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BEYOND TIME AND SPACE:
Edith Flückiger and Germaine Koh

The new multimedia exhibition *(im)mobile* explores space and its relation to humans, absent and present. Presented by Dalhousie Art Gallery and the Centre for Art Tapes in partnership with White Frame, *(im)mobile* is a collaboration between Switzerland's Edith Flückiger, who's included a number isolated text and video-based pieces, and Vancouver-based Germaine Koh, who contributes a series of highly interactive pieces. Employing video projection, sound installation and electronics, the exhibition succeeds in presenting a complimentary series of works engaged in meaningful dialogue with one another about the ambiguous spaces we traverse while connecting with our inner and outer worlds.

As curators Mireille Bourgeois and Chantal Molleur explain in their statement about the show, "These artists consider human presence or absence within their work ... One's works do not knowingly create a space for the other's, but they trigger a conversation, a dialogue between sites of the mind and state of the body."

The darkened Dalhousie Art Gallery magnifies the sense of isolation and removal in many of the pieces. The artists collaborate on *Tracing Tracks*, an interactive online game that asks viewer/participants to retrace onto new locations tracks previously recorded by other users. A computer terminal in the corner of the gallery encourages the viewer to route traced parks, cemeteries and other public spaces around the world, and lay the route over a map of wherever they are, or download it onto a GPS. The activity itself, along with the project website, which grows as more users upload their own results, creates a sort of dual dialogue. Users are forced to interrogate their own familiar spaces through a different cartographic lens, and in sharing their results they engage with users from around the world, and with the images of the familiar spaces of other users.

Flückiger's *Inside and Outside*, created in collaboration with Stephan Bischoff and Beni Mosele, is a work of video projection, 2D composition and sound installation. Large images of green text are projected onto a black background on the wall of a darkened room, to almost overwhelming effect. The format recalls the black and

> "When my heart starts racing I give up. I close my eyes. Sleeping, however, is out of the question."
> —Edith Flückiger's *Inside and Outside*

Installation view of *(Im)mobile,* featuring work by Edith Flückiger and Germaine Koh at the Dalhousie Art Gallery, 2014.
Photo: Steve Farmer

Installation view of Edith Flückiger's *swim*, 1997/2014 (foreground); and Germaine Koh and Gordon Hicks's *There/Here*, 2011.
Photo: Steve Farmer

Left to right: Installation view of Edith Flückiger's *lost in thought*, 1999;
and Germaine Koh's *Fair-weather forces (wind speed)*, 2002.
Photo: Steve Farmer

green of early computer terminals, while the text appears as though it's being typed out in real time. The phrases onscreen suggest a sort of awe, as well as perhaps confusion or fear at the idea of existence upon what amounts to a massive rock hurtling through space. This fear is reflected in the text, as in the passage which states: "When my heart starts racing I give up. I close my eyes. Sleeping, however, is out of the question." The movement of the text, racing across the screen at one moment, crawling slowly the next, floating in and out of focus, appearing and fading away, mirrors the feelings conveyed in the text, and the sensation it creates in the viewer. It's a dizzying piece, almost overwhelming, and certainly enveloping.

Koh's *Here/There*, created with Gordon Hicks, enables an even more removed form of interaction; two framed doors are connected by a live internet stream, and any manipulation of one results in the immediate identical movement of the other. The work plays with the idea of being two places at once, through "technological communication." When the piece debuted in 2011 at the Surrey Art Gallery, the curators alluded to the way in which the work explores how "in our age of everyday telepresence, manifested by

constant mobile phone and portable computer use, relationships between time and space are being altered in significant ways." The live, internet based interaction, so typical of our everyday lives, is stripped of its familiar visible user interface, and stripped down to something so basic and comparably ancient as a simple wooden door and frame.

The entirety of the exhibition, which is comprised of works created over a period of over fifteen years, constantly changes and challenges the viewer's orientation to the art, piece by piece. Flückiger's video projections isolate images of bodies at play, and her large block texts seem like cryptic commands, dominating the spaces they are viewed in while revealing only fragments. Koh's work insists that the viewer participate and communicate with others. Together, the works call into question communication, with each other and with the spaces we inhabit. ∎

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