

Jess MacNeil THE RATE OF FORGETTING

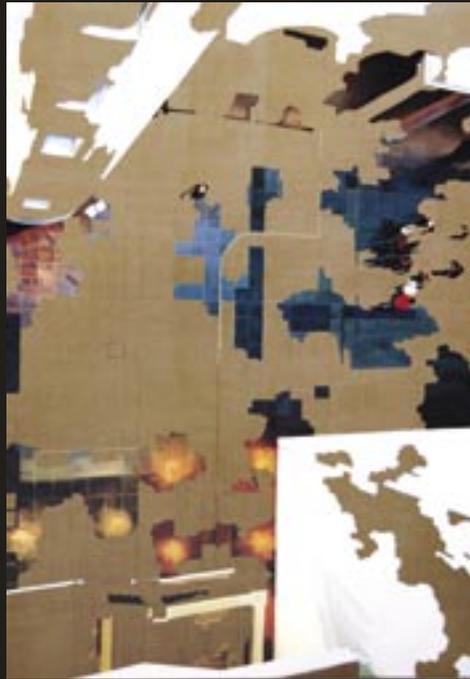
Art thinks? Art generates thought. Art thinks with us. Art has the power to affect us. Art translates our lived experiences via imagination, memory and language. Art exists as a translation, both linguistic and subjective.

Jess MacNeil's paintings reside within a situation of relentless translation – of place, memory and lived experience. Her insistence on the [re]presentation of place brought about via an intercession into the slippages of memory and lived experience situate us not simply as passive observers – rather as crucial collaborators to the form and content of these paintings and the sensations that they generate.

Negotiating her way through both intimate spaces and monumental places across Berlin, Dusseldorf and the French Alps, MacNeil has selected moments that distil time and place. Alexanderplatz and Potsdamerplatz become receptacles for our own enquiry – whether weighted by the burden of Berlin's history, or via the sense of a city undergoing constant change. These paintings allow us to fill in the spaces with our own memories and sentiment, stimulating in us both a rational and an emotional response.

On a viewing platform high on Mont Blanc tourists gather to snap pictures that in turn act as conduits to memory. The overwhelming sensation of these sublime Alps is reduced via photography. MacNeil's paintings reinvest awe in these immense landscapes disrupting our 'natural' way of seeing and opening us up to sensations of the sublime. Our rational way of seeing and our reticular vision is bit by bit dissolved by the mirroring of the landscape and MacNeil's spaces devoid of paint, leading us away from the image as a representation of 'reality', creating pauses, breaths, a suspension of vision and visibility and towards an extraordinary crossover of figuration and abstraction.

Sally Breen, June 2004



Front top: *Levity, Echo* 2004
oil and graphite on acrylic colour-canvas, 122 x 183 cm
Front bottom: *The Present Perfect: East* 2004
oil and graphite on linen, 91 x 137 cm
Centre: *The Future of Memory* 2004
oil and graphite on linen, 183 x 246 cm (diptych)
Above: *K21* 2004
oil and graphite on linen, 228 x 152 cm



Jess MacNeil



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