



eva exhibition of visual+ art

March 29 – June 24 2007, Limerick Ireland



"Distance" 2006-2007. Installation view Limerick City Gallery of Art.

A Sense of Place

by Klaus Ottmann

Pearlstein's "Distance" is her most recent work in a series of rigidly minimalist videos. In these works, actors are choreographed to perform language games enacted as social activities in the sense of Wittgenstein's definition of 'speaking' as 'part of an activity or form of life', which may include 'giving orders and obeying them . . . reporting about an event . . . speculating about an event . . . asking, thanking, cursing, greeting, praying'. While most of Pearlstein's earlier videos were shot in a seamlessly white space, which lent them a nonspecific sense of location, "Distance" was filmed in a studio located in the prominent Starret-Lehigh building at the edge of New York's gallery district. Through its windows one can see the sky, the Hudson River, even spot cruise ships docked at the Chelsea Piers. In "Distance" Pearlstein pays tribute to the filmmaker Michael Snow, whose film "Wavelength" (1967) revolutionized the practice of avant-garde film. Consisting of a single 45-minute-long tracking shot that documents seemingly random events, including a 'murder', Snow forces the viewer to consider the formal aspects of film at the expense of illusionism and narrative. Snow's film continues to influence filmmakers today, as evidenced, also, by Chantal Akerman's 2006 'documentary' La-bas.