

DAN SHIPSIDES - Under a frogs arse @ the bottom of a coalmine

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Under a frogs arse @ the bottom of a coal mine

SD video 12mins
1997

Original performance / installation made at Catalyst Arts Belfast 1997.

The projects' title refers to a Hungarian saying (and title of Tibor Fischer's novel) about being in a situation of adverse routine. The title originally was used for the two person show by Dan Shipsides and Jo Mcgonigal at Catalyst Arts. The title stuck for this work.

The work for this project involved turning the gallery space into a climbing training gym. The gym develops a set of climbing moves based on and emulating magazine images (e.g. Steve Bancroft climbing the route Strapdictomy or Elizabeth Jenkins on The Elephant) which join together to create a route which circumnavigates the space without the protagonist touching the floor. The route uses the features in the room such as windows, doorways, skirting boards, ceiling pipes etc. and also additional attached coloured climbing holds.

The gym is used three times a week by the artist over a period of four weeks. The artist / climber trains by completing the challenging moves and route, repeating the circuit until fatigued. Each of these sessions are attended by a notified audience who are presented with the activity of training procedures and with a performance which has its' own natural timing,

objectives and system of narrative structure with the climax being the point at which the climber falls off the route.

Climbing gymnasiums are used by climbers for training but also as an end in themselves. The act of creating routine within daily life can often be seen as restrictive. In contrast to the dream of distant mountains the fulfilment in climbing movement within the daily routine is fundamental to perceiving and living within one's circumstances.

The work presents a notion of performance as evident in a non-art activity. It presents the notions personal endeavour and escapism within the daily routine of ordinary life.

Beta. Solo exhibition. GtGallery. Belfast. 2004

The Short Span Solo exhibition. Millennium Court gallery. Portadown. N. Ireland. 2004

Fables of Desire Video screening Fix 98. Belfast.1998

MUU festival video screening. Helsinki. Curated by Fanni Niemi Junkola. 1998

Under a frogs arse at the bottom of a coalmine Catalyst Arts, Belfast 2person show. 1997