

Press Release

Distractions

Video Works by Michael Nyman

21 May – 1 June 2009

LA PEDRERA

Provença 261-265, Barcelona



"When I started there was no intention to make films or a book of photographs. It happened because I was there, had a camera and an eye and a curiosity, my own visual diaries of a distracted but persistent mind." Michael Nyman, 2009

La Pedrera in collaboration with Loop Festival is proud to present “Distractions”, an exhibition of Video Works by Michael Nyman. “Distractions” is part of the cultural and exhibition program of the Obra Social de Caixa Catalunya.

Michael Nyman is an internationally acclaimed composer, musician and musicologist. Best known for the many movie scores he wrote during his numerous collaborations with the filmmakers Peter Greenway, Michael Winterbottom and Neil Jordan, and for his multi-platinum soundtrack album to Jane Campion's *The Piano*., his video work has emerged today as a significant and pivotal part of his creative practice.

“Distractions” is the first comprehensive exhibition of selected video works by Michael Nyman outside of the United Kingdom. The series focuses on his previously unknown experimentation with film, accumulated over the past 15 years on his global travels as a composer and a performer. Shot with a hand-held camera, the work features every day

moments or episodes that Nyman has chanced upon and chosen to record, lingering on unfolding events, capturing the unexpected, or focusing on the mundane. The work is an attempt to capture living cultures and forgotten traditions in a format which illustrates a diaristic study of modern-day life.

"I was reacting to what I saw in the moment, which is the opposite of what I do as a composer. But it's the product of the same mind and creative sensibility. I've always worked with images as a composer of film scores, but they've been other people's images. Being in charge of the visual element generates a new kind of creative excitement quite different from my work as a composer." Nyman explains.

The video works are presented as installations with accompanying soundtracks, which use either location recordings or music from Nyman's own musical archive and repertoire. The show has been co-curated by Carlos Senda and Myriam Blundell and is hosted by La Pedrera, the iconic monument designed by Gaudi and located in the heart of the City of Barcelona.

Michael Nyman has collaborated with several visual artists including Bruce McLean, Mary Kelly and more recently Carsten Nicolai and Kutlug Ataman. In 2008, he published *Sublime*, a book containing nearly two thousand of his photographs, and in 2009, his first major UK exhibition was held at the De La Warr Pavillion –Bexhill-on-sea, featuring “Videofile”, a comprehensive selection of video works and photography. His work has also been exhibited in various public institutions, including Tate Modern, Reina Sophia Museum in Madrid, and the Museum of Modern Art in New York. His films have also been featured in a number of film festivals including Morelia and Documenta in Madrid.

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Admission Free

