

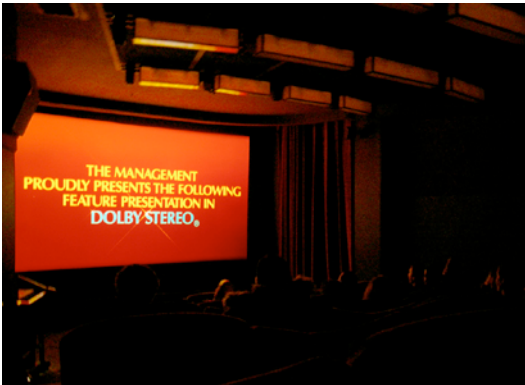


UNIVERSITY ART MUSEUM  
CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, LONG

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THE UAM PRESENTS LOS ANGELES-BASED ARTIST *MUNGO THOMSON: CENTRIC 65*

November 2 – December 19, 2004



Mungo Thomson, *Cinema Concepts*, 2003, installation shot.

This fall the UAM is pleased to present a solo exhibition of work by Los Angeles-based artist Mungo Thomson. The 65th exhibition in the *Centric* program, an on-going exhibition series dedicated to displaying new work and introducing emerging national and international artists to new audiences. Mungo Thomson's work in a variety of media utilizes mass cultural vernacular to explore the phenomenology of social space and the mechanics and poetics of reception. Thomson's *Centric* exhibition will

include two new 35mm film projects and a new multi-channel video installation, each preoccupied with the history and practices of Hollywood film production and movie going. Also on view will be a new sound project exploring the practical social context of minimalist art.

*Centric 65* will include a sound installation culled from Thomson's ongoing audio project entitled *The Bootleg Series*. This series consists of ambient field recordings of art exhibitions, opening receptions, and other art-related social functions. *The Bootleg Series, Volumes 5-7: Beyond a Singular Future* is an audio recording of the ambience of 2004's much-touted (and simultaneous) Minimalist Art surveys: *Singular Forms* at the Guggenheim Museum; *A Minimal Future?* at Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles; and *Beyond Geometry* at Los Angeles County Museum of Art. Thomson's bootlegs attempt to capture the fabled "aura" of minimalist art and the mechanics and poetics of contemporary institutional art viewing.

Thomson's 35-millimeter film *Cinema Concepts* (2003), shown here as a DVD projection, is a compilation of 30 spliced-together theater announcement trailers purchased from the inventory of Atlanta-based theatrical films company Cinema Concepts. The program covers fire safety, theater etiquette, concessions promotion, crying babies, coming attractions and litter control in a variety of graphic and animation styles. In *Cinema Concepts* Thomson extends the initial moments at the movies that both cast the spell of cinema and codify behavior to ensure that the spell is not broken. In doing so he presents his own movie that is at once entertaining and agonizing. The anticipated feature never arrives, and *Cinema Concepts* becomes a meditation on the spaces of anticipation, contemplation, amusement, and delay within consumer entertainment culture.

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*The Swordsman* (2004), a new 35mm film project transferred to DVD, portrays legendary Hollywood "sword master" Bob Anderson expertly throwing a prop sword to an actor off screen. *The Swordsman* is an inversion of the famous moment in a sword fight when a character finds himself unarmed and is thrown a sword from off screen—from another character via editing, but in fact from a professional sword master—he catches it, and resumes fighting. Bob Anderson has provided sword training and stunt support for Hollywood films for over 60 years, and his filmography includes *The Adventures of Robin Hood*, *Star Wars*, and *The Princess Bride* to name a few. *The Swordsman* is a very brief film of what happens outside the action, outside the fictional space of a movie, outside the documented histories of film, and outside the film frame itself. Finally, *New York, New York, New York, New York* (2004) is a new multi-channel immersive video installation. What appears to be four wall-size projections of empty New York City streets is in fact footage shot by the artist on the "New York City" stage at each of Los Angeles' major studio backlots. Together these works cement Thomson's taste for backgrounds, empty spaces, sidebars, and holding patterns.

#### **CATALOGUE**

This exhibition will be accompanied by a three-part catalogue published by the UAM in conjunction with the UAM-sponsored presentation of Thomson's work at the *VIII Bienal Internacional de Cuenca*, which took place in Ecuador in Spring 2004. Thomson's first monograph, this fully illustrated catalogue features essays by Rachel Kushner, Jan Tumlir, Matthew Higgs, and UAM Curator of Exhibitions Mary-Kay Lombino and is available at the Museum.

#### **BIOGRAPHICAL MATERIAL**

Mungo Thomson received an MFA from UCLA in 2000 and attended the Whitney Museum Independent Study Program in 1994. His work has been exhibited internationally in shows at California College of Arts/Wattis Institute in San Francisco, MAMCO in Geneva, Kunsthalle Exnergasse in Vienna, and TENT.CBK in Rotterdam. Thomson has recently participated in group exhibitions at Sculpture Center, Artists Space, and Gavin Brown's Enterprise in New York City, at Jack Hanley Gallery in San Francisco, More Fools in Town in Turin, and at Studio Voltaire in London. His work will also be on view this fall at OR Gallery in Vancouver, in the 2004 California Biennial at the Orange County Museum of Art, in the exhibition *100 Artists See God*, curated by John Baldessari and Meg Cranston for Independent Curators International, at Laguna Art Museum in Laguna Beach and the Institute for Contemporary Art (ICA) in London. Thomson has also published essays on art and artists in *Afterall*, *BOMB*, and *Parkett* and curated art projects for *Open City*. Thomson is represented by Margo Leavin Gallery, Los Angeles, and John Connelly Presents, New York.

#### **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

The UAM would like to thank Margo Leavin Gallery, EPSON America, Inc., and The Odyssey Program at CSULB for their generous support of *Mungo Thomson: Centric 65*. The UAM is supported by the Bess J. Hodges Foundation, Constance W. Glenn Fund for Exhibitions & Education Programs, and CSULB Instructionally Related Activities Fund.

#### **GALLERY HOURS**

**Tuesday – Friday 12-5, Thursday till 8 pm, Saturday and Sunday 11-4**  
Closed Monday, University Holidays. Closed Thanksgiving weekend, Nov. 25-29.