

MARIAN GOODMAN GALLERY

For Immediate Release.

Eija-Liisa Ahtila: "*Where is where?*", 2007 and "*Fishermen (Etudes, No 1)*", 2007

March 29 – April 30, 2008

Opening reception: Saturday March 29, 2008, 6 – 8 pm

Marian Goodman Gallery is pleased to announce an exhibition of the critically acclaimed Finnish filmmaker, video artist, and photographer Eija-Liisa Ahtila and the US premiere of her new work *Where is Where?*, a powerful six screen installation. We are also pleased to be showing *Fishermen (Etudes, no 1)*, the first in a series of short studies that Ahtila is planning to make.

Where is Where?, a major new installation made up of simultaneous HD-projections with 8 channel sound, is shown continuously on six screens. This will be the first U.S. presentation of the work, which was premiered at Ahtila's solo show at the Jeu de Paume, Paris (which continues until 30 March) and which will tour to K21 Düsseldorf in May 2008.

The theme of *Where is Where?* is colonialism and the presence of two different cultures. Its starting point is a real event that took place in Algeria at the end of the 1950s. At that time, Algeria was still under French rule and was involved in a long struggle for independence from the mother country. The situation was extremely violent, both because of recurrent assassination attempts by the resistance movement and because of the French government's harsh countermeasures. As one consequence of and reaction to the barbarous acts committed by the French, two Algerian boys killed their friend, a French boy of the same age.

The story has three main characters: Adel and Ismael, the Arab boys who committed the murder, and a European poet, a woman of about 40. The story opens with Death entering the woman's house. The experience of death is compared to finding oneself in a new country and to a calling into question of existence and identity. The woman starts, with the aid of words from her profession of poet, to clarify what happened, while also running through elements involved in the event, such as the different religions, guilt and sameness, and a search for what they have in common. Gradually the focus shifts from the woman's world to the boys' reality. The murder is taken out of the time of its occurrence and brought into the present day. A mist clears from the back garden of the house to reveal a boat that has appeared in the swimming pool, in it sit Adel and Ismael. The poet is shifted to the background, and what the boys say and the inevitability of what they did – with its causes and consequences – take centre stage.

Although the film's starting points are based in reality, at the heart of the story is the relationship this event has with today's situation. The narrative starts from the present moment, which is gradually interwoven with what the boys did and the events in Algeria. Thus, the murder committed by the boys is seen, on the one hand, in the light of the current world situation and, on the other hand, in a way that attempts to put the conflicts between western and Arab cultures into historical perspective. The events are, nevertheless, approached from the viewpoint of an individual person and filtered through her.

The installation of *Where is Where?* in the North Gallery is accompanied by a single screen installation *Fishermen (Etudes, no 1)* in the North Gallery Viewing Room. The first of a series of short studies or etudes,

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the film was shot in West Africa, and observes the local fishermen who attempt to overcome the strong wind and heavy waves to launch their boats out to sea.

Eija-Liisa Ahtila was born in 1959 in Hämeenlinna, Finland and currently lives and works in Helsinki. She was the recipient in 2000 of the Vincent Van Gogh Biannual Award for Contemporary Art in Europe, Maastricht, The Netherlands as well as the Coutts Contemporary Art Foundation Award, Switzerland. In 1998 she received the Edstrand Art Prize, Sweden. She attended Helsinki University, Faculty of Law (1980-85); Independent Art School, 1981-84; and London College of Printing, School of Media and Management, Film and Video (1990-91). She received a Certificate from U.C.L.A. in Film, TV, Theater and Multimedia Studies, Los Angeles (1994-95) and attended special courses at the America Film Institute, Advanced Technology Program, Los Angeles (1994-95). She has exhibited extensively at numerous museums and film festivals around the world and her films have received distinctive film awards and prizes over the years. Her work has also been widely seen on television in Europe.

A solo retrospective of her work, with a fully illustrated catalogue, is currently on view at the Galerie nationale du Jeu de Paume, Paris and will tour to K21 Düsseldorf from 17 May – 17 August 2008. The production of *'Where is Where?'* was generously supported by the Ellipse Foundation, Portugal, who will present the work later this year, and the Ringier Collection, Zurich.

Numerous one-woman exhibitions of her work have been seen internationally at venues such as Tate Modern, London; Museo d'Arte Moderna e Contemporanea, Bolzano, Italy; De Appel Center for Contemporary Art, Amsterdam; The Dallas Museum of Art; Zurich Kunsthalle; Kiasma Museum of Contemporary Art, Helsinki; Neue Nationalgalerie, Berlin; Salzburger Kunstverein, Salzburg; Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago; Museum Fridericianum, Kassel and MOMA, New York. Retrospectives of her cinematic work have been recently shown at the Museum of Modern Art, New York; Tate Modern, London; the Institute Finlandais, Paris.

Important group exhibitions include *Auto Emotion*, The Power Plant Contemporary Art Gallery, Toronto; *Views from the Bosphorus*, Istanbul Modern, Istanbul, Turkey (2007); *Beyond Cinema*, Nationalgalerie im Hamburger Bahnhof, Museum für Gegenwart; *Ecstasy: In and About Altered States*, MoCA, The Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles; *The World is a Stage: Stories Behind Pictures*, Mori Art Museum, Tokyo; *Girls Night Out*, Orange Country Museum of Art, Los Angeles, which traveled to Aspen and St. Louis, and Houston's Blaffer Gallery, University of Houston (2006) ; *51st Venice Biennale* 2005; *The Friedrich Christian Flick Collection*, Hamburger Bahnhof Museum für Gegenwart, Berlin; *Outlook*, Athens; *Away from Home*, Wexner Center for the Arts, Columbus, Ohio; *Reel Sculpture*, San Francisco Museum of Modern Art; *Documenta II*, Kassel; *Sydney Biennale* 2002; *Venice Biennale* 1999 and 1997; *Manifesta 2* 1998, Luxembourg; and the *5th Istanbul Biennale* 1997.

Please join us at the opening reception on March 29th from 6-8 pm.

For further information, please contact the gallery at: 212 977 7160.

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For Immediate Release.

Chantal Akerman: *Women from Antwerp in November, 2007*

March 29– April 30, 2008

Opening reception: *Saturday, March 29th, 6-8 pm*

Marian Goodman Gallery is pleased to present a new installation by the renowned Belgian filmmaker Chantal Akerman, which will be on view from March 29th through April 30th, 2008.

Women from Antwerp in November, 2007 is a two-channel installation which will be on view in the South Gallery. The work was originally commissioned for inclusion in Akerman's first American museum survey which is currently touring the U.S.: *Chantal Akerman: Moving through Time and Space*, on view through the end of March at the Blaffer Gallery, University of Houston, and opening May 1st at MIT's List Visual Arts Center, Cambridge; then traveling to Miami, St. Louis, and San Francisco through 2010.

Comprised of two monumentally scaled projections alternating between color and black-and-white, *Women from Antwerp in November* features short vignettes of women smoking at night in various street settings. These short narratives – presented together as a 'landscape' in a long horizontal, split-screen format – offer a compelling array of psychological and emotional scenarios of 'before' and 'after' as women engage in wordless social interplay, lingering on the sidewalk, walking in the rain, ambling in from an evening out. On the opposite wall, a single-frame portrait -- a 'face' -- shows a languid four-minute loop filmed in black and white of a young woman lighting, smoking and extinguishing her cigarette.

"I made five moving images that work together like a landscape," Akerman explains. You can imagine what has come before and what might come after, but each short passage is, by itself, abstract and unsettled."

Women from Antwerp in November is redolent of classic 1940s/1950s French and American film noir, touching on Akerman's foundation in feminist filmmaking and her deep connection to a highly personal, yet distant, cinematic point of view. A meditation on classic psychological props and on reflective female gestures, it employs slow moving action and a compelling attention to detail, light, and visual effect to conjure an atmosphere of nostalgia and a distinct and mesmerizing cinematic experience.

Chantal Akerman was born in Brussels in 1950 and currently lives and works in Paris. One of the most important filmmakers of her generation, she has been a leading figure in European experimental cinema since the early seventies, employing a rejection of classical conceptions of narrative and a variety of genres over the past three decades to portray the theme of womanhood, family, domestic life, and one's own relationship with history. From early films such as *Saute ma ville* (1968); *Jeanne Deilman* (1975), *Je Tu Il Elle* (1975), onwards, she demonstrated an interest in the everyday that followed from a trajectory of postwar neorealist cinema to the feminist rewriting of women's history in the seventies.

Over the past decade, since the early nineties, Akerman has used video and installation in her exploration of film form, in such works as *D'Est* (1995); *Sud* (1998/9); *From the Other Side* (2002) ; and *Marcher a cote de ses lacets dans un Frigidaire vide* (2004).

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She is the author of several books, including *A Family in Brussels*, a fictional stream of consciousness text first performed as a monologue in Paris and Brussels, and published in French by Les Editions de l'Arche, Paris and in English by Dia Art Foundation.

Current projects include a solo exhibition scheduled to open this summer at Camden Arts Center, UK from July 11 through September 14th. Her U.S. survey *Chantal Akerman: Moving through Time and Space* continues its run through 2010, opening to the public on May 2nd at MIT's List Visual Arts Center, Cambridge, MA where it will be on view through July 6th; then traveling to the Miami Art Museum, Miami, FL from October 16th thru January 18th; the Contemporary Museum of Art, St. Louis, MO, May 8 thru August 2nd 2009; and The Jewish Museum, San Francisco, CA, from October 9 – January 2010. A catalogue for the exhibition has been published to coincide with the tour, with texts by Terrie Sultan, Bill Arning, Rina Carvajal. An exhibition of her work will also be on view in Portugal this summer.

Her work can also currently be seen in *Ellipsis: Chantal Akerman, Lilli Dujourie, and Francesca Woodman*, curated by Lynne Cooke, which was shown at Museo Tamayo, Mexico City through the end of January, and is currently on view at the Konsthall Lund Sweden through April 6th, and will travel to Contemporary Art Centre, Dundee, Scotland from April through June 2008. A catalogue with texts by Lynne Cooke and Jan Avgikos is being published on the occasion of this exhibition. She is also included in the group exhibition *WACK!: Art and the Feminist Revolution*, now on view at P.S. 1 Contemporary Art Center, NY thru June 2008, traveling to the Vancouver Art Gallery, BC from October thru January '09. She will participate in Art Focus 2008 in Jerusalem this Fall.

Recently, solo exhibitions of Akerman's work have been seen at the Tel Aviv Museum of Art, Israel (2006); Princeton University Art Museum, Princeton, NJ (2006); Museo de Arte Latinoamericano de Buenos Aires/Malba, Buenos Aires, Argentina (2005); and Ecole superieure des Beaux Arts de Toulouse (2004).

Important earlier exhibitions include a retrospective survey, *Chantal Akerman*, held at the Centre Georges Pompidou in 2003, as well as the travelling tour of the film *D'EST*, 1995 (a documentary of the transition from summer to winter across Germany, Poland, and Russia) which was seen at San Francisco MoMA; Walker Art Center, Minneapolis; Galerie national du Jeu de Paume, Paris; Palais des Beaux Arts, Brussels; IVAM, Valencia; Kunstmuseum, Wolfsburg; and The Jewish Museum, New York.

Her work has also been included in group exhibitions, such as *Faces in the Crowd*, Castello Di Rivoli Museo d'Arte Contemporanea, Rivoli-Turin, Italy (2005) and Whitechapel Gallery, London (2004); *Fast Forward: Media Art from the Goetz Collection*, ZKM Center for Art and Media, Karlsruhe, Germany (2003); *Crossing the Line*, Kunsthalle Vienna (2003); the 2002 *Documenta XI*, Kassel, Germany, and the 2001 *Venice Biennale*, as well as numerous international film festivals.

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