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Andrew Wright & Janieta Eyre / Opening Reception

Events

Andrew Wright: Penumbra / Janieta Eyre: Constructed Mythologies

April 30 – June 29, 2013

Opening Reception: May 3, 6 – 8:30 p.m.

University of Toronto Art Centre

15 King's College Circle

This year, CONTACT's Festival theme, Field of Vision, intends to explore the photographic medium as a way of seeing. *Andrew Wright's Penumbra*, currently on display the University Toronto Art Center (UTAC) is a quintessential display of innovative approaches towards using photography as a means to broaden the horizons of visual perception.



Bonnie Rubenstein, artistic director of Scotiabank Contact Photography Festival with artist Andrew Wright and University of Toronto Professor Mark A Cheetham

Wright believes that this exhibition reflects his "interest in what makes a photograph and what makes a photographic experience." His investigation of the penumbra explores limbo-like spaces between regions of complete shadow and complete illumination. By using scale, darkness and skewed angles, Wright evokes a sense of disorientation that causes ambiguity and mystery about the space depicted.



Andrew Wright with his two children in front of *Tree Corrections, 2012*

In the exhibition Q&A, *Wright* claimed that one's sense of time and orientation becomes mixed up when travelling. In the north, the distinctions between night and day blend into each other and what we rely on to locate ourselves in space becomes subject to question. *Penumbra* captures this phenomenon by situating the viewer on the fringes of both worlds.



Visual Studies Graduate Vlad Lunin gazes into *Coronae, 2011* (left) University of Toronto Professor Mark A Cheetham admires *Boulder #3 (Baffin Island), 2011* (right)

In this mid-career survey of works from 2001 – 13, Wright uses a range of photographic technologies from iPhone filters to camera lucida, altogether offering a diverse exploration of mystically disorientating visuals. The combination of methods present in the exhibition granted a new means of interpreting our surroundings. For example, in *Prairie Skies X* (2004), rather than staring up at the sky as so many visionaries before him have done, *Wright* makes the sky come to him with a pinhole camera.



Bonnie Rubenstein alongside CONTACT programme manager Tara Smith

Bonnie Rubenstein has stated that *Penumbra* has been one of the most intense curatorial projects for her during CONTACT. In the past, she has seen several exhibitions of *Wright's* work in Toronto but they had always been strong centralized around one project. Her desire to see how all his work from the past and present resonated together compelled her to arrange this survey exhibition.



Artist Janieta Eyre alongside her piece *The Day My Eye Laid An Egg, from the Motherhood series, 2002*

Alongside *Penumbra*, UTAC is also exhibiting *Janieta Eyre's Constructed Mythologies*. *Eyre* is an internationally acclaimed photographer known for her constructed images that contrast and challenge traditional notions of femininity. This exhibition examines a timeline of *Eyre's* work in its capacity to confront and re-examine social constructions.



Installation view of *Mute Book #7*, 2010

Eyre's quirky double self-portraits offer alternative myths that stem from her own encounters to a broader social critiques Often, her surreal portraits portray herself as a schizophrenic twin that is simultaneously amusing and grotesque, rejecting singularity.



Text and photo: Shellie Zhang

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