

## àngels barcelona

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### Michael Snow

**Condensation- A Cove Story**

**The corner of Braque and Picasso Streets**

**See You Later / Au Revoir**

#### Daily video screenings

From May 12<sup>th</sup> to 30<sup>th</sup> at Àngels Barcelona.

See program details at [www.angelsbarcelona.com](http://www.angelsbarcelona.com)

**05.05.09 > 13.06.09**

Opening: Tuesday May 5<sup>th</sup>, 8 pm.

#### Artist's talk

May 4<sup>th</sup> at 19h30, Auditori **MACBA**.

Àngels Barcelona presents the first solo exhibition in Spain of Michael Snow (Toronto, CA, 1928) with two new video-installations and a film.

The three projects address concerns that have been central to the artist's varied filmography, and which often correspond to key questions in video art history. In fact, his colourful biography runs parallel to the history of a medium in which he is one of the main figures.

Snow's work aims to challenge our automatic (default) approximation to the visible by using a composition strategy that threatens the tools we rely on to process what we perceive. By defamiliarising the spectator with reality, the conventions of representation and reception may be re-examined. One could say that, in a way, Snow revolutionizes the perception of reality in the same way that modern artists revolutionized the perception of art.

The title from **Condensation- A Cove Story** (2008) refers to the temporal compression implied in image acceleration. In Snow's words, "This work is a temporally compressed, condensed recording of several weather-events which took place on and near a wild landscape in the Canadian Maritimes".

The piece provides a way to understand the camera not as a capturing device which registers prepared stories and settings, but rather as an instrument whose own particularities and possibilities are the main issue at play.

Similar to other consecrated works such as *Wavelength* (1966-67) or *La Région Centrale* (1971), the images serve as the trace of an invisible yet implied installation: a camera *left alone* at a site. We witness what seems to be an operator-less recording, where the camera functions as a tool which affects and transforms the visible while capturing it.

*Condensation- A Cove Story* transmits the spontaneous dialogue between the landscape and the camera which results in a sequence of images that speak about their progressive transformation to a third party, the public, that takes place in the space of art.

**The corner of Braque and Picasso Streets** (2009) is a *site-specific* project using images from the street reproduced in real time. The artist has waited many years before producing this project. It constitutes an example of expanded cinema, from the image's capture and its transmission, to Snow's interest in investigating how much the manipulation of the projection transforms the original capture and its reception.

The spatial manipulation turns the moment of projection into an indispensable part of the piece. Thereby reinforcing the dynamism of a constantly changing and self-updating work, where the randomness of reality becomes a randomness produced by the artistic process of editing and by the medium's own history—here, specifically Cubism's history, which emerges as an iconic structure to which we remain subjected.

**See You Later / Au Revoir** (1990), is a film that works as a counter-point to the two works described above. It is a piece where "slowed-down time" complements the "accelerated time" in *Condensation- A Cove Story* and the "real time" in *The corner of Braque and Picasso Streets*.

Using slow motion, a trivial action that lasts for 30 seconds turns into a slightly activated photograph. The sync sound, a typewriter and two voices (He: "Good bye"; her: "See you later"), is also slowed down.

Differing from the aforementioned works, *See You Later / Au Revoir* is acted. In Snow's pieces, human presences are far from being vehicles of the narration, instead they are treated as one among the many registers that participate in a film sequence and are subjected to the same games of chance and experimentation. The same thing happens to verbal language when it appears in his videos, such as *So it this*. Often, the characters help highlight the playful dimension of the projects which is also an essential part of the artist's work.

*See You Later / Au Revoir* will be shown at the gallery every day during the exhibition's opening and closing weeks. (May 5<sup>th</sup> – 10<sup>th</sup> and June 2<sup>nd</sup> – 13<sup>th</sup>). Three screenings per day: 13h / 17h / 19h

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Linked with the American avant-garde in his beginnings, Snow has had a personal, multidisciplinary career that has made him a referential figure within the visual arts and a pioneer in video art.

This itinerary has been the focus of exhibitions and screenings at main artistic institutions worldwide, including MOMA (New York), Centre Pompidou (Paris), MNCARS (Madrid), MAMCO (Geneva), BFI (London), Museum of Contemporary Art of Quebec, Hara Museum (Tokyo), among others. He has also participated in Manifesta 7, and the Sydney, Sao Paulo and Whitney Biennales.