

DIAZ CONTEMPORARY

MEDIA RELEASE

Allison Hrabluik

Two Portraits and a Landscape

January 23 – February 24, 2007

Opening Thursday, January 25, 6–9 pm

Artist in attendance

Diaz Contemporary presents the first solo exhibition of Allison Hrabluik with the gallery. An emerging artist actively exhibiting in Europe and Canada, Hrabluik will be showing new video, sculpture, and wall works for *Two Portraits and a Landscape*.

Hrabluik's *Two Portraits and a Landscape* plays with the literal and figurative language of art making tropes to suggest amalgamated narratives and representations hewn from disparate territories—the hinterlands of wintry fields, the storied Flemish landscape, and the exteriorised products of our own psyches.

Employing a technique of adapted stop-animation that uses photographs and detailed model sets, Allison Hrabluik has created a haunting new video work, *Rossendale*. This video portrays a farmer, who, garbed in a work snowsuit, purposefully labours over an assortment of odd fantabulations. These machines and objects are inventions he has assembled in answer to the specific needs of his farming activities, and function as manifestations of his persona otherwise invisible to us. Projected in the gallery space, the whiteness Hrabluik uses to represent the prairie winter and the confines of the farmer's workshop seeps out to join with the neutral gallery walls; an analogy becomes palpable between this farmer's work and that of an artist in their studio.

Across the gallery a knobbly, knotted tree stands. It resolves itself as a life-size recreation fashioned from papier maché and collaged prints of tree surfaces. Comprised of a trunk and the gnarled nubbins of branch bases, the sculpture shows a tree that has been shorn down again and again, leaving swollen nodes from which branches will stubbornly return. This *Flemish Tree* stands stanchion-like, an intrepid soldier still on guard from an antediluvian directive, giving the sense of a haunting and mute anthropomorphised figure. Adjacent to this hang two large framed pieces the artist refers to as storyboards. These shadowboxes hold dozens of disparate images—watercolours and digital prints. Together they form the suggestion of a fantastical narrative structure, or harvested elements of an imagined landscape.

Allison Hrabluik is currently living in Belgium where she is completing her graduate work at the Higher Institute for Fine Arts—Flanders (HISK). Raised in Alberta, Hrabluik will be returning to Canada upon

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completion of her studies. Recent exhibitions include *Ideas of North* at Isabella Bortolozzi Gallery, Berlin, and her solo exhibition *Rossendale* at Vancouver's Western Front.



UPCOMING