

STORIES OF CELEBRATION AND DISSENT

JAMES NEWITT

curated by Paula Silva (*Inflight*) and Tiny Domingos (*rosalux*)

Exhibiting for the first time in Berlin, James Newitt will present two works made in 2007 and 2009. Through these works, Newitt interrogates localised issues through a universal lens, incorporating performance, observation and experimental narrative in his video and photography. *Stories of Celebration and Dissent* represents perspectives on the idea of *community*, the exhibition investigates community through connections and relationships as well as conflicts and oppositional standpoints.

James Newitt is an Australia artist, born in Hobart, Tasmania in 1981. In 2007 James graduated with a PhD in fine arts from the Tasmanian School of Art. James' practice engages temporal media such as video projection, sound and text installation as well as large-scale public projects. His work poetically explores concepts surrounding individual and collective identity, sense of place, memory and history, as well as public and private space.

James' exhibition history includes: *Handle With Care*, 2008 Biennial of Australian Art; Monash University Faculty Gallery, Melbourne, 2008; *Ten Days on the Island*, Hobart, 2007; Sherman Galleries, Sydney 2007; *Next Wave Festival*, Melbourne, 2006; the Perth Institute for Contemporary Art, 2003. He lectures in visual communication at the Tasmanian School of Art, and was a founding member and past director of INFLIGHT artist run initiative.

Saturday Nights (2007)

Artwork commissioned as part of the Port Arthur Project, Ten Days on the Island 2007

Saturday Nights is a single channel video about a country-dance facilitated by Newitt in early March 2007 at a small country Hall on the Tasman Peninsula in Southern Tasmania. *Saturday Nights* combines documentary observation and facilitated performance to reveal aspects of the personal histories and relationships that exist in a rural community; visualising paradoxical isolation and connection. *Saturday Nights* was filmed on the 10 year anniversary of the Port Arthur Massacre, where a lone gunman murdered 35 people at the Port Arthur Historic Site, only 5 kilometers from the site of the dance. *Saturday Nights* investigates the potential of a participatory event to modify everyday experience as well as offer a new narrative layer to a place which is often seen through its past.

Passive Aggressive (2009)

Passive Aggressive is part of a new body of work which investigates current social tensions relating to forestry practices in Tasmania. Government and privately owned companies are currently logging expansive areas of old-growth forests in Southern Tasmania. Anti-forestry activists devote themselves to disrupting forestry activity in creative, subversive and dangerous ways. *Passive Aggressive* observes a situation which is riddled with compromise, conflicting beliefs and passionate opinions through a detached and objective lens.

rosalux

the Berlin-based art office

Saturday Nights

2007

16:9 HDV

10:20 mins

Stereo sound

Edition 1 of 3 + 1 artist proof

Passive Aggressive

2009

16:9 HDV

9:00 mins

Stereo sound with headphones

Edition 1 of 3 + 1 artist proof

Arberg Bay, 2006

2006

16:9 DVD loop

8:15 mins

Silent

Edition 1 of 3 + 1 artist proof

Landscape

2009 – ongoing

30 x c-prints

15 x 22.5 cm (90 x 160 cm) each

Edition 1 of 5

rosalux at Story Hotel*****

13 - 28 June 2009