



DVD installation in which a pair of television sets is placed screen to screen and reflect the glow of a 15-minute looped "pornographic gangbang"; *A Man, A Woman*, an eight-minute-long DVD in which some 150 categories of characters culled from films—"a notorious B-movie director, a female FBI rookie, a likeable drunkard, five vastly different high school students"—appear and dissolve on a large-format screen to the music of Glenn Gould playing the *Goldberg Variations*; and *REM*, a two-and-a-quarter-hour-long colour DVD that Mark describes as "a video Mash-Up consisting of 170 different sources taken from television during a four-month period between April 1 and July 31, 2007."

To make *REM*, Mark settled into the work mode that has characterized her art practice since she



top left: Kelly Mark, *A Little Piece of Heaven*, 2006, 10 x 10' grass sod, site-specific installation created for the Tree Museum. Photo: Anne O'Callaghan for the Tree Museum. All photos courtesy the artist.

middle left and right: Kelly Mark, *REM*, 2007, Dvd 2:16:33, colour with sound, installation dimensions 16 x 16 x 8; walls, televisions, Dvd player, co-axial & RCA cables, room furnishings.

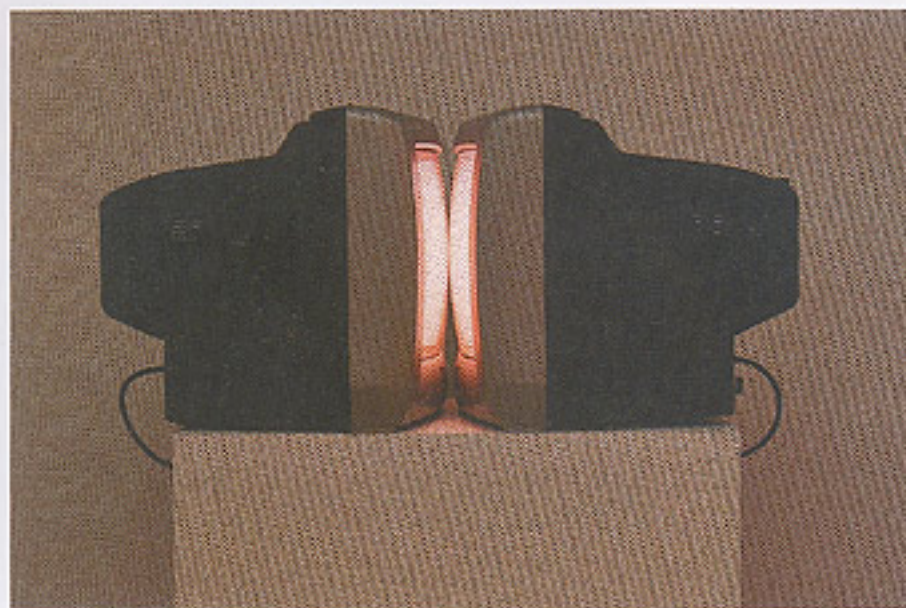
Elegant Stupidities

When she designed her Web site, Toronto artist **Kelly Mark** decided the only way to make sense of her production was to put up 30 thumbnails. "Some people only know me for my Letraset drawings, or my graphite pieces, or my video, or the Glow works. My work is all over the place. Everytime I do a show, it looks like a group show."

She produces enough work for a group of artists, as well. In 2007 she exhibited *The Kiss*, a two-channel

graduated from NSCAD in 1994. She channel-surfed every night for the four months, establishing for herself a set of unbreakable rules: no renting of movies, the material had to be found on television, and she had to find the opening and closing scenes for her "made-from-television" movie on the first night of watching. What's typical about the *REM* project is the placement of a conceptual structure around everyday experience; the work of watching subjected to the framework of thinking. At her own admission, she has been preoccupied with "the differing shades of pathos and humour found in repetitive, mundane tasks"; what is notable is how poetic the works have been that have emerged from her intense involvement with the quotidian.

Mark says her definition of art "is that it's just a conversation." By this measure, she is a generous and elegant conversationalist. You can go through



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the pared-down descriptions in *REM* and figure out what films are being referred to (*Target*, *Silence of the Lambs*, *Cool Hand Luke* and *The Breakfast Club* cover the list above), just as you can appreciate her acknowledgement of Brancusi in her two-channelled reprisal of *The Kiss*. Among her many achievements are an unfailing ability to match material to idea—this is the source of the formal elegance that marks her work—and the operation of a playful sense of

humour. In both her work and her conversation, there is an evident readiness to laugh at the human condition and at her place in it. When asked if she is interested in absurdity, her answer registers surprise that the question would be asked in the first place. "Yeah," she says. "Life is stupid, man." No one should be surprised to know that an exhibition of her work that has been touring Canada for two years is called "Stupid Heaven." ■

top: Kelly Mark, *The Kiss*, 2007, 2-channel Dvd installation, 15-minute loop, colour, silent, part of "Glow Video Series," edition of 5 with 1 artist's proof.

top right: Kelly Mark, *Signature (Stamps)*, 2007, (Books 1999–ongoing).

lower right: KC Adams, *Circuit City II*, 2007, digital print on Arches paper, 10 x 10' print size. All photos courtesy the artist.