

CLAUDE
LÉVÊQUE
WELCOME
TO SUICIDE PARK

30 january - 29 march 2008

« I had to put up some kind of a fight. »
The Rolling Stones - *Honky Tonk Women*

A park. A place of initiation; ideal; somewhere to come and finish your days. A place to isolate yourself, to invent a world no longer crippled by the quest for normalisation and rationality. A place to withdraw to.

An exhibition serves to translate, to adapt a scenario, guaranteeing not only its result but also the procedure itself. It is a perpetual and permanent elaboration, an on-going space, to be traversed in all senses.

In this process, in order to obtain an infinite narrative, each work becomes a clue. It becomes an investigation, based not on pragmatic or rational notions, but, quite the opposite, on the immersive virtues of fiction, its meaninglessness and its own space-time and mental rules.

Using the works and their layout, the exhibition gives birth to a *layer of fiction*, a *landscape of events*, whereby new systems of discourse are produced.

It becomes a *toolbox* that allows the formation of a space full of connections, a "*sentient chain*" that is made up of multiple links composed of the images, their shapes and their contextual environment.

The exhibition space is either a trap or a protection; a place of surveillance and dissimulation that enables us to escape, to move beyond the reach of repression. It is a form of heteropia, a real counter-space but outside all space, at once removed from – and within – the world, which it allows us to perceive without having to fear it. Here, then, we may carve out our niche, in harmony with our individuality and desires.

Fiction hunts down reality and uses it for its own ends. For any event or exhibition, there is a pre-existing vocabulary, there are pre-existing possibilities and fragments of a story. To cling to this moment is to verify certain hypotheses amidst a journey.

"Western man prefers shock emotions – the realm of shouting – to contemplative emotions – the realm of sighing. He needs to be rocked by upheavals, deafened by hysterical activity, astonished by new and powerful impressions".

Michel Lacroix, *Le culte d'émotion* [*The cult of emotion*]

Claude Lévêque's work examines the impact produced by emotions and allegorical situations. He sets out to create superficiality with a formal, highly economical language. He defines the characteristics of ephemerality, the delusion of an existence, thereby expressing how fragile reality is once one understands its seduction. Here, melancholia is a way of capturing time, because to reach the end is also to be faced with eternity. We are confronted with moments both of anxiety and constraint; mirror images that provoke a sensorial set of circumstances. The artist plays with dynamic, unstable forces in an uncompromising release of the imaginary. We pass from seduction to repulsion and find ourselves in a destabilizing situation, in a tragic and luminous landscape. Instead of the dominance of biography, we have a game with its own personal history. Through shared places, Lévêque likes to produce metaphors – transformations that scrutinize a snapshot of life. Using archetypes for their immediate recognisability, he arranges them like the pieces of a film set in order to create a *popular otherness*: a dizzying array of images removed from reality; a tracking shot showing a work of fiction in progress in a zone of reactivity.

NO FUTURE ≠ YES TO ALL

Timotheé Chaillou, January 2008
(Translation: James Curwen).

Claude Lévêque « Welcome to suicide park » will be presented at the galerie kamel mennour from tuesday to saturday, from 11am to 7pm.

For further information, please contact Marie-Sophie Eiché and Emma-Charlotte Gobry-Laurencin.

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Sound design Alexis Raverdy