



Nooshin Farhid: Acid Drops, 2005, video stills.

ACID DROPS

Nooshin Farhid

Acid Drops 2005 is a video installation first installed at Keith Talent Gallery for the exhibition Use this kind of Sky. It took the form of a nine monitor arrangement and a projection which in this presentation was located in another part of the gallery away from the monitors. The monitors were randomly placed though in close proximity to each other, they gave the appearance of having 'just arrived' in the space, provisional and waiting to be ordered into the aesthetics of the gallery. In many ways this strategy of placement gives an important entry into the work, each monitor had its own video looped partial narrative, sequences of imagery, fragments of a larger narrative to which we have no access. As the viewer we are teased by these narrative fragments that offer us a story line that seems familiar having its references to mainstream cinema and the more interesting regular drama we see on a weekly basis on TV. However these narratives remain unresolved they become furtive glimpses of potentially dark happenings.

What holds this fragile structure together is the overwhelming nature of the imagery, each sequence shot in real time and carefully edited is set against the background of a fantasy space, a space of fun, pleasure, enjoyment and excess. Pleasureland, the

funfair, the uniqueness of the English pier clinging on to the mainland but not quite part of it metaphorically becoming an other place were the extreme can be experienced and indulged in. A dominant feature of this is the power of colour, not the subtly of ordered sophisticated design but that of the clashing and outrageous, a flooding of reds, yellows, purples, greens all vying for our attention. Drifting through this space appearing and disappearing from location to location from monitor to monitor is the image of a young man carrying a bundle of newspapers. He carries these disposable belongings close to his body, sometimes dropping them and anxiously gathering them readjusting their position again close to his body. There is the sense that in the space of the fantastical which verges on madness these conveyors of news, information about the world becomes his hold on sanity. The newspaper also becomes multi-functional, its columns of text offer stories from the local to the international from the serious to the frivolous, its material being becomes a protection against the cold, as a rolled up object it becomes a powerful weapon of resistance. The newspaper is emblematic of a kind of stability,

it stands for something morally, politically, ethically yet it is disposable, it has a short term shelf life, its authority is for 24 hours to be super ceded by more news by more opinions. One of the most powerful sequences in the installation depicts a bright pillar box red stairwell the camera placed precariously at the top on the edge of a guard rail, sheets of newspaper float down to the basement below, the poetic of the initial single sheets becomes a torrent of sheets showering down. The order and structured form of the newspaper as an organised entity, edited, designed to take us from the important through to the frivolous but linked by the ever present advertising, the life blood of the publication is summarily dispatched into chaos and collapse, into dispersal and dis-order.

Paul Eachus