

# SOUND SPEED MARKER

Teresa Hubbard / Alexander Birchler

28 February – 10 August 2014

Ballroom Marfa is pleased to present *Sound Speed Marker* by Teresa Hubbard and Alexander Birchler. The three video installations and related photographs, covering a span of five years of work, explore film's relationship to place and the traces that movie making leaves behind. The exhibition includes the premiere of *Giant* (2014), a work commissioned by Ballroom Marfa. The exhibition will be on view at Ballroom Marfa until August 10, 2014 and will be accompanied by a comprehensive catalogue to be published in December 2014. *Sound Speed Marker* will travel to the Irish Museum of Modern Art in December 2014 and the Blaffer Art Museum at the University of Houston in May 2015 in May 2015.

*Grand Paris Texas* (2009) considers the physical and social space of a dead movie theater, a forgotten song and the inhabitants of a small town. The Grand Theater, an abandoned, pigeon-filled movie theater in downtown Paris, serves as the protagonist in a narrative that explores Paris as a meta-location constructed through celluloid and soundtrack. *Grand Paris Texas* connects three seminal movies of the Southwest: Wim Wenders' *Paris, Texas* (1984), Bruce Beresford's *Tender Mercies* (1983), and King Baggot's classic silent film, *Tumbleweeds* (1925).

In *Movie Mountain* (Méliès) (2011), Hubbard/Birchler explore the site of a mountain in the Chihuahuan Desert near the town of Sierra Blanca. The project generates several narrative strands that interweave memory and forgetting. *Movie Mountain* (Méliès) features a script-writing cowboy as well as local residents whose relatives performed in an original silent picture filmed at the mountain. The project also encounters a possible link between Movie Mountain and Gaston Méliès, the brother of famous filmmaker George Méliès.

*Giant* (2014) interweaves signs of life and vistas of a decaying movie set built outside of Marfa: the Reata mansion from the 1956 Warner Bros. film, *Giant* starring Elizabeth Taylor, Rock Hudson and James Dean. After filming was completed the three-sided facade was left behind in the landscape. Hubbard/Birchler explore the skeletal remains of the set as seasons change, day turns to night and parts of the structure swing and fall off. Scenes of a film crew recording the current conditions are juxtaposed with a Warner Bros. office in 1955, where a secretary types up the location contract for the motion picture that has yet to be created.

Teresa Hubbard, born in Dublin, Ireland 1965 and Alexander Birchler, born in Baden, Switzerland 1962 have been working collaboratively in video, photography and sculpture since 1990. Their work is held in numerous private and public collections including the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington D. C.; Kunstmuseum Basel; Kunsthaus Zurich; Modern Art Museum Fort Worth; Museum of Fine Arts Houston; Yokohama Museum of Art and the Pinakothek der Moderne, Munich. Work in this exhibition appears courtesy of Tanya Bonakdar Gallery, New York and Lora Reynolds Gallery, Austin.

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It is part of Ballroom Marfa's mission to enable artwork that would be impossible to realize elsewhere. This project – with its roots in the landscape that we call home – brings Hubbard/Birchler's trilogy to a close, and clarifies Ballroom Marfa's role as an organization committed to commissioning new work.

*Sound Speed Marker* and its programs have been made possible by the generous support of Aargauer Kuratorium, The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, The Brown Foundation, Inc.; L & M Charitable Foundation, Inc.; The Moody Foundation, National Endowment for the Arts, and Texas Commission on the Arts.

With underwriting support provided by Charles Attal, Suzanne Deal Booth, J. Travis Capps, Jr.; Molly Kemp, Jeanne & Mickey Klein, John Thornton, Melba & Ted Whatley, and Ballroom Marfa members.

In-kind support provided by Lance Armstrong, Big Bend Brewing Company, Charles Mary Kubricht & Ron Sommers, and Quality Quinn.

Additional support provided by the Bill & Bettye Nowlin Research Fellowship in Photography at the University of Texas at Austin, Blaffer Art Museum at the University of Houston, Irish Museum of Modern Art, Lora Reynolds Gallery, and Tonya Bonakdar Gallery.

Special thanks to AEP Texas, Francesca Altamura, Skye Ashbrook, Lalo Baeza, Brice Beasley, Jennifer Bell, the Big Bend Sentinel, Michael Camacho, Joe Cashiola, Ross Cashiola, Rob Crowley, Dan Dunlap, Hilary duPont, the Evans family, Fat Lyle's, Cuca Flores, Frama, Bill Haddad, Erin Kimmel, Gerry Luján, Marfa Public Radio, Nicolas Miller, Minerva Lopez, William Parrott, Francisco Rosas, Gory Smelley, Junie Villareal, and WNP Industries.

*Giant* was commissioned by Ballroom Marfa.

*Grand Paris Texas* was commissioned by the Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth.

*Movie Mountain (Méliès)* was created with generous support of the Alturas Foundation.

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**AARGAUER**  
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**KURATORIUM**

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Teresa Hubbard / Alexander Birchler  
Installation View, *Sound Speed Marker*,  
Ballroom Marfa, 2014

Photo Credit: Frederik Nilsen

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Teresa Hubbard / Alexander Birchler  
Installation View, *Giant* 2014  
High Definition Video with Sound  
Duration: 30 min.  
Synchronized 3-Channel Projection  
Courtesy of Tanya Bonakdar Gallery, New York  
and Lora Reynolds Gallery, Austin  
Commissioned by Ballroom Marfa

Photo Credit: Frederik Nilsen

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Teresa Hubbard / Alexander Birchler  
Production still, *Giant* 2014

Photo Credit: Chris Austin

**BALLROOM  
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Teresa Hubbard / Alexander Birchler  
Production still, *Giant* 2014

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Teresa Hubbard / Alexander Birchler  
Installation View, *Sound Speed Marker*,  
Ballroom Marfa, 2014

Photo Credit: Frederik Nilsen

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Teresa Hubbard / Alexander Birchler  
Installation View, *Grand Paris Texas* 2009  
High Definition Video with Sound  
Duration: 54 min.  
Courtesy of Tanya Bonakdar Gallery, New York  
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Collection Modern Art Museum Fort Worth

Photo Credit: Frederik Nilsen

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Production still, *Grand Paris Texas* 2009

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Teresa Hubbard / Alexander Birchler  
Production still, *Grand Paris Texas* 2009

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Teresa Hubbard / Alexander Birchler  
Installation View, Tape 2009  
4 digital archival prints,  
Each image: 24 x 30 inches  
Courtesy of Lora Reynolds Gallery, Austin

Photo Credit: Frederik Nilsen

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Each image: 24 x 30 inches

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Teresa Hubbard / Alexander Birchler  
Installation view, *Eiffel Tower, Paris Texas* 2009  
Digital archival print  
Image: 24 x 30 inches  
Courtesy of Lora Reynolds Gallery, Austin

Photo Credit: Frederik Nilsen

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Teresa Hubbard / Alexander Birchler  
Installation view, *Sunrise Filmset Sunset* 2012  
2 digital archival prints, diptych  
Each image 43.5 x 54.5 inches  
Courtesy of Lora Reynolds Gallery, Austin

Photo Credit: Frederik Nilsen

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*Sunrise Filmset Sunset* 2012  
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Production still, *Movie Mountain* (Méliès) 2011

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Teresa Hubbard / Alexander Birchler  
Production still, *Movie Mountain* (Méliès) 2011

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*Dead Cat on Movie Mountain, Sunrise, 2011*

Digital archival print

Each image 43.25 x 54.75 inches

Courtesy of Tanya Bonakdar Gallery, New York and Lora Reynolds Gallery, Austin

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*Dead Cat on Movie Mountain, Sunset*, 2011

Digital archival print

Each image 43.25 x 54.75 inches

Courtesy of Tanya Bonakdar Gallery, New York and Lora Reynolds Gallery, Austin

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Teresa Hubbard / Alexander Birchler  
Installation View, *Missing Truffaut* 2014  
Wooden pole, electric light, laser print on paper  
25 x 4 x 2 feet  
Courtesy of Lora Reynolds Gallery, Austin

Photo Credit: Frederik Nilsen

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