

MURRAY GUY

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"A Man of the Crowd"

MATTHEW BUCKINGHAM

1st November – 20th December 2003

Opening reception: Saturday 1st November 6-8pm



Edgar Allan Poe never saw the London of 1840 in which he set his short tale "The Man Of The Crowd." Poe's story about a man who secretly follows a stranger for twenty-four hours contains nothing recognizable of London. Matthew Buckingham's 16mm film-loop installation, "A Man of the Crowd," transposes Poe's uncertain London to a more concrete present-day Vienna, a city that, for complex reasons, retains its 19th century plan and profile. Buckingham also enacts other shifts: "*The Man...*" becomes "*A Man...*"; the literary work becomes filmic; and in the accompanying book published by the Museum Moderner Kunst, Vienna, photographs of the film's locations oppose Poe's original tale. Buckingham also complexifies the dynamic found in the original story, introducing a film camera into Poe's narrative, where it paradoxically becomes a central "character" operating in the peripheral vision of the other characters.

Buckingham's installation spatializes the symmetry, doubling, and self-reflexivity of the Poe story: a 16mm film using Poe's tale as a template is projected through a small opening in the gallery wall into a freestanding two-way mirror. The glass, which echoes a café window from the story, reflects and doubles the image. The glass also reflects the viewer's own image and creates a complex network of shadows while framing other spectators moving in the space. The seemingly sovereign observer becomes displaced and multiplied. Formerly stable dichotomies of subject-object are questioned through the direct experience of the viewer.

"A Man of the Crowd" premiered in a solo exhibition at the Museum Moderner Kunst – Stiftung Ludwig (MuMoK) in Vienna, where it will remain on view through November 16th.

Buckingham's recent film installation "Muhheakantuck – Everything has a Name" is on view through 8th November in Beacon, NY as part of *Watershed: The Hudson Valley Art Project*. Through 2005 it will be shown in various locations along the Hudson River.

Matthew Buckingham was born in 1963 in Nevada, Iowa. His films and installations have been shown extensively in galleries and museums in North America and Europe including the Museum of Modern Art, New York, Moderna Museet, Stockholm, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, P.S.1 Contemporary Art Center, New York and the Charles H. Scott Gallery, Vancouver. He is currently living in Berlin on a residency of the DAAD Berlin Artists Program.