



Contemporary Art Gallery

Vancouver, BC

Opening receptions:
Thursday November 17, 7-10pm

Robert Orchardson

November 18, 2011 to January 15, 2012
B. C. Binning Gallery

Corin Sworn

November 18, 2011 to January 15, 2012
Alvin Balkind Gallery

Federico Herrero

Continues to January 15, 2012
Window Spaces and off-site





Robert Orchardson

Endless Façade

November 18, 2011 to January 15, 2012
B. C. Binning Gallery

To coincide with the exhibition, Orchardson has produced a limited edition, *Study for Endless Façade* (2011), a signed giclée print, edition of 50, 13 x 18.5 inches, priced \$150, unframed.

A catalogue, the first publication devoted entirely to the work of Robert Orchardson, with text by Matthew Rampley, accompanies the exhibition, priced \$25. Please see CAG reception for details.

This will be the first exhibition in Canada of work by British artist Robert Orchardson. Inspired by science fiction films and the work of architects and designers who engage with ways of thinking about the future, Orchardson is all too aware of the inherent paradox in visualizing the unknown, any attempt immediately foiled as it becomes instantly familiar. In setting out to imagine 'things to come', such endeavours unavoidably speak to us of the here and now. For Orchardson, his artistic proposition compels us to reassess utopias of the past, this revisiting however more than a mere act of longing. Instead it implies a restaging of unfulfilled possibilities as he grapples with fresh meaning and opportunity.

Using humble materials such as wood and resin as well as found objects, Orchardson is unashamedly nostalgic for modernist idealism, appropriating its forms and reconfiguring these, when utility has been postponed, as objects devoid of apparent function. He considers prototypes and models to be carriers for ideas, able to convey utopian potential as they develop into something beyond themselves. Orchardson also sees this sense of possibility inherent in stage sets, a tension evident where a narrative exists between the material character of the set itself and the 'other' identity it adopts within the context of a play.

At the Contemporary Art Gallery we present *Endless Façade* (2011), an ambitious new installation which partially revisits stage sets designed by Isamu Noguchi in 1955 for a Royal Shakespeare Company production of *King Lear*. Noguchi aspired to an other-worldly state or feeling — a kind of mythical elsewhere, “free of historical or decorative associations” — where abstract, mobile forms created a shifting landscape against which the play unfolded. However, his designs were met with damning criticism, regarded as outlandish and unsympathetic to the theatrical production.

Fascinated by aspiration offset by failure, Orchardson revisits Noguchi's designs, grasping their optimism and eventual redundancy. A sumptuous floor piece made of red felt, sensual in its materiality, is redolent of the cloak designed for Lear, the cut holes proposed to multiply as the play progressed, symbolic of the protagonist's deteriorating mental state.

While Noguchi spoke of a unifying grey against which brightly coloured geometric designs and costumes sat, so Orchardson constructs a huge monochrome wall drawing, a jigsaw of interlocking triangular shapes creating a repeat pattern. In part also formally referring to *Aelita*, a Soviet science fiction film

Opposite and above
Robert Orchardson
Endless Façade (2011)
Photograph by Stuart Whipps
Courtesy of the artist and
Wilkinson Gallery, London



from 1924, this acts as a cohesive backdrop, a recurring motif for a series of highly coloured, prop-like forms, transforming the gallery spaces into an immersive environment tense with possibility. This major work within the overall piece recalls further reference points typical of Orchardson's practice whereby he reframes the work of other designers, sometimes even fictional characters. For example, working in the 1970s, architectural practices like Superstudio proposed modular structures which could stretch to infinity; Bruno Taut in the early twentieth century proposed a kind of utopian architecture of crystalline forms extending beyond the horizon. Made of endlessly repeating elements, such forms would inevitably have to stop somewhere, their own physicality limiting the potential implied. Therefore, if positioned as 'endless', they convey a utopian possibility, a provisional idea for architecture.

A broader context cited by Orchardson for this work is Paul Scheerbart's 1914 novel *The Grey Cloth* that tells the story of an ambitious and headstrong architect who pioneers the use of brightly coloured glass. He comes to the conclusion that the visual experience of his buildings is undermined by occupants who wear coloured clothing, clashing with his careful, chromatic schemes. In response he insists that his new wife should only wear grey, with 10% white, in order to be the perfect visual accompaniment to his architecture. In spite of such attention to detail, in a practice that extends to all corners of the world, he often finds his work to be the subject of derision.

Approached through a triangular opening at the CAG, the wall construction will pervade the whole gallery, reinforcing the deliberate sense of entering another world. Against this, the series of coloured objects resemble the amorphous motifs that feature in paintings by surrealist artist Yves Tanguy. The result is an environment that speaks of competing implications of potential and redundancy; abstraction versus figuration; the immediate present as opposed to somewhere else.

Such an ambitious installation corresponds to sensibilities evident in earlier works by Orchardson, including *Mimoid* (2005) based on Stanislaw Lem's novel *Solaris* in which strange forms emerge and dissolve back into the living, thinking ocean of another planet. *World Without Worlds* (2005) consists of a circular wall piece behind a screen that incorporates imagery from the 'stargate' sequence of Kubrick's *2001: A Space Odyssey*; within *Endless Façade* stands a shallow curving screen made of complex rhomboid forms, its geometric patterns mediating our view of other visitors, creating a new 'stage' space in which viewers assume the position of actors. Seen within the context of the exhibition as a whole, such machinations are key to Orchardson's artistic proposition.

Robert Orchardson was born in Glasgow and now lives and works in London, UK. He studied at Duncan of Jordanstone College of Art, Dundee and Goldsmiths College, University of London. Solo exhibitions include *Robert Orchardson*, Economist Plaza, London; *Perfect Vacuum*, Wilkinson Gallery, London; *Beyond*, Monitor Gallery, Rome (all 2005) and *New Model Army*, Galerie Ben Kaufmann, Berlin (2009). Recent group exhibitions include *A Stranger's Window*, Nottingham Castle Museum, Nottingham and *A Cage Around the Sun*, von Doering Contemporary, Schwabisch Hall, Germany (2010); *The Associates*, Dundee Contemporary Arts (2009); *Let Me Show You Some Things*, CCA, Glasgow (2008); *Artfutures 07*, Bloomberg Space, London (2007); *Arte all' Arte*, Castilo Linare, San Gimignano, Italy; *Bloomberg New Contemporaries*, Cornerhouse, Manchester; *LOT*, Bristol and Barbican, London (all 2005). Commissions include *Paths Beyond* for British Airways at Heathrow Terminal 5 (2008) and *Nexus*, British Land Plc, London (2006). He is represented by Wilkinson Gallery, London and Galerie Ben Kaufmann, Berlin.

This exhibition is organized in collaboration with Ikon Gallery, Birmingham, UK.

Corin Sworn

Endless Renovation
Alvin Balkind Gallery
November 18, 2011 to January 15, 2012

The Contemporary Art Gallery presents *Endless Renovation*, an evolving installation by Corin Sworn, which combines found objects and texts, light and shadows, storytelling and speculation. With this recent work, Sworn transforms the Balkind Gallery into a set animated by audio and images.

Endless Renovation was first performed in front of a live audience, where the artist read from a transcript corresponding to a selection of found images. Sourced from a discarded collection discovered in an alleyway several blocks from her home in Glasgow, these comprise nearly 600 35mm slides. Employing a typical art history lecture format, Sworn used two projectors as if comparing one image against another, an approach that emphasises the visual — precisely where Sworn starts. At one point she states, "All I have to interpret the images is what is held within them ...," as if there were no other choice, but breaks from this notion of a singular known by merging poetic quotes with her own thoughts. In describing the first slide she moves to include the words of American poet John Ashbery: "you cannot take it all in, certain details are already hazy and the mind boggles." In citing this phrase, it is as if she is suggesting we cannot fully comprehend that which we see, acknowledging the difficulty in attempting to characterize the intent of the image's maker. The act of conveying her impressions consequently shapes the narrative and thus our understanding.

The performative element of this initial presentation remains central to the exhibition at the Contemporary Art Gallery. Here the narration is now recorded and synced to two automated slide projectors, with glass and mirror shelving, a flower arrangement, various vases and tailored curtains assembled into a minimal installation. However, each object, the room's composition, the scent of flowers and diffuse yet changing light form a precise setting for the images and the artist's meanderings, while also becoming emblematic of Sworn's task in deciphering the images.

A selection of vases from different decades is placed on mirrored wall shelves. Twice weekly one is chosen to hold a floral arrangement made in accordance to the historic tastes of the era of the vase. It sits on the floor illuminated by a light from an antiquated slide projector, casting a sharp silhouette on the wall. This element makes reference to Malcolm LeGrice and his experiments in Expanded Cinema. Here the shadow cast by the flowers to obscure the slide is a dematerialized image produced continually in the present rather than the inevitable 'past' implicit in images in film and photography. Hence the form of the arrangement remains speculative: a contemporary interpretation that ultimately determines its appearance. Another component, that of layered curtains, their simple design representative of the two interlocking beams of light emitted from the lens of



Opposite
Robert Orchardson
Endless Façade (2011)
Photograph by Stuart Whipps
Courtesy of the artist and
Wilkinson Gallery, London

Above
Corin Sworn
Endless Renovation (2010) (detail)
Dimensions variable
Courtesy of the artist and
Kendall Koppe, Glasgow



Opposite
Corin Sworn
Temporal Arrangements (2010)
Dimensions variable
Courtesy of the artist and
Kendall Koppe, Glasgow

the slide projectors, notionally gives the immaterial substance, while echoing the physicality of the installation itself. These components are symbolic of the artist's process, linked to the viewer's experience and a more general understanding of how time — past and present — is represented and perceived.

The exhibition is a space of projection, starting with Sworn's simultaneous interpretation of the slides and her contemplation on the actual process of interpreting present in the audio. The narration begins by lingering on the first image which she singles out from its counterparts. It is a 'mistake,' a crop of the ceiling and a paper lampshade. For her it differs in that the others "are composed in a style that might be considered objective." This error, easily thrown away by the photographer yet deliberately retained by Sworn, shapes the reading of the rest of the images as nondescript: flowers, empty apartments, landscape and dust. As the sequence progresses, they become more consistent, repeatedly using the same composition, displaying a solitary object centered against a blank background. It seems the photographer was perhaps an ingenious clock-maker whose unique, futuristic designs allow hours, minutes and seconds to be interchangeable.

But then again in this moment of discovery, of knowing, the associations that emerge when heard in tandem with the images slip as the work unfolds and loops, revealing Sworn's preoccupation with multiple, simultaneous readings, with the impossibility of singular, definitive meaning and with time, perception and memory. Hence the structure moves between organizing the images into a narrative chronology whilst alternately suggesting they function as sites for separate yet related thought process.

To further question assumptions, Sworn imposes subtle interferences; projectors are positioned on perpendicular walls making it difficult to view both images at once and obscure references are incorporated in the voiceover. While specific musings appear to relate directly to the content of the images seen, they are later revealed as lies. At one point in the narration, Sworn reveals that she also found a diary marked *Temporary Diary: June to November 1985* from which she learnt what car the photographer owned and the dates of his meetings. So the images were not all she had to work with?

Weaving between concrete discussions of the images represented to a meandering collection of thoughts, as well as a shifting assortment of objects and forms, this subtle yet affecting work poignantly touches on the passing of time and the notion of the past forever out of reach. Speculation no matter how tentative still offers meaning. In the artist's words, "these moments of projection produce territories of imagined possibility."

Corin Sworn, born in London, UK, now lives and works in Vancouver and Glasgow. She studied at Emily Carr University of Art & Design and Glasgow School of Art. Her solo exhibitions include *Endless Renovation*, Tate Britain, London (2011), *Prologue: Endless Renovation*, Washington Garcia, Glasgow (2010); *Corin Sworn*, ZieherSmith Gallery, New York (2008) and *Adventure Playground*, Or Gallery, Vancouver (2006), among others. Sworn has participated in group exhibitions including *Cosey Complex*, Institute of Contemporary Arts, London (2010); *Morality Exhibition, Act 5: Power Alone*, Witte de With Center for Contemporary Art, Rotterdam (2010); *Report on Probability*, Kunsthalle Basel (2009) and *Exponential Futures*, Morris and Helen Belkin Art Gallery, Vancouver (2008). She has written catalogue essays and reviews for publications such as *Canadian Art*, *C Magazine* and *Hunter and Cook*, Toronto and is represented by Blanket Contemporary Art Inc., Vancouver and Kendall Koppe Gallery, Glasgow.



Contemporary Art Gallery Annual Gala Dinner and Art Auction

Saturday November 5, 2011, 6.30pm
Rosewood Hotel Georgia

Tickets available now:
\$250 (\$225 for members) / \$2,250 for a table of 10
For further details and to purchase tickets contact Sue Lavitt at
604.681.2700 or email s.lavitt@contemporaryartgallery.ca

On the occasion of our fortieth anniversary come celebrate and
collect an artwork from one of the participating artists:

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|--------------------|-------------------------|
| Vikky Alexander | Micah Lexier |
| Roy Arden | Anne Low & Gareth Moore |
| Robert Arndt | Attila Richard Lukacs |
| Joshua Bartholomew | Kelly Lycan |
| Thomas Bewick | Scott McFarland |
| Shary Boyle | Elizabeth McIntosh |
| Pablo Bronstein | Al McWilliams |
| Eric Cameron | Scott Massey |
| Andrew Dadson | Ron Moppett |
| Dexter Sinister | Alex Morrison |
| Marcel Dzama | Shannon Oksanen |
| FASTWÜRMS | Jayce Salloum |
| Ryan Gander | Nicolas Sassoon |
| Peter Gazendam | Mark Soo |
| Hadley & Maxwell | Corin Sworn |
| Sharon Hayes | Ron Tran |
| Federico Herrero | Stephen Waddell |
| Shawn Hunt | Jeff Wall |
| Antonia Hirsch | Ian Wallace |
| Jay Isaac | Holly Ward |
| Devon Knowles | Weppler and Mahovsky |
| Germaine Koh | Jordan Wolfson |
| Susanne Kriemann | Alison Yip |
| Lyse Lemieux | Elizabeth Zvonar |
| Arvo Leo | |

A benefit for the Contemporary Art Gallery. To view donated
works visit www.CAGauction.com



Federico Herrero

Vibrantes
Window Spaces and off-site
Continues to January 15, 2012

Federico Herrero's vivid and dynamic mural for the Contemporary Art Gallery continues to animate our windows into 2012. For this major commission Herrero shifted material, using sheets of coloured adhesive vinyl instead of his usual medium of paint. Akin to Matisse and his late paper cutouts, Herrero progressively developed this new work across our façade of windows and doors using the glass as a ground for an array of layered, multi-coloured abstract shapes that accumulate in density to form a cohesive composition. As clouds roll in, the sun moves across the window panes and the season changes, the saturated vinyl forms will constantly shift in intensity and opacity. This fluctuating vibrancy is part of the works complexity and Herrero's interest in using site-specificity to address the division between art and life.

Using Herrero's propositions as a starting point and moving beyond the gallery itself, the Contemporary Art Gallery will launch a new virtual GPS project in late autumn. Working with Herrero, Autobox Media and consultant Hannah Hughes, we have designed a program, using Layar Reality Browser that will allow gallery visitors to manipulate and expand Herrero's mural. On arrival at the gallery, users will be able to view an extended virtual mural spreading onto the street and surrounding buildings. The amount of people using the program will affect its capabilities. The more users there are at one time, the more the original artwork will transform and spread.

The programme will be accessible through most smartphones and can be activated when in proximity to the gallery. Smartphone devices will be available for use at reception. Please check our website for updates.

Federico Herrero
Vibrantes (2011)
Contemporary Art Gallery
Photograph by Scott Massey



Public events

Exhibitions Opening

Thursday November 17, 7–10 pm

Join us to celebrate the opening of our new exhibitions.

Endless Endless:

**Robert Orchardson and Corin Sworn in-conversation
with Richard Henriquez and Leslie Van Duzer**

Friday November 18, 7pm

Places are free

An in-conversation event between artists Orchardson and Sworn with architect Richard Henriquez and Leslie Van Duzer, Director and Professor, School of Architecture and Landscape Architecture, UBC. Discussion will centre on topics of redundancy, memory and shifts in value and meaning over time.

Aelita: Queen of Mars (USSR, 1924)

Director: Jakov Protazanov

Film Screening at Pacific Cinematheque

Thursday December 15, 7pm

Programmed on the occasion of Orchardson's *Endless Façade* this marks a partnership between the Contemporary Art Gallery and Pacific Cinematheque. The most celebrated Soviet film until *Battleship Potemkin*, and perhaps second only to *Metropolis* as the most influential science fiction movie of the silent era, the exotic, extravagant *Aelita* — the world's first-ever feature film about interplanetary travel — is a key example of Constructivist decor and costume.

Black and white, DVD, 111 minutes. Silent with English intertitles and musical score.

Public Discussion

Nancy Gillespie on Corin Sworn

Date to be announced, please check our website for updates

Places are free

Nancy Gillespie, poet and Lacanian scholar will examine the literary aspects of the Corin Sworn exhibition, *Endless Renovation*. This discussion is part of an ongoing series of talks in which we invite commentators from other disciplines to respond to our exhibition programme.

Cover image
Robert Orchardson
Endless Façade (2011)

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Open Wednesday to Sunday 12 to 6pm
Free entry

The Abraham Rogatnick Library is open to the public by appointment

The Contemporary Art Gallery is generously supported by the Canada Council for the Arts, the City of Vancouver, and the Province of British Columbia through the BC Arts Council and the BC Gaming Policy and Enforcement Branch. We are grateful for the support of Vancouver Foundation and our members, donors, and volunteers.

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Free Guided Visits

Guided visits are free and open to the public, providing an excellent opportunity to engage with exhibitions and develop new skills for interpreting contemporary art.

Saturday November 19, 3pm

Guided visit of exhibition Robert Orchardson, *Endless Façade* led by Executive Director Nigel Prince

Saturday December 3, 3pm

Led by our volunteers with Gallery Coordinator, Jill Henderson

Saturday December 10, 3pm

Guided visit in French led by our volunteer Patricia Huijnen

Saturday December 17, 3pm

Guided visit of exhibition Corin Sworn, *Endless Renovation* led by curator Jenifer Papararo

Saturday January 7, 3pm

Guided visit of Federico Herrero, *Vibrantes* led by Jenifer Papararo and Hannah Hughes

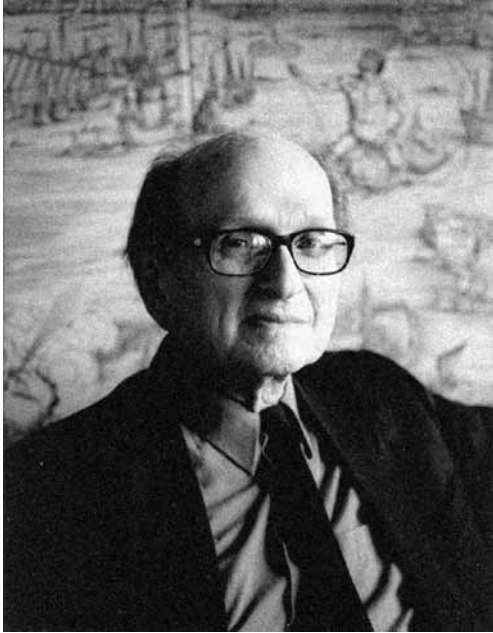
Sunday January 15, 3pm

Led by our volunteers with Gallery Coordinator, Jill Henderson

We also encourage visits from primary and secondary schools, ESL groups, university and college students and community groups. For more information or to book a guided visit for your group, please email info@contemporaryartgallery.ca or telephone 604.681.2700.



Abraham Rogatnick



Abraham Rogatnick: 1923–2009

At the Contemporary Art Gallery we are ever mindful of the necessary and generous support from all of our funders, crucial in enabling us to achieve so much of what we aim to do and importantly to provide this free to the city of Vancouver.

For this, the last series of exhibitions, events, activities and associated talks in our programme for 2011, and on the occasion of our fortieth anniversary, we celebrate these supporters, past, present and future.

That these exhibitions are rooted in the relationships between disciplines — art, architecture and theatre — could not be more apposite for this occasion. Further, that they embody themes including notions of memory, loss, and new meaning that might emerge from consideration of models now past is arguably even more apt.

And so it is in this spirit and context that we delight in being able to dedicate them to the legacy and lasting memory of Abraham Rogatnick, a significant and enthusiastic supporter of the Contemporary Art Gallery for many years. That Rogatnick means 'a Y-shaped fork in the road,' emblematic of choice and decision, seems ever more and uncannily prophetic. He remains a rare and special person.