

Harun Farocki

Serious games

+ Film screening (19:30 h.):
Nothing Ventured, 2004, 50 min. > 08.03.11
Respite, 2007, 40 min. > 05.04.11

04.02.11 > 30.04.11

opening: friday february 4rd at 8 pm / artist talk with Carles Guerra at 7:30 pm

For his second solo exhibition at **angels barcelona** and in Spain, Harun Farocki presents his last work *Serious Games* composed by 4 video-installations

Watson Is Down, *Three Dead* and *A Sun with no Shadow* (2010), examine the technology used to train soldiers by simulating combat situations in a created realistic environment based on actual landscape coordinates and satellite data. Each of these videos, that last 8 minutes, Farocki shot in military facilities in the USA and combined these sequences with material from the computer simulations. *Immersion* (2009), on the other hand explores the usage of a similar simulation that is being used as a tool for therapeutic treatment by allowing soldiers to re-enact previous combat trauma by virtually reliving the events that took place on the war field.

Watson is Down was recorded at the Marine Corps base 29 Palms in California, USA. Farocki filmed a sequence of four marines that sat on a row with their laptops, simulating the crew of a tank on a mission in Afghanistan. They steer their own vehicle and watch their unit while driving in a Computer-Animation-Landscape environment. The simulated terrain originates from an actual geographical data. The vegetation on the ground, the trees, the mountain ranges and the streets that appear on the screen of the computer are an exact copy of the Afghanistan terrain. But as realistic and as detailed this simulation of reality is, death in the computer game is something quite different from death in reality.

The single channel video installation: *Three Dead*, shows the real image of the war field, in a projection of the MOUT facility in Afghanistan and introduces images from the simulation at the start and at the beginning of the video.

A Sun with no Shadow takes us on a tour within the two simulation programs; the one that is used for training and the one that is used with a therapeutic purpose. In the training computer game simulation, the shadow of the armored vehicle is determined by an imaginary sun that moves like the real sun in Afghanistan. The simulation program is very precisely detailed and its images are intended to prepare for the war. In the second half he shows us the images that are intended to awaken memories in the therapeutic process. Both the images carry a resemblance, the ones that prepare and the ones that help you remember. The only difference is the lack of shadows in the second simulation, the system for remembering is a little cheaper than the one for training.

Finally, *Immersion* shows a variation of the same training program, which deals with the reenactment of soldier's traumatic wartime experiences and in this case serves therapeutic purposes. Soldiers are both being trained and rehabilitated through virtual reality. *Immersion* was filmed at Fort Lewis, near Seattle, during a demonstration for therapists treating Post Traumatic Stress Disorder.

Harun Farocki (Nový Jicin (Neutitschein), 1944). Attended the Deutsche Film und Fernsehakademie in Berlin (1967-68) and was visiting professor at the University of California, Berkeley (1993-1999) and he is also Visiting Lecturer on Visual and Environmental Studies at the Harvard University, Massachusetts. He has made more than 100 feature films, documentaries, essay films, political "agitation" videos, educational videos, and video installations. His work raises questions about issues that range from political and social themes to the theory of film within the field of art. Farocki has also worked in television and as editor of the magazine *Filmkritik*. His great importance to the visual arts is reflected not only in the retrospectives of his films at institutions like Tate Modern in London, MACBA or MNCARS in Spain, but also in solo exhibitions at the MUMOK Wien, the Jeu de Paume in Paris, Kunsthau Bregenz, Raven Row, London and the Museum Ludwig in Cologne. Farocki's participation in the São Paulo Biennial in 2010 and in the Kassel documenta in 1997 & 2007 is a strong indication of the impact of his films and installations.

with the collaboration:

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