

[View on Canadian Art](#)

Your Cultural Concierge! VoCA offers critical commentary on the Canadian art scene, with a focus on Toronto. Featuring exhibition previews, critics picks, interviews and in-depth articles on art in Vancouver, Calgary, Winnipeg, Ottawa and Halifax.

Mark Lewis: Canada's Filmmaker in Venice

June 8th, 2009 | [Exhibitions](#), [News: Canada](#), [Video/New Media](#)

He may not have won any of the big Biennale awards, but no matter.

With all the fundraising the Canadians were forced to do, it's impressive that they put up so much work. *Cold Morning*, a selection of four new films by [the excellent film artist Mark Lewis](#), is on view at the Canada Pavilion as part of the [53rd Venice Biennale](#) from 7 June to 22 November 2009. Lewis has long been one of VoCA most-admired artists and he certainly deserves to be our rep at Venice.



Mark Lewis, Rear Projection: Molly Parker from 2006. Image: marklewisstudio.com

Mark Lewis's films for the Canada Pavilion combine documentary footage and dramatic action with his recent interest in the historical technique of rear projection, resulting in works that explore the history of place and the passage of time.

Four autonomous works are presented together:

TD Centre, 54th Floor (2009) features a vertiginous view of the pulse of downtown traffic from the 54th floor of Mies van der Rohe's iconic office tower in Toronto.

Cold Morning (2009), also shot in Toronto, sees Lewis shift perspective by focusing on the actions of someone who lives and makes his home on the street during one of winter's coldest days. With the medium of rear projection, Lewis elaborates the spatial dissociation more explicitly at the level of film itself.

The Fight (2008) is set against the autonomous backdrop of pedestrian traffic within a public market. It observes the to-and-fro of physical conflict without apparent resolution.



Mark Lewis, *Untitled* (2009). Location shot, TD Centre 54th Floor.
Image: canadapavilionvenicebiennale.ca

Nathan Phillips Square, A Winter's Night, Skating (2009) follows the undulating narrative of lovers seemingly immersed in the open dream space of an urban skating rink. The simultaneity of two temporal and spatial dimensions within one picture, already an aspect of the history of the avant-garde's pictorial interests, challenges the visual experience of backgrounds as mere setting.

Backstory (2009), Lewis's documentary on rear projection, is also being screened offsite during the press preview dates. *Backstory* profiles the Hansards of Hansard Enterprises, a small, family-run production company that has provided background definition to some of Hollywood's most memorable cinematic moments for over 70 years.

[More from the Venice Biennale:](#)

Wondering how the Reverse Pedagogy artists are doing with their canoes in the canals?

Read the Toronto Star's story [HERE](#)

And click [HERE](#) to read the Globe's story on the lack-of-funding tribulations facing pavilion curator Barbara Fischer and artist Mark Lewis.

[HERE](#) is a very good article by Daniel Baird in the Walrus on Mark Lewis's Venice installation.

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