

HYPERFOCAL — Five from L.A.

February 19 – March 26, 2005

HYPERFOCAL DISTANCE – *The nearest distance upon which a photographic lens may be focused to produce satisfactory definition at infinity. Webster, Unabridged edition*

This exhibition brings together five young artists from Los Angeles. Born in the 1970s, for all of them this will be their first show in France and for some Europe. **Lisa Lapinski, Brandon Lattu, Michael Queenland, Paul Sietsema and Erika Vogt** use a variety of media (photography, cinema, video, sculpture, drawing, installation...), and share a number of questions about the way images are made and used. Whether reconstituting (B. Lattu) or obsessively constructing (P. Sietsema) the conditions of the visible, elaborating the conditions of the appearance of light (M. Queenland), using labyrinthine narrative structures (L. Lapinski) or creating set-ups which make it possible to simultaneously see all the facets of a given object (E. Vogt), these artists set up new relations between the near and the far, between object and image, but also between seeing and remembering.

It is no coincidence if the landscapes of Los Angeles, a city corroded by a perpetual light, make regular appearances in their work. A city with no centre, an urban mirage standing amidst semi-desert, the capital of all illusions and all disillusion, Los Angeles has a very particular way of engaging the gaze. These artists do not enter into competition with the almost absolute regime of the image, but examine, in their own individual ways, the modalities of the visible.

The Los Angeles art scene is currently the object of great international interest, as reflected in exhibitions planned over the coming two years at the Pompidou Centre in Paris, the Royal Academy in London and the Van Abbemuseum in Eindhoven. The Californian megalopolis has undeniably established itself as an alternative to New York, a magnet for American and foreign artists with a thriving gallery scene and many private and public initiatives. Yet it remains little-known in Europe. The singularity of its practices may make this scene seem disorienting and yet, since the early 1960s, artists like John Baldessari, Jack Goldstein, Mike Kelley, Paul McCarthy, Charles Ray, Ed Ruscha, and James Welling have laid the foundations of what can now be recognised as a tradition in its own.

This exhibition is the fruit of a collaborative venture by Alain Cueff and Philip Nelson. It will be accompanied by a catalogue documenting the work of Vogt, Sietsema, Queenland, Lattu and Lapinski, with a preface by Alain Cueff.