



Rebecca Ann Hobbs

Mangere Mall

OPENING

Saturday 30th June, 2012

EXHIBITION DATES

29th June – 24th July, 2012

Five cameras, six dancers and lots of movement. *Mangere Mall* is part of a series of video works by Rebecca Ann Hobbs shot in public spaces in South Auckland, New Zealand, and influenced by dance.

Extending upon her photographic practice, which captures individuals in unexpected moments of mid-action, Hobbs' recent video works realise and actualise the movement of the camera and of the body. Underpinned by an ongoing interest in notions of the absurd, Hobbs is currently fascinated with specific types of popular dance and how these become manifest when practiced in a South Auckland locale.

For *Mangere Mall*, Hobbs has collaborated with the Waikato-based VOGUE Dance Crew, who unexpectedly emerge from behind pillars to fill an empty street mall with their joyous dancing. Captured from multiple angles, the dancers perform a series of synchronised, syncopated movements inspired by 'waacking'; a style of disco-influenced street dance that originated in Black and Latino gay nightclubs of 1970's Los Angeles where male performers would dress as women and perform to female songs on stage.

Highlighting Hobbs' critical intensity -as well as her droll sense of humour –*Mangere Mall* touches on a wide-range of inter-related themes such as gender, race, constructed space, movement and site. It is significant that the dance troupe are located in the Mangere Town Centre, an open-air mall in one of a number of community developments instigated by the New Zealand government in the 1970s as part of a state housing program that resulted in an influx of Pacific Island migrants. Under the striking canopies designed by the local community, *Mangere Mall* sees the upbeat dancers activate the built environment, orientating and temporalising the space to give it new meaning and energy.

Hobbs ultimately offers a buoyant, non-prescriptive commentary on the politics of culture and representation within the post-colonial cultural landscape of New Zealand, a young nation with a complex identity.

Rebecca Ann Hobbs received a Bachelor of Fine Arts (Honours) from the Victorian College of the Arts, Melbourne, in 2002. She received an Anne & Gordon Samstag International Visual Arts Scholarship in 2003, for which she undertook studies at the California Institute of the Arts, receiving a Masters of Fine Art in 2005.

Selected solo exhibitions include *Failing, Falling, Flying*, St Paul Street Gallery, Auckland, New Zealand, 2010; *Ah-round*, Monte Vista, Los Angeles, USA, 2010; *To Do*, Sutton Gallery, Melbourne, 2009; and *Suck Roar*, Centre for Contemporary Photography, Melbourne, 2002. Her work is currently featured in *Hijacked 2: Australia/Germany*, a survey of photography from Australian and New Zealand presented at Reiss-Engelhorn-Museen, Mannheim, Germany, which previously toured nationally in Australia. Significant group exhibitions include 'People's Television', *Focus Nouvelle-Zelande (Part 1)*, Centre Pompidou, Paris, France, 2011; *Light Sensitive*, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, 2006; and *Shipping and Receiving*, The Armory, Pasadena, Los Angeles, USA, 2006.

In 2009 Hobbs was a selected finalist in both the Bowness Photography Prize and Trust Waikato National Contemporary Art Award. Her work is held in many important Australian public collections including Artbank, Monash Gallery of Art and the National Gallery of Victoria.

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