

A scene from William Friedkin's *The Exorcist* (1973) is isolated and collapsed into questionable cinematic depictions of the formless period of America's Reconstruction, in particular the forgotten Tennessee Johnson (1942). Shot in the desert involving subjects manically and inscrutably performing a fort da ritual of the Iraq archeological dig scene from the opening of *The Exorcist*. Bodies dig, wait, and bang on green boards as if trying to summon both the exorcist and the repressed narratives of the films they are seemingly destroying. A section of Les Baxter's *Quiet Village* that is heard in the waiting room while Regan is undergoing operation is carried over into the Iraq dig operation.

The film installation is nestled in a makeshift structure of green boards approximating the archeological dig scene. The mise-en-scene of *The Exorcist* influences the formal scheme of the peripheral installation while the structure is informed by Alice Aycock's early outdoor skeletal structures. By bringing the dig scene into the gallery a backwards continuum is introduced, putting events out of joint, especially as the colour green traditionally associated with preproduction here confronts the viewer as a quasi-representational end. Splittings occur throughout, conflating dialects of inside/outside, domestic/church/dig scene, geographical specificity, the green colour and the films themselves which only reinforces the impossibility of invoking this obscure and incontinent period of political and social history buried in the historical unconscious, traces of which are everywhere visible in contemporary life. Echoed throughout the work is signage and language from the U.S. Army MREs Meal Ready to Eat, In particular the vague symbol of a rock with the phrase "Rock or Something" below it, meant as cooking instructions, leads to the title *Reconstruction or Something*.

Stephen G. Rhodes was raised in Louisiana and works in Los Angeles, California. Rhodes has had solo exhibition at Isabella Bortolozzi Galerie, Berlin (2009), Misako & Rosen (2009), Overduin and Kite, Los Angeles (2007). Recent 2009 group exhibitions include the Hammer Museum, Los Angeles, Saatchi Gallery, London and "The Generational: Younger than Jesus" at the New Museum, New York.

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