Michelle Naismith / Rosalind Nashashibi:

VISIONS FOR THE FUTURE V
31 May – 19 July 2003

Visions for the future V is the fifth exhibition in The Fruitmarket Gallery's four-year series showcasing the work of leading artists either from or based in Scotland. Initiated by The Fruitmarket Gallery in 1998, the aim of *Visions for the Future* is to commission and exhibit the work in 6 exhibitions, each featuring 2 artists. Each artist's work is accompanied by a publication resulting in a series of 12 publications.

This exhibition presents new works by **MICHELLE NAISMITH** in the lower galleries, and **ROSALIND NASHASHIBI** in the upper galleries. Both artists' work involves large-scale video projections.

MICHELE NAISMITH was born in Glasgow in 1967 and studied at Sheffield Hallam University and Glasgow School of Art. She lives and works in Glasgow and Nantes, France, where she has been involved since 2001 with the research group *Multipoint*.

The work is in three parts. The first is a large illuminated sign. Made from light bulbs set into a black background, it is initially impressive – a grand opening gesture. On closer inspection, however, the sign is less convincing. The light bulbs are very dim, the background just painted wood and the letters themselves uneven. It seems to be a stage prop, made to convince from a distance. Up close, it looks a little frail.

The sign which announces the title of the exhibition and the work in it – *Au Revoir Moodle Pozart (Goodbye Moodle Pozart)* – also sets the exhibition's tone. Moodle Pozart, a play on the words 'poodle' and 'Mozart', is the name of the character at the centre of the video projection in the room to the left of the sign. A hybrid renaissance figure, he is inspired by a mixture of, among others, the composer Mozart, Swiss psychic Anton Mesmer, German philosopher Arthur Schopenhauer, and a large poodle, which he most resembles. He is a mystic manic-depressive philosopher and composer. Attended by two acolytes, the Personal Assistant/Chronicler and the Homehelp, he is also somewhat frail. At the end of the video he disappears.

The video, like the sign, is a fiction. Absurdly humorous, it spins a web of fake mysticism around its central character, who communicates in subtitles, which seek not to translate nor explain the action, but to open up a new channel of information. For explanation, we might look to the archive room which completes the exhibition, and reveals the network of

collaborations involved in its making. Two video monitors sit on the table. One show a black and white super 8 film documenting the making of the *Au Revoir Moodle Pozart* and the other includes a tarot reading determining the poodle's ultimate fate. In both we meet again the Personal Assistant/Chronicler and the Homehelp, who turn out to be played by members of the *Multipoint* group – curator Dessislava Dimova, and write Douglas Park. As themselves, these two also contribute to the exhibition publication, a companion volume to the video, which is also on display in the archive room. Like the sign, the publication uses the font Saturnalia, a bit-map font available as a free download from nursery.ns.

The archive room complicates rather than clarifies, and contributes to the ambiguities, which characterise *Au Revoir Moodle Pozart*. An artist open to collaboration, Naismith seeks primarily the collaboration of the audience. It is up to us to enter the world of Moodle Pozart, to play along with the fiction created around him, and see where that may take us.

'I am trying to formulate my own quasi-mystic, developing these as tools or languages to help generate other ideas.' (MN)

ROSALIND NASHASHIBI was born in 1973, in Croydon. She studied at Sheffield Hallam University and Glasgow School of Art, and lives and works in Glasgow.

The artist's work takes the form of short 16mm films shown as DVD projections. In this exhibition she is showing three films, two shot during a four month residency in Omaha in Nebraska, USA, and one newly commission by The Fruitmarket Gallery and shot in four British cities. Location is crucial to the way the artist works: she finds a situation which appeals to her and turns her camera on it, filming people as unobtrusively as possible, and later editing the footage into deceptively simple films which reveal the rhythms and patters at work in everyday life.

Midwest: Field, one of the two films shot in Omaha, features the easy companionship of a group of model-glider fliers. As we watch the film we are included in the men's circle, immersed in their chat. We are there with them, on the ground, looking at the sky, lost in our own thoughts as the planes circle. Typical of Nashashibi's films, in *Midwest:Field* there is activity but no action, narratives but no story. The aviators are absorbed in their hobby and we also become absorbed as we watch them in their state of oblivion.

Midwest was also made in Omaha but in a different location. The camera is on the street, watching people hanging around, walking, going in and

out of a Mexican café. And waiting outside a rehab centre. They pay little attention to the artist filming them. Occasionally they glance towards the camera with bored curiosity, but on the whole the artist seems to have achieved her goal of becoming invisible without hiding. Because of this, we can study the individuals in the film, see how they come and go, group and re-group as the time of the of the film is edited in a fluid way, and built rhythmically scene by scene like a musical composition.

Can anyone tell – that is to say, narrate – time, time itself, as such, for its own sake? That would surely be an absurd undertaking. A story which read; 'time passed, it ran on, the time flowed onward' and so forth – no one in his senses could consider hat a narrative. It would be as thought one held a single note of a chord for a whole hour and called it music. For narration resembles music in this, that it fills up the time. It 'fills it in' and 'breaks it up'. So that there' s 'something to it', 'something going on'.

Thomas Mann, *The Magic Mountain*, 1924, Penguin Books 1973, p541

Inspired by Thomas Mann's *The Magic Mountain*, *Humaniora* is the new film shot around NHS hospitals in Glasgow, Leeds, Manchester and Sheffield. Staying outside each hospital, the camera dispassionately records the patterns of activity around it, its walkways, drop off areas and sliding doors, finding it a place of institutional time and common experience. The film visits Victorian and post-war hospitals, bringing to mind the attitude to public healthcare in two very different British ideological eras. There are no words on the soundtrack; instead the almost hypnotic noise of industrial fans encourages our submission to the rhythm of time passing behind these walls, revealed by the film.

Michelle Naismith and **Rosalind Nashashibi** are both included in this Venice Biennale. Nashashibi's work will be featured in *Zenomap; a presentation of New York from Scotland for the Venice biennale*. Naismith's collaboration with Douglas Park, Nico Dockx and Kris Delacourt will be featured in *Utopia Stations*, curated by Hans Ulrich Obrist, Rikit Tirivanija and Molly Nesbitt.

Rosalind Nashashibi is the winner of this year's *Beck's Futures* Prize. An exhibition of the work of all the artists short-listed for this prize in on view at the CCA, Glasgow, from 6 June.

All rights reserved. © the writers, artists and The Fruitmarket Gallery

The Fruitmarket Gallery takes no responsibility for information which is out of date or inaccurate.

The Fruitmarket Gallery

45 Market Street
Edinburgh, EH1 1DF, Scotland

P +44 (0)131 225 2383
F +44 (0)131 220 3130

info@fruitmarket.co.uk
www.fruitmarket.co.uk