

POSTMASTERS

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for immediate release:

January 9 – February 13, 2010

OMER FAST

Opening reception Saturday, January 9, 6-8 pm



Take a Deep Breath, 2008, production still (photograph by Yon Thomas)

I don't deal directly with reality but with representations and stories. The truth basis of what I'm doing is not interesting to me. In an act of storytelling, there is a truth. Omer Fast, as quoted in New York Magazine, December 21-28, 2009.

These exact words were never uttered in this order. But, like in Fast's works, it is precisely in re-telling, editing, interpretation, misunderstanding and subjective recollections that we encounter the kernels of what is real.

Postmasters Gallery is pleased to announce an exhibition of two video works by Omer Fast. The show opening on January 9th coincides with Fast's exhibition at the Whitney Museum of American Art.

"Take A Deep Breath" (2008)

In the summer of 2002, Martin F. was standing outside a Falafel shop in Jerusalem when it exploded. A trained medic, he went in and discovered the body of a young man on the floor. The young man had lost both legs as well as an arm, but his eyes were open and focused. Hoping for a miracle, Martin F. decided to administer mouth-to-mouth resuscitation. After a few minutes though, the young man's eyes rolled up into his head and he expired. A crowd of onlookers had gathered outside and the police showed up. They wanted to know how many casualties were inside. When he responded that there was only one, Martin F. realized the young man he had just left inside was the suicide bomber.

In "Take A Deep Breath," extracts from a conversation recorded with Martin F. in Jerusalem alternate with scenes filmed in Los Angeles in which a team of actors attempts to stage his ordeal for the camera. There are two cameras shooting simultaneously. Each shoots a different view.

"De Grote Boodschap" (2007)

Filmed on-location in Mechelen, Belgium, "De Grote Boodschap" presents the stories of paired Flemish characters who appear to be caught in a time-warp: A stewardess and her unemployed husband, an old junkie and her caregiver, a white beatboxer and his black girlfriend, a real-estate agent and a taciturn Arab. As the characters interact, the story of a family's diamonds is revealed and retracted in an endless loop that mistakes the scatological for the profound.

Fast is interminably drawn to the figure of "the witness"—the individuals un/officially earmarked to repeat their personal experiences for something like the greater good. And it is precisely in these active, "acted" retellings, in which memory is vocally rehashed, that Fast encourages his protagonists to stumble. Rather than drawing a fine-tooth comb through their dreams à la psychoanalysis, Fast surveys their seemingly-scripted public stories, and from stilted syllables and logical missteps excavates flashes of that abstract notion of the "real." (...) Perhaps because of this interpretive flair, Gideon Lewis-Kraus has called Fast a "reanimator"; in particular, it is his ability to imagine an interviewee's (beaten, dead) tale as something other than it is (alive). Trafficking in structural manipulation allows Fast to avoid the video artist's inevitable gambit of camera-as-confessional, leaving critical, and even ethical, space for the viewer to wallow about in.

Kari Rittenbach "Dramatic Witness: The Art of Omer Fast (Art In America online December 2009)

Omer Fast was a recipient of the Bucksbaum Award at the 2008 Whitney Biennial. In October 2009 he has received National Gallery Prize for Young Art in Berlin. Most recently Fast's works were shown at Hamburger Bahnhof, Berlin, Gallery of South London, Berkeley Art Museum, Lund Kunsthall, Indianapolis Museum of Art and Performa 2009.

Postmasters Gallery located at 459 West 19th Street between 9th and 10th Avenues is open Tuesday through Saturday 11 – 6 pm
Please contact Magdalena Sawon or Paulina Bebecka with questions and image requests

www.postmastersart.com

upcoming exhibition

STEVE MUMFORD new paintings (opening February 20)

Postmasters Gallery will participate in The Armory Show (March 3-7, 2010)