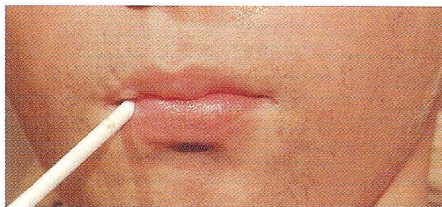


REVIEWS



Above: Maria Marshall, *1941 Stearman*, 2003. Below left: Maria Marshall, *Lollipop (In 200 Days I will be 11)*, 2004. Both images courtesy: the artist and Taché-Lévy Gallery, Brussels. Below right: Tomma Abts, *Zaarke*, 2001. Courtesy: The Douglas Hyde Gallery, Dublin



BRUSSELS: TACHÉ-LÉVY GALLERY

MARIA MARSHALL

15 september – 16 october 2005

www.tache-levy.com

For her second show at Taché-Lévy Gallery, Maria Marshall presents three large single-channel video projections. As in her previous works, the artist explores the psychological dimension of the movie format and confronts the viewer with strong images, the effectiveness of which lies in the balance between their powers of seduction and the feelings of uneasiness which they arouse.

*Cyclops* (2002), is a two-screen installation that fills an entire room. One screen shows the artist in her underwear, standing still in a large studio with concrete floor and walls. She is surrounded by flashing and aggressive lights, and the camera moves rapidly towards, around and away from her. Marshall has been working with computer controllable equipment: once programmed, the camera performs its task according to the location of the person in the room. On the second screen, we see a young boy in the same space, under a cold, artificial light. As he shakes his head negatively, the camera moves above him as if it were an adult

looking at a child. Referring explicitly to Alan J. Pakula's film *Sophie's Choice* (1982), the installation confronts the adult's anxiety with that of the boy's. Dealing with the fundamental themes of motherhood and the fear of loss, *Cyclops*, like most of Marshall's work, is partly autobiographical – the boy is the artist's youngest son.

His brother appears in *Lollipop* (2004), the subtitle of which (*In 200 Days I will be 11*) gives a clue to understanding its meaning. While the shape of the picture refers to the cinemascope format, the close up of the boy's face pays homage to Clint Eastwood in *The Good, the Bad and the Ugly* (1966). Not quite a man yet, chewing on a lollipop instead of a cigarillo, the boy already dreams of being a cowboy. The film is a six-and-a-half second shot replayed in a loop, which makes it seem endlessly long.

Looping is used differently in *1941, Stearman* (2003), where the artist is shown kissing a pilot goodbye before he takes off in his biplane. While flying, the plane writes the word 'kill' in the sky; at the end of the last letter, the sequence loops backwards, and the plane seems to come back to its starting point, erasing the word. In Keiji Nakazawa's famous autobiographical manga comic book, *Gen of Hiroshima* (2003-5), a kamikaze decides to fly one last time above his family; he cannot decide to leave, eventually runs out of gas but is rescued from the crash. In Maria Marshall's film too, the suicide pilot makes it back alive. Unfortunately, things usually don't happen this way nowadays: using archetypal images of WW II, the film nevertheless alludes to tragic current events.

PIERRE-YVES DESAIVE