent works by the photographer Luc Delahaye.

All these photographs were taken over the past four years at the scenes of contemporary world events: the playing-out of war, conflict and power, where history is set in stone as and when it happens.

Spotless, an installation by François Curlet & Donuts

After *meta jardin* by Gerda Steiner and Jörg Lenzlinger, Les amis de la maison rouge have invited François Curlet and the Donuts design collective to take over the patio at la maison rouge.

Forthcoming exhibitions at la maison rouge

February – May 2006: the Isabelle and Jean-Conrad Lemaître collection

Summer 2006: Henry Darger / Michaël Borremans / Nicolas Darrot

Autumn 2006: the Sylvio Perlstein collection

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Dieter Appelt, Cinema Prisma

The internationally renowned artist Dieter Appelt has been building up a personal and demanding work for more than 30 years in photography but also in film, sculpture, drawings or music.

His name is often associated with images of "actions" in which he directs himself like *Images of life and death* or *Liberation of the fingers*, but Dieter Appelt is mostly famous for his photographs. Françoise Paviot has designed for his exhibition in la maison rouge a course, in which all the media used by the artist are gathered.

His films will be shown once an evening at the Centre Georges Pompidou and regularly in the conference room of la maison rouge. Some of them leave for the first time the personal archives of Dieter Appelt and have been worked on again especially for this event.

The exhibition will also allow to see the evolution of his work since his last exhibition in France, at the Centre National de la Photographie in 1989, showing recent or less known works.

Visitors will discover *Forth Bridge-Cinema. Metric space**, a tableau of 312 photographs of the Forth Bridge, built in Scotland at the end of the 19th century, (commissioned by the Canadian Centre for Architecture in Montreal). This work is a monumental architectural image and includes film, photography, Iannis Xenakis' formalized music and the mathematical notations of his pieces for percussion instruments. The film and the drawings that go with this work will also be presented.

In *Wiesent Cinema**, Dieter Appelt compares cinema to a continuously flowing river that regularly captured his attention. Through the immobile and moving images, he continues in a more sensual and perhaps less formal way his reflections on duration, waiting and the nature of time.

With *Spiegel Prisma Cinema Maschine** – after which the exhibition was named – and *Glas Skulptur*, Dieter Appelt has designed two "reflecting" machines, in the literal as well as the figurative sense. These two sculptures stand directly on the ground, in the darkness, and work with a projector. They are truly metaphors of the image and both intrigue and provoke the spectator, who can give free rein to his imagination and read them in many different ways.

Dieter Appelt's work constantly renews itself and gets more and more complex. However, his approach has never changed since he started. He defines it as a thought in image. In this same state of mind, Dieter Appelt has built a several metres high *Tower**. The composition, both archaic and elaborated, is made from bundles of wooden sticks and linen straps. This sculpture is presented in the foundation's highest room and echoes his old *Augenturm*. Its outline is both rigorous and fragile, and expresses the usual tensions of his works, between order and trouble, violence and harmony, light and shadow. Several older pieces, which have rarely been shown in France, are also exhibited, like the complete series of his photographs on *Ezra Pound* and the *Pitigliano* series, enabling visitors to compare them with his recent works and see how Dieter Appelt's work keeps getting richer and deeper in his favourite themes: duration, waiting, time and how it can generate its own space.

*Photos available for the press.

Michel Frizot, *Dieter Appelt*, Photopoche, Centre National de la Photographie, 1997 (excerpts)

“Working not only in photography but in video and sculpture, too, Appelt, who has links with painters in the Berlin scene, stresses the importance of free choice when it comes to his modes of action, keen to avoid the straitjacket of any one medium. He regards the careful preparation of the shot as a constructive necessity, a syntax drawn from poetics. It should be remembered that for German artists, the word Bild (“picture”) is associated with the idea of a construction or “formation” (Bildung) which, in turn, has a geological meaning. One of his faces covered in cracked earth (1979-88) is entitled Schichtung (“stratification”), encapsulating in a single word the telluric origin of the human body, the alluvial nature of memory and the way in which the image was actually produced. Rocks, caverns (in particular the Etruscan cave dwellings in Sorano in Italy, where Appelt has also made a film) and even the lines of standing stones near Carnac are all primal realities, sources of pulsation and language.”

Dieter Appelt, excerpt from the book accompanying the exhibition “Forth Bridge - Cinema. Metric Space”, Canadian Centre for Architecture, Montreal, 2005

“Early in May 2002, Hubertus von Amelunxen* and I went through the photos and papers in the CCA’s collection of images of the Forth Rail Bridge.** Von Amelunxen and I examined the documents describing all the stages of its construction, from the erection of the framework to the assembly of the girders. We came across one particularly remarkable photo, which was widely circulated at the time. This featured a living model of the Forth Bridge, with two men sitting on chairs holding up a chair in the middle on which a third man was seated. This model was used to illustrate the principle of the cantilever bridge and to demonstrate its strength. This trip to Montreal gave my project a fresh lease of life. When I returned to Europe, my head still full of the pictures I had originally taken, I immediately travelled back to the Forth Bridge to take more. Today, the conceptual drawings and screenplay, the accelerations and decelerations of filmic time, the chronology of the corresponding sounds and the serial principles I adopted at quite a late stage go way beyond simple narration. The shifting nature of reality and the limitations of formal appearance have led me to pay more attention to effect. I use the precise number of images needed to obtain the desired effect in order to avoid the risk of distilling reality. Accordingly, the film recounts only its own reality. At the end of the day, a cinematic experiment in its final form, such as “Forth Bridge - Cinema. Metric Space”, which attempts to reflect the structure of the temporal layers, reproduce the rhythmic sequences of film images using 35-mm single-frame prints and create a pattern out of the assorted elements of time, space and form by means of a musical notation system, reflects the many conceptual and technical problems that have yet to be resolved.”

*Visiting Curator of the CCA photographs collection.

**Engineering work built in Scotland between 1883 and 1889.

biographies

Dieter Appelt

Dieter Appelt was born in Germany in 1935. He lives and works in Berlin. He studied music at the Akademie in Leipzig and began a career as a solo baritone at the Opera. This was as formative for him in his artistic practices as his study of Fine Arts in Berlin. At the end of the 1970s, he decided to focus only on image. First, Dieter Appelt mostly worked on "actions" in which he directed himself. Photography and film took rapidly a growing place and status in his work. He became a teacher at the University of Art in Berlin in 1982 but he never interrupted his artistic career. The Art Institute in Chicago, the Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam, the Guggenheim in New York, the Centre National de la Photographie in Paris, the SMACK in Gand or more recently the Canadian Centre for Architecture in Montreal have staged major solo exhibitions of his work.

Françoise Paviot

Françoise Paviot has run a photography gallery since 1995. A graduate in advanced literary studies, she has worked as editor-in-chief for *Interphotothèque Actualités* and *Coursives* at the Centre Georges Pompidou. She helped implement a policy of photographic records management in France and is the author of *Analyse de l'image fixe*, *Adresses utiles pour la photographie* and *Paris en Fête*. She was the curator of the tribute to René-Jacques at the Musée de la Marine in Paris, Brest and Saint-Malo and has organized many colloquia and workshops about the image in institutional and private places. She has worked with Dieter Appelt for more than ten years and has closely collaborated with him to curate this exhibition.

Prolonging the exhibition

Friday November 4th 2005: screening of *Wiesent Cinema* at the Centre Georges Pompidou (times will be given on the websites of la maison rouge and the Centre Georges Pompidou).

Saturday November 5th 2005 at 11am: presentation of the exhibition to the public by Dieter Appelt and Françoise Paviot.

Thursday November 17th 2005 at 7pm: Hubertus von Amelunxen, visiting curator at the Canadian Centre for Architecture, founding director of the International School of New Media in Lübeck (Germany), and director of the École Européenne Supérieure de l'Image in Angoulême, will talk about the work of Dieter Appelt and in particular his photography.

Saturday November 19th 2005 at 11am: presentation of the exhibition to the public by Françoise Paviot.

More talks will be scheduled during the exhibition. Dates and speakers will be given later.

"Figures de l'identité et pratiques du territoire chez Dieter Appelt" by Marc Donnadiou, director of the Frac Haute-Normandie and art critic under the pseudonym Charles-Arthur Boyer.

Philippe-Alain Michaud (conservator at the MNAM/Centre Georges Pompidou).

Michel Frizot, photography historian, researcher at the CNRS and lecturer at the Ecole du Louvre, is the author of Dieter Appelt, *Photopoche*, 1997, Centre National de la Photographie (2nd edition Actes Sud, Paris, 2005).

Bookings for these events must be made, either by telephone +33 (0)1 40 01 08 81 or at info@lamaisonrouge.org

Every Saturday and Sunday at 4pm, la maison rouge organises free guided tours of the current exhibitions.

II. Luc Delahaye

Luc Delahaye has taken photographs for four years from places newspapers report on every day: war zones, areas of conflicts or power struggles, places where "History" is made, at the very moment the events happen. His direct approach reminds one of a reporter. The frontal nature of his photographs, the neutrality, the detachment and the richness in detail that emerge from them relate his work to documentary-style photography. Their size and narrative power connect them to older artistic practices such as those of Gustave Courbet or, more recently, Jeff Wall.

Luc Delahaye sets out to show through photography the state of the contemporary world and to make every image a summary of its events and situations. The "tableau", which is the typical form for independent images, and the size of his photographs are evidences of his will to set apart the image, in a culture dominated by mass media. His work urges a reflection about the relationship between art, history and information.

Contradictory forces operate in his pictures. First, the photographer, taken in a dialectic game, is at the same time absent from himself and present in the world. The very presence in reality he has been looking for coexists with the coldness and distance of his view. Furthermore, his ability to focus on the recording process itself, the primary specificity of photography, paradoxically transcends the "photographic" aspect of the work. Finally, the "unromantic" clarity of the documentary style contradicts but also enhances the dramatic intensity coming from the subject and the spectacular format of the tableau. Despite its apparent visual coherence, the image expresses a nub of formal tensions, aesthetic and political stakes.

Luc Delahaye, interview with Philippe Dagen, published in *Art Press* in November 2004

(...) That's what I worked on over the years. I had two watchwords: speed and indifference. I was looking for the perfect gesture of pure efficiency. Overcoming any obstacles that lurked within me. Seeking to achieve oneness with reality – a silent oneness - via a form of absence, even unconsciousness. Photography is a wonderful activity, as it allows us to become reunited with the world. Though not all the time. For me, because these gestures have no other purpose than their own fulfilment, they are clearly a form of artistic performance...

(...) *How can history be told?*

- First of all, you have to ask yourself which history? When I look around me, some things seem more important than others. This hierarchy is determined by who I am and where I was born. We can't do anything about that, but we need to be aware of it. Next, I must be prepared to restrict myself to that which is sufficiently, indeed eminently visible. This may be a narrow doorway, but for me it's the only one there is. I know that history can't be reduced to a series of dates, that it is constantly shifting, albeit in a fairly slow and subterranean way, but I happen to work on a property unique to photography - its supposed literalness. Lastly, there's the insignificance of my position. When I'm out in the field, I do what I can, it's as simple as that. There's no omniscient vision, no dominating position.

(...) *Can you say something about this formalization?*

- Words only come later, once you've found something.... Being an artist counts for nothing, or at least it's not enough. You've got to be a poet. We articulate previously indistinct sounds and invent what look like possible routes... It all comes down to using the unique characteristics of photography to translate an attitude and rationalize an intuition. Turning your back on style and sentimentality, seeking clarity, measuring the distance that separates you from what you see. There is also a desire to serve the image, however exacting, carrying the camera to where it needs to be and creating an image that will not be subjugated to either reality or intention, as the intention of the moment will always fall short of what you are actually looking for. The important thing is to record as many details as possible and to achieve some kind of order, without depriving reality of its complexity. Expressing reality and creating an image that constitutes a world in itself with its own coherence, autonomy and sovereignty – a thinking image.

(...) *How much of your work is documentary and how much is fiction?*

- The two go hand in hand.... The documentary component inclines towards the imaginary, while the fictional component inclines towards the real. So while we may seek a form of truth via fiction, reality is so self-evident

that it ends up becoming enigmatic. Documentary photography holds out the interesting possibility of achieving a poetic form, though for me it's more than just an interesting possibility as it's what I actively seek to achieve. If an image is sufficiently strong, if it resists us, if its obscure coherence means we can no longer fully understand it, then we have gained a little ground on reality.

Quentin Bajac, "Le regard élargi" [The Wider Gaze] (excerpts), published in *Les Cahiers du Musée National d'Art Moderne*, July 2005

(...) A supposedly neutral means of capturing reality, the panoramic format may also signal a desire to open the image up to the powers of narrative and the imagination, and to lend these a dramatic dimension, even if meaning becomes blurred in the process. A desire to regard the image as a symbolic whole *as well*, describing the world not simply in photographic terms but in allegorical ones, too.

(...) As it involves a widening of the field of vision, the panoramic format therefore holds out the promise of capturing reality in a more complex (extended frontality) and unconscious manner (difficulty of controlling the entire field). However, although this open instrument would appear to embody the documentary utopia of neutrality - albeit illusory -, it also paradoxically reveals itself in retrospect to be the main (double?) agent behind a dramatization of the image. Especially as Delahaye deliberately uses it in this way by "turning up the volume", to borrow Thierry de Duve's comment about Jeff Wall. Like the latter and others since him, the decision to enlarge a print brings the photographer one step closer to spectacularization - an acknowledgement that we are living in "a cultural environment where small-format paintings and photographs cannot hope to rival the attractiveness of film and advertising". This spectacularization is particularly potent as the panoramic format turns out not to be so very "neutral" after all. For in an unformulated but nonetheless real way, it recalls another mode of capturing reality: the panorama. Historically linked to the economics of showbusiness, everything about the panorama, from the claim to encapsulate space and the world around us to the notion that imitation can be a form of knowledge, sets it up as the antithesis of the documentary form. Although in terms of scale and dimension Delahaye's panoramic formats do not have much in common with the monumental and all-embracing panoramas of the 19th century or even with the sometimes excessively large CinemaScope screen, they nevertheless retain a sufficiently evocative interplay of ratios and proportions to remind us of them, giving us the impression that we are standing on the "Balcony of History" - an expression derived from the viewing platform spectators would climb to admire a panorama - and contemplating the world spread out before us. When they are viewed in a series, they come to life and start telling a story. Although it may be full of gaps and be neither objective nor linear, this story nevertheless reinforces the overall narrative dimension. For this reason, Delahaye's images can be said to be imbued with film, photography's double that has become our preferred tool for narrating the world - just as painting was in the 19th century.

(...) We are confronted here by a reversal of roles - the subversive use of what is actually a narrative and dramatic form (the panoramic format) for documentary purposes; a sort of photographic antonym taking the form of impressive visual paradoxes which paint an impossible picture of the world. For Delahaye, this obscure coherence, played out here in the extended and poetic form of the panorama, combines the limpid attractions of the documentary form with the more obscure temptations of the dramatic form, providing a new opening onto the world but at the same time making meaning more opaque, as though we were seeing through a glass... darkly.

biography

Luc Delahaye was born in France in 1962. He lives in Paris.

Solo exhibitions

Cleveland Museum of Art (2005)
Huis Marseille (Amsterdam, 2004)
National Museum of Photography & Film (Bradford, 2004)
Ricco/Maresca Gallery (New York, 2003)
Kunsthal Rotterdam (Rotterdam, 2002)
Kunsthalle Rostock (Germany, 2002)
Centre Photographique d'Île de France (France, 2002)
Weltkulturerbe Völklinger Hütte (Germany, 2001)

Group exhibitions (selection)

Big Bang. Centre National d'Art Moderne Georges Pompidou (Paris, 2005)
Deutsche Börse Photography Prize 2005. C/O Berlin (Berlin, 2005)
Singuliers. Museum of Fine Arts (Canton, 2005)
Les Grands Spectacles. Museum der Moderne (Salzburg, 2005)
Deutsche Börse Photography Prize 2005. The Photographer's Gallery (London, 2005)
Emergencies, Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Castilla y León (León, 2005)

Publications

History (Chris Boot, 2003)
Une Ville (Xavier Barral, 2003)
Winterreise (Phaidon, 2000)
L'Autre (Phaidon, 1999)
Mémo (Hazan, 1997)
Portraits/1 (Sommaire, 1996)

Awards (selection)

Deutsche Börse Photography Prize (UK, 2005)
Prix Niepce (France, 2002)
Robert Capa Gold Medal (USA, 2002 & 1993)
ICP Infinity Award (USA, 2001)
Oskar Barnack Award (USA, 2000)

Collections (selection)

Centre Georges Pompidou (Paris), Antoine de Galbert (Paris), High Museum (Atlanta), Los Angeles County Museum of Art, LaSalle Bank (Chicago), Chrysler Museum (Virginia), International Center for Photography (New York), National Gallery of Canada, Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Castilla y León (Valladolid), Huis Marseille (Amsterdam), National Museum of Photography (Copenhagen), National Museum of Photography (Bradford).

Prolonging the exhibition

Thursday December 1st 2005: Quentin Bajac, conservator at the MNAM/Centre Georges Pompidou.
More talks will be scheduled during the exhibition. Dates and speakers will be given later.

Monday January 9th 2006: symposium on "Photojournalism and Contemporary Art" led by Gaëlle Morel, a doctor of Université Paris I - Panthéon Sorbonne and secretary-general of the Société Française de Photographie (a list of speakers and subjects will be published on the website of la maison rouge).

III. François Curlet & Donuts, Spotless

At Antoine de Galbert's request, each year the Association des amis de la maison rouge chooses and produces a project for the foundation's patio.

A committee, this year presided by Jean de Loisy, has selected three artists among those put forward by les amis de la maison rouge. These artists were invited to submit a project for the patio. For autumn 2005, the members of the association met and voted for François Curlet.

Spotless

"La maison rouge is a private foundation which promotes contemporary art. Next to exhibition rooms of the size of a museum's, it offers a central light well juxtaposing the red painted main body of the building. This patio is dedicated to art projects and used for exhibition purposes. Our project is to bring into play a "club-house" language in order to meet the aesthetics of this place. In this area meant to promote art in an ambulatory process, we have gathered cultural and functional factors and transformed it into a "showroom" for golf carts, which completes an otherwise static visit." (Curlet & Donuts).

François Curlet regards his work as a disconcerting answer to a given reality. Entrusting him the maison rouge's patio is like exposing this place to the critical eye of an artist who is always in wait of signs and symbols, to which he then gives a totally new orientation.

François Curlet & Donuts have been sensitive to the harmony between the aesthetics and the purpose of this place. They have seen in it an architecture of leisure and pleasure. The playground may as well be a golf green as an exhibition room. The green with no holes - "spotless" - refers to this space dedicated to the game of art, just like an advertisement refers to a product. The mental impact of the installation is expected to be as quick and strong as the club when it hits the ball.

biographies

François Curlet

François Curlet was born in Paris in 1967 but settled in Belgium when he was 22. He came back to France only recently. He sees himself as a "synthetic Belgian" in the tradition of artists such as Magritte or Broodthaers, close to the generation of Michel François and Wim Delvoye. He defines himself as a "conceptual spaghetti artist", referring to the evolution of the classic western genre into the spaghetti western.

He has often worked in tandem, first with Frank Scurti, then with Michel François and Pierre Huygue. In 2003 he asked the graphic design agency Donuts to make his catalogue in the spirit of the graphic charter the agency had created in 1996 for Derby consumer goods. François Curlet worked on and signed with Donuts *Crème de singe*, a commission from Le Printemps for "Nuit Blanche 2004". Within this new way of collaborating, aimed at fulfilling commissions, the project is the result of a common reflection. After this reflection, the artist is in charge of the symbolic consistency of the project with the exhibiting place and with the artistic field, while Donuts ensures the visual efficiency of the exhibition. As such, they also share the status of author.

Donuts

Anne Franssen, Olivier Vandervliet and Nathalie Wathelet set up a graphic creation agency in 1996 which soon achieved recognition. The strategies of visual identity they conceive go beyond the simple logo. They decline simple elements in a recognizable, efficient but slightly shifted style. Each commission takes a specific form according to the principle that "the thing is regarded as an object rather than as the medium for information." Their collaboration with François Curlet opens for them the "liberating" field of art. Their web site www.donuts.be, which puts their various activities on an equal footing, shows that this approach is for them part of their job.

les amis de la maison rouge

Les amis de la maison rouge, a non-profit organisation chaired by Pauline de Laboulaye, addresses collectors, art enthusiasts and professionals with an interest in the perspectives opened up by the foundation. It is a platform for all those who see this project as an opportunity to develop new points of view on contemporary creation, and to encourage dialogue on the theme of the private collection. Unlike the majority of contemporary art institutions in France, la maison rouge does not rest on a public entity. It needs friends to support its endeavours and contribute to its wider recognition in France and the rest of the world.

After a year's activity, les amis de la maison rouge has close to 300 members. In addition to the tours, encounters and other events which la maison rouge organises around its exhibitions, les amis de la maison rouge devotes the vast majority of its resources to an annual seminar on the history and current state of private collections, and to commission a work for the patio.

seminar on the history and current state of private collections

"Une autre histoire du collectionnisme", the 2004-2005 seminar by Patricia Falguières took an in-depth look at collectionism from a new angle. It concluded with a slideshow which Pierre Leguillon devised specially for la maison rouge.

Beginning in January 2006, Jean-Pierre Criqui will invite collectors and professionals to speak on this theme during talks and debates.

The foundation's schedule means the next commission for the patio will be shown in February 2007. The selection committee will be chaired by Patricia Falguières.

For more information: amis@lamaisonrouge.org

IV. practical info



getting there

metro stations: Quai de la Rapée (line 5) or Bastille (lines 1, 5 or 8)

RER station: Gare de Lyon

bus n° 20, 29 or 91

accessibility

the exhibition areas are accessible to disabled visitors and people with restricted mobility.

opening days and times

Wednesday to Sunday 11am to 7pm

late-night Thursday until 9pm

closed December 25th, January 1st and May 1st

admission

full price: €6.50

concessions: €4.50 (13-18 years, students, full-time artists, and over-60s).

free: under-13s, the unemployed, companions of disabled visitors, members of ICOM and Les amis de la maison rouge.

annual pass

full price: €22

concessions: €14

free and unlimited admission to the exhibitions.

free or reduced rate admission to related events.