

FUTUREBLUEPERFECT

GORDON CHEUNG (UK), MARIANNE ENGEL (CH), PIL & GALIA KOLLECTIV (IL),
ISABELLE KRIEG (CH), JONATHAN McLEOD (UK), BRUNO PACHECO (PT),
RACHEL REUPKE (UK). Curated by Clare Goodwin and Liz Murray.

Venue: Cafe Gallery, by the lake, centre of Southwark Park, London SE16 2UA
Travel: Jubilee Line to Canada Water
Exhibition: 25 June – 27 July 2008
Open: Wednesday, Thursday, Friday & Sunday 11 – 6pm; Saturdays 12 – 6pm
Preview: Sunday 22nd June 2 – 5pm
www.cafegalleryprojects.org tel: +44 (0)20 7237 1230

Intense, in tense or in tents?

The title for the show has arisen out of a miscommunication. Future pluperfect (as opposed to blueperfect) is a Latin tense used in English grammar to describe future actions in the past and not the name of a spoof advertising – or colour-prediction agency. The artists chosen all create different contemporary agendas for past perspectives on the future – re-examining particular utopian / dystopian belief structures or schemes (cultism, religious prophecy, visionary thinkers and scientific theory) with the benefit of hindsight. Like the aural oversight kept in the title, there is a sense of idealism to these artists' acceptance of others' actions. They find new relevancy in evidence of fallen systems or outmoded ideologies plucked from the historical recycling bin.

The future pluperfect is also known as the hortatory subjunctive; "hortor" meaning urge – in the sense of making something happen or be done. And the majority of the artists here employ facets of the instructional, call-to-arms facility of media messaging in ways that blur the boundaries between truth and fiction. There is a palpable urgency to **Gordon Cheung's** pictorial narratives, rising phoenix from the ashes out of yesterday's news. Using the tools of commercial business and social activism (Financial Times pages, spray paint), and Eastern and Western landscape painting traditions, Cheung examines the real-world physicality implied by cultural neologisms such as "cyberspace" or the "information highway".

In her ongoing series of nocturnal photographs, executed with just a camera and perhaps a torch, **Marianne Engel** views the natural world from scientific, yet culturally cluttered perspectives. The literary and filmic associations that tumble from each image – from the Brothers Grimm to 'Close Encounters' – transport us back in time but essentially reality remains unchanged. At a certain time of night, piles of sand may become alien entities, a harbour wall a spiritual path way: the notion of a set up is ever present, yet the variables that determine how and what that might be exist only in the mind of the viewer.

Pil and Galia Kollektiv play directly with our understanding of the structures at work within the social body. Their 2007 film 'Better Future Wolf-shaped', for example, follows the tenderly funny rituals of a modernist cult with a documentary-critical eye; reminding us equally of the political motivations behind the telling of a story as the dogma of its subjects.

CAFE GALLERY

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Isabelle Krieg communicates life's big themes through small interventions and performative gestures. Stains in cups might turn out to be newspaper imagery, or a carefully placed hair on a bar of soap a geographical fault line. In recent large-scale installations Krieg's political subtext is humorously packaged but none-the-less powerfully felt: the male-dominant collection at Kunsthaus Zürich is currently littered with giant grape-like clusters of white Polyfoam breasts.

In his present series of hyper-real paintings, **Jonathan McLeod** delivers news-topical and personal concerns through the languages of art historical and religious iconography. Framing devices, such as the recurring, thorny horseshow growth through which we experience his prophetic urban visions, bring to mind the altarpiece. The painstakingly executed, borderline surrealist objects (such as trainers, a marker of gangland territory) strung from their branches, allude to the many factions of the everyday as part of a wider universal narrative on belonging.

Bruno Pacheco's paintings reveal benign groups of people apparently united by one kind of passion or another. Clowns, tourists, a ring of dancers – are rendered through a filmy technological glaze prompting speculation that what we see, perhaps, is several times removed from source and reality. The everyday nature of their curious activities begs the question of what distinguishes cult from civic life.

Rachel Reupke digitally manipulates video footage of real sites to question the political processes governing forms of cultural development. In 'Now wait for last year' (2007) she gave the architecture of Beijing a corporate-style makeover incorporating both traditional and futuristic urban elements, thereby subtly traversing very different ideological standpoints on the notion of progress.