

For Immediate Release:

Brice Dellsperger, *Body Double 18*
09 September through 02 October 2004

Team Gallery will open the 2004-2005 season with a new video installation by the Paris-based artist Brice Dellsperger. Entitled *Body Double 18*, the show will run from the 9th of September through 2nd of October 2004. The gallery is located at 527 West 26th Street, between Tenth and Eleventh Avenues, on the ground floor.

Brice Dellsperger's *Body Double 18* is a synchronized three-channel video installation that presents 15 young subjects. The sequence, a recreation of a scene from David Lynch's *Mulholland Drive*, focuses on the representation of a weeping female character who is masturbating furiously but is unable to achieve orgasm. For this work, Dellsperger called on the assistance of members of both sexes who are styled in the overly determined manner of a carnivalesque femininity. The three projections repeatedly alternate sitters as the viewer is surrounded by an almost suffocating sense of furious desire and frustration.

The image track shifts repeatedly from point-of-view shots of a stone wall to images of Dellsperger's cast doubles. The camera pans down from close-ups of their garish, tear-stained faces, across their chests and bellies, ending with close-ups of their hands moving frenetically underneath the fabric of their underwear. With this dynamic installation, Dellsperger continues to create works which prick at the gender codes inscribed by the contemporary American cinema, revealing their animosity toward any alternative identity formation. Even in Lynch's purportedly avant-garde work, gender representations are stifled, yoked to very limited models.

Body doubling is a standard cinematic production strategy in which one human body is filmed in a manner that will enable it to pass for another. Body doubling, in practice, serves two purposes - one economic, the other aesthetic. When Brian de Palma, to cite one famous example, used a body double to "substitute" for Angie Dickinson in *Dressed to Kill*, the production was able to pay an extra a lower wage scale for labor than that charged by the infinitely more costly star. In addition, and most importantly, when cutting away from shots of Dickinson's then fifty year-old face, to the breasts of a woman in her early twenties, a third impossible body was constructed across the edit, a body that was somehow more "acceptable" than that of the far too human Dickinson.

Without a doubt, damage seeps from this phantom, Frankensteinian body infecting the minds of spectators, who begin to see their own bodies as complicit in a chain of constant comparison between "ourselves" and these filmic representations. In this manner, the phenomenon of the Body Double is an amalgam of the aesthetic and the ideological, one which foregrounds the idea of the body as imperfect without the saving intervention of technology, cosmetics and science. How do we stack up? This innocent shell-game, this bait-and-switch, is the triggering inspiration for Dellsperger's entire *Body Double* project in which he consistently miscasts both against gender and, frequently, against body type. In his practice, women have played River Phoenix, femme queens have played John Travolta, butch men have played Carrie Fisher. In the artist's *Body Double 18*, we are constantly made to shift our gaze back and forth across the 15 figures posing as Naomi Watts, comparing their respective beauties.

Dellsperger's filmic doublings are the inheritors of a complex series of very disparate practices including, but not limited to, the Warhol/Morrissey genre deconstructions (such as *Lonesome Cowboys*, *Heat*, and *Flesh for Frankenstein*); to American avant-gardists Joseph Cornell and Bruce Connor who constructed filmic pieces from previously authored imagery; and to Austrian experimental filmmakers such as Martin Arnold and Peter Tscherkassky who create works by repeating fragments from the films of Hollywood's Classical period. Dellsperger's unique activity straddles the avant-garde and the commercial, the perverse and the normative, the narrative and its opposite. Their hybrid formal nature is mirrored by their gender representations, which mix and match an elaborate myriad of sexual performativities.

They are indeed captivating, enjoyable (oftentimes deliriously so), however, there is also lot of meat, so to speak, in these projections. Dellsperger's work is included in a number of prominent public collections including that of the Museum of Modern Art here in New York. He has recently been included in exhibitions at the Vienna Secession, at the Centre Georges Pompidou, and at the Migros Museum in Zurich.

This is Dellsperger's second one-person show at Team and the first time that one of his multi-screen works is being shown in the US. For further information and/or photographs please call the gallery at 212.279.9219.