

Elizabeth Dee

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Josephine Meckseper Josephine Meckseper

May 1 - June 7, 2008

Opening Reception: Thursday, May 1, 6-8 pm

Elizabeth Dee Gallery is pleased to present an exhibition of new work by Josephine Meckseper opening May 1st-an annual date of significance for socialist, labor and protest movements. Similar to the dark spirit of "Fear and Loathing: on the Campaign Trail 72," the exhibition reflects what will undoubtedly be a historically important election year.

Marking the 5th anniversary of the war in Iraq, Meckseper transforms the commercial zone of the gallery into a conceptually politicized territory. Through her signature use of display systems and commodity structures, she exposes the "endpoints" of the United States' capitalistic and militaristic crusades since 2001: totalitarianism in the current era of war, globalization, and domestic crisis. Multi-tiered display shelves slowly rotate in the front windows of the gallery. Their glass and mirrored surfaces offer up signifiers of the current sub-prime mortgage crisis and the looming legacy of the Great Depression along with more quotidian materials and pseudo-consumer goods. In the center of the gallery, a large-scale presentation platform supports an assemblage of metallic mannequins holding signs that Meckseper has created in response to the current presidential primary elections. Functioning as literal and metaphorical armatures for an interrogation into the failed "shock and awe" phenomenon of a war that has resulted in the death of 4000 service members in Iraq and a crucial election in which one candidate has declared the possibility of occupation continuing in that country for "100 years," the installation refers to Giorgio Agamben's concept of "the state of exception," which allows for monstrosities such as Guantanamo Bay and Blackwater to occur.

Presented in the second gallery, Meckseper's newest video *0% Down* recontextualizes the seemingly seductive devices of television car commercials to reveal their disturbingly confrontational and militarized sales tactics and the car industry's complicity in a war for oil. As Paul Virilio observes, "The blindness of speed as means of communicating destruction is not a liberation from geopolitical servitude, but the extermination of space as the field of freedom of political action. (…) the more speed increases, the faster freedom decreases. (…) War has thus moved from the action stage to the conception stage, that as we know, characterizes automation." Aggression, speed and control become the ultimate commodity.

This is Josephine Meckseper's third solo show with Elizabeth Dee. Her work will be presented at MoMA, New York in 2008 for the exhibition *New Photography 2008: Josephine Meckseper and Mikhael Subotzky and U.S., PROSPECT. 1*, New Orleans. In 2007, her work was the focus of a mid-career retrospective presented at the Kunstmuseum Stuttgart, which traveled to Gesellschaft für Aktuelle Kunst, Bremen. She has been featured in numerous national and international exhibitions including *Brave New Worlds*, Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, MN, touring to Fundación/Colección Jumex, Mexico City; *Resistance Is*, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, NY; *Second Moscow Biennial of Contemporary Art*, Moscow; *Biennial of Contemporary Art of Seville*, Seville, curated by Okwui Enwezor; *USA Today*, Royal Academy of Arts, London, which traveled to The State Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg; *Media Burn* at the Tate Modern, London; and the *Whitney Biennial 2006: Day for Night* at the Whitney Museum of American Art, NY.

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