

darkness on the edge of town

beam contemporary

tahlia jolly david mutch debbie pridmore
mark reid dawn roe david surman james voller
curated by kyle weise

22 July – 13 August 2011

Exhibition Opening Saturday 23rd of July 3pm - 5pm

Spanning video, photography and painting, *Darkness on the Edge of Town* explores the in-between sites and borderlands of the contemporary built environment and landscape. In the works presented here, 'darkness' is both a literal and metaphorical feature of these spaces. Several works are focused on night-time scenes, while other works present the suburban environment, with its expanding frontiers and forgotten spaces, in stark-daylight, but with potentially sinister undertones. Shared amongst all of the works is a fascination with landscapes that are in flux. The works create scenes that shift and blur the boundaries between darkness and light, movement and stillness, interior and exterior, the built environment and wild nature.

In a gesture that refers to the importance of popular culture in defining this landscape, the exhibition takes its title from Bruce Springsteen's popular 1978 album of the same name. In this album, as in much popular culture, the edge of town is a site of physical uncertainty that also presents a conceptual ambiguity: the edge of town is a frontier of possibility, a route to freedom from everyday life, but its possibilities are inevitably tainted with doubt and fear.

Referring back to the 1970s, the title also points towards the 1975 "New Topographics" exhibition, which focused on photographic work that captured the emerging contours of the American and European landscape. This work presented an exploration of the quotidian reality of a landscape dominated by cars, consumerism, waste and environmental destruction. Crucially, however, many of the artists associated with the "New Topographics" also found incredible beauty amongst this banality. Their work is neither a simple celebration nor outright condemnation of the environments that are their subject. The emerging patterns of land-use, transport and habitation, captured by these artists, have since expanded significantly and have given rise to new spatial agglomerations, such as 'edge cities' and 'exurban' developments. The works in this exhibition maintain a relationship with this work of the 1970s, but also begin to explore the specificity of contemporary landscapes, dwelling for a moment, and capturing the uncertainty of a physical landscape constantly remade.

The exhibition includes video works by David Mutch, Mark Reid and Dawn Roe; photographic works by Tahlia Jolly, David Surman and James Voller; and paintings by Debbie Pridmore.

For further information or images contact Kyle Weise: kyle@beamcontemporary.com.au



level 1, 30 guildford lane melbourne victoria 3000 australia
wednesday to saturday 12 – 6

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List of works

Main Gallery clockwise from left to right

- **Debbie Pridmore**, *Bench*, 2008
Oil on Canvas, 92 x 70cm
- **Debbie Pridmore**, *Ute*, 2008
Oil on Canvas, 92 x 70cm
- **David Surman**, *Untitled (The Approach)*, 2011
Archival inkjet print on archival paper, 75 x 56cm
Ed. 3 + 1 AP
- **David Surman**, *Untitled (The Approach)*, 2011
Archival inkjet print on archival paper, 75 x 56cm
Ed. 3 + 1 AP
- **David Surman**, *Untitled (The Approach)*, 2011
Archival inkjet print on archival paper, 75 x 56cm
Ed. 3 + 1 AP
- **Mark Reid**, *Gate Three*, 2010
HD video on Blu-ray, 28 minutes.
Ed. 3 + 2 AP
- **James Voller**, *Homely Part One (Upper Hutt, New Zealand)*, 2010
Archival inkjet print on archival paper, 53 x 65cm
Ed. 3 + 1 AP
- **Dawn Roe**, *This is Nowhere (Everybody Knows)*, 2009
Two-Channel HD Video, 2 minutes, 10 seconds.
- **Tahlia Jolly**, *Light Series*, 2010 (Selection)
Clockwise from top left to bottom right:
Light Series 5
Light Series 8
Light Series 1
Light Series 2
Light Series 3
Light Series 4
Digital Prints Mounted on Aluminium, 76 x 61cm
Ed. 2 + 1 AP

Alcove

- **David Mutch**, *Abandoning the Surface*, 2011
Looped HD video
Ed. 3 + 1 AP

All enquiries, please contact Kyle Weise:

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Artist Biographies

Tahlia Jolly's current photographic work explores and captures familiar surroundings and the unsettling yet seductive shift that occurs as darkness envelops them. The suburban landscape is rendered eerily quiet and still as night approaches. The more the light fades, the quieter and lonelier it gets. Until you find yourself outside in dark solitude, voyeuristically turning towards sources of light for comfort. Tahlia completed a Bachelor of Fine Art at Monash University as a faculty scholar in 2010. Currently she is studying a Master of Art Curatorship at Melbourne University. Tahlia received a NAVA award for Professional Practice in 2010.

David Mutch's practice encompasses sculptural installation, video, photography & sound. His current work documents a search for secularly spiritual sites and experiences in contemporary urban environments. David completed a BA Fine Art at RMIT, Melbourne. Recent solo exhibitions include: *Why Did Aliens Build The Pyramids?* (2011), Beam Contemporary, Melbourne; *Inverse Universe* (2011) at Rearview, Collingwood & *The Tourists* (2010) at Seventh Gallery, Fitzroy. Group shows include *Hans Arp If You Like Dada* (2011) at ARTbeat, Melbourne & *Morelocks, Molepeople...* (2010) at Westspace, Melbourne. In 2009 he curated *Last Days Polaroid Sale* at Blindsight, Melbourne and was a recipient of a City of Melbourne Young Artist Grant.

Debbie Pridmore graduated from The Victorian College of the Arts (Melbourne) in 1997, and following her involvement in several group shows during that period, has only more recently begun exhibiting regularly. Through several solo shows, at Trocadero Artspace, Bus and Beam Contemporary, Debbie has been exploring the themes of perception, memory and time. The works aim to impart a tension between recognition and obscurity and to leave the viewer with at least a mild sense of unease.

Mark Reid is a new media artist based in Melbourne, Australia. Mark works primarily with digital video, exploring the possibilities of observing the sublime in the absence of conventional beauty. His recent body of work invites his audience to partake in a process of quiet observation, experiencing familiar places and landscapes in unfamiliar ways. Mark graduated from RMIT (Melbourne) with a Bachelor of Fine Arts (Honours) in 2010. His work has been screened at ACMI (Melbourne) in 2009, and, as part of *Rencontres Internationales* (2010-2011) at the Centre Pompidou (Paris), Filmoteca Espanola (Madrid) and Haus der Kulturen der Welt, Berlin.



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Dawn Roe received her MFA in Studio Art from The Illinois State University School of Art in Normal, IL in 2005 and her BFA in Photography from Marylhurst University in Portland, OR in 2002. Dawn is currently Assistant Professor of Art at Rollins College, Winter Park Florida. Select solo and two-person exhibitions include Orange Coast College Photography Gallery, Costa Mesa, CA (2011), Dog & Pony Projects (*with Benjamin Gardner*), Buffalo, NY, Orlando Museum of Art, Orlando, FL (2010), SE1 Gallery, London, U.K. and Newspace Center for Photography (*with Catharine Stebbins*), Portland, OR (2009). Recent group exhibitions include *Transplanted*, Launch Projects, Toronto (ON) Canada (2011), *HyperReal World: Landscape as Commodity*, Museum of Fine Arts, Florida State University, Tallahassee, FL, *In Our Backyard*, McLean County Arts Center, Bloomington, IL (2010), and *(H)4U*, Pearlman Gallery, Art Academy of Cincinnati, Cincinnati, OH (2009). Dawn has undertaken residencies throughout the US, and most recently served as Artist-in-Residence at The Visual Arts Centre of LaTrobe University in Bendigo (VIC), Australia.

David Surman is an English artist currently based in Melbourne, Australia. He works collaboratively with his partner Ian Gouldstone, creating works in a range of media. Their work explores themes of sex, identity and territory, and the transformative effects of mediation and commercialisation. After graduating with distinction from Masters at Warwick department of Film and Television and the Royal College of Art, Surman and Gouldstone have exhibited their work in film festivals and galleries worldwide, including the Sundance film festival, Ann Arbor film festival, Toronto Film Festival, Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego, Royal Academy London, British Museum, Victoria and Albert Museum, Barcelona Centre of Contemporary Culture, and the 291 Gallery. Awards include the 2007 short animation BAFTA for *guy101*. They are currently working on a range of photographic and single channel video works.

James Voller completed a BFA at the University of Canterbury, New Zealand, and received a scholarship to complete a Masters of Fine Arts at RMIT, Melbourne. Currently based in London, he has exhibited throughout New Zealand and internationally. Most recently James was an artist in residence in Krems, Austria, culminating in a large installation exhibited at Kunst Verein Baden.



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