

Libertarian Magazine Untitled Issue #6

Agustin Yarde Buller: Why is this series called "Etant donnes"?

TR Ericsson: It's from Marcel Duchamp. It's a puzzle, a word game. I used the title to contextualize the work around the discourse that surrounds the original Etant donnes. The English translation "Given" implies that what is seen provides only partial evidence as to the various meanings that could be constructed. The title and the relationship to the Duchamp work were simply meant to suggest the impossibility, or fallibility entailed in constructing a narrative around what can only ever be an incomplete image, or object, or series of images. This way the questions, or meanings generated by the work, steer toward what isn't visible, what isn't there.

Are the characters in the photographs looking for something or have they lost everything?

The whole thing is a metaphor for loss. Even the seemingly literal, heavy-handed reference to Duchamp becomes just another signifier. The work is essentially autobiographical, entirely personal, even narcissistic, so there are things I know about the work, there's a dead mother lost inside the work, a murdered teen-age girl, a self-portrait, an ex-wife, a love-affair and the birth of a child. And it's not just about the woman and her spread legs, it's about the waterfall and the woods and the rocks that surround her, sex and seduction and death.

What is the process you go through in each of your pieces?

I take thousands of digital photographs. These image files are photographed and re-photographed; enlarged Xerox copies are made from these and photographed again and again digitally. The final image file becomes a film positive, which is blown out on a light table into a hardened stencil enmeshed into a silkscreen. The image in the silkscreen is destroyed while pounding powdered graphite through the mesh onto paper. The image is then further deconstructed and reconstructed by hand with erasures, razor blades and vacuums. The final works are an accumulation of lost images. The powdered residue of the graphite on the paper is all that remains of the original photographic image.

After exhibiting in so many different places, which one did you find better for your work?

It's hard to say. Is anything ever really resolved by being shown in a particular place? It's a good question. A work is seen in a lot of places and at different times. And in each place and time new layers of meaning are revealed. It just keeps going. It never ends.

How would you define art?

As unjustifiable.

What does the term Libertarian mean to you?

An individual that considers herself free to realize her own end and then acts accordingly.