

Transcendence through the Artifice of Spectacle:

Martin Beauregard's "Fireworks"

by Camille Baker

The off-beat emerging artist from Montreal, Martin Beauregard, whose piece on spectacle has been chosen for the grunt event for the LIVE Biennial 2005. His performances "flirt with disaster: reckless inventions, scenery that falls apart, half finished machinery that explodes... Failure looms large; success is not an option." Beauregard is a perfect choice for LIVE 2005 and it's theme of Altered States.

For LIVE, he will perform "Fireworks", using a slide projector and live sound effects. It is his intention to wipe out wonder and make a big deal out of nothing.

Beauregard's previous work is child-like, using papier-mâché, packing tape, corrugated foam and other low cost materials for his costumes, props and sets. It is full of over-the-top, amateurish, brightly coloured, crude/ garish costumes that seem like homemade mascots and in them his performances are very stunt-like, seemingly more goofy than meaningful. However, his use of low-tech materials and equipment is intriguing, but I'd like to see him in a few years when he has refined his techniques and content further.

It is clear that Beauregard has thought about his works and conceptualized their profundity (or lack there of) with some self-awareness and humour. It is also evident that these garish, tasteless, amateurish and stunt-like elements are intended as part of Beauregard's reflection or statement on art, performance and society in its current state.

For this year's LIVE, in his press release states,

"... fireworks investigates the dimension forgotten by the spectacle(entertainment), its failure(defeat... us[ing] the subtlety...of the deceit and the guile, mixing participation and laziness... the artist accentuates ... a reflection on certain values conveyed by "the society of the spectacle(entertainment)... bringing to mind those interminable slideshows of vacation trips... the installation creates interplay of contradictions between the sensational, cheapness, and emotion..."

is this your Thesis?

Not a sentence.

is it okay to call him off-beat?

Introducing Martin → offbeat
Introducing Live

Where does this book come from?

title of performance
intention of works

previous works
history

Introduces "I"
her opinion

Writer's conclusion

Martin's words
about fireworks.

Should be first.

long sentence.

Interested in slides as presentation in the sense of reviewing memories or as souvenirs because of their motionless or static aspect, Beauregard hopes to suggest the memory of archaic cinema, or to inform a journey, as was popular in the 70s. He feels that, unlike photography, slide projection allows for group imagination, creating a story, a route, continuity of time, preserved statically.

← hopes what?
about fireworks.

Beauregard sees "Fireworks" addressing the theme of "Altered States" through the projected photographed fireworks, reactivating the event, while sharing all the contradictions imposed by the chosen medium. He sought old technology to "rock the state enchanted with the crowd"; to highlight the unique quality fireworks events; to elicit a second reading: a caricature or parody of the state of the spectator.

Artist's intention ⇒
description of what
he's doing.

The French word fireworks is translated from feux d'artifices, or artificial fire - although the fire or light is real and not artificial, Beauregard points out that fireworks were meant for their ability to dazzle, to deceive, similar to magic. (So the idea of the artificial spectacle is inherent in its name, yet his piece represents or exposes this artifice in a more obviously.)

same.

Unclear paragraph.
→ Closer to the end
→ referring to what?

Beauregard defines "altered states" in terms of his process and performances, by diverting or hijacking the viewer through spectacle and the chosen medium, distorting the spectator's state. Rather than creating a spectacular experience (experiment) of delight, he wishes viewers ponder, creating a critical distance for them, inducing a state of reflection; to take time and be conscious of the piece's inaction and irony, enabling a sense of memory and its souvenir.

Artist's intention
Important para

Beauregard hopes that as one enters the piece, it will initially surprise; be seen as ridiculous; a powerful trick lost in the weakness of its translation, a balloon will burst. Some may try analyze what's behind it (literally and figuratively). The curious will check behind the screen, then the performer will be revealed, creating the simulation; thus lifting the veil, the end of OZ, exposing the artifice. Some will experience it like a state of dream, reflection, oneiric, intimate or calming. The piece is intended to create distance, wavering between enchantment and disenchantment. It could also be seen as humorous.

unclear ⇒ "the"

Beauregard feels performance exploits and is successful in its poetry, the subject matter, its force, its energy, and the poverty of the materials chosen. Impotence and fate are recurrent subjects for him. Costumes, objects, machines, all built in a spirit of whimsy, and his fascination with explosions. He confesses that, *"The idea of failure is always present in my work... The more that it misses, the more it succeeds!... It is the idea of the hardly finished machine, which explodes. I put accent rather on the disproportion of the effort..."*

Beauregard feels people need to «make the bridge between criticism and contemplation ...by containing [them] in a state of enchantement, thus [they] must give up their sense of reality... to profit from feelings [of immersion] in the screen... When judgement sets in the illusion is also lost.» He believes spectacle too often holds the witness in a zombie state; larval and unable to respond or escape.

The performers that have influenced Beauregard's work the most is the performance group **Survival Research Laboratories**, locating its work between salvage yards, robot wars and visual arts; using the spectacle of explosions. He is taken with their "Utopia of Machines" to create spectacles of disaster and degradation, with ironically tedious and destructive content.

Artist Bio

Martin Beauregard, recently graduate of the National School of Higher Studies in Artistic Expression of Bordeaux in France, holds a baccalaureat of Interdisciplinarité in Visual Creation of the University of Quebec in Abitibi-Témiscamingue. He presented his works in solos in many centers of Canadian artists and took part in several exposures of group, events of performance and festivals of film and videos in Canada, in the United States, in France, in Senegal and in several countries of South America. He will expose in 2005 to the eye of fish to Quebec, Eyelevel Gallery in Halifax and Aceartinc Gallery in Winnipeg.

Camille Baker is a media curator/ artist/ instructor living in Vancouver.

each paragraph
begins with beauregard
exploits what?

whose costumes?

in relation to...

No conclusion

suggested edits

1. paragraph ordering needs to change
2. No transitions \Rightarrow each paragraph starts with Beauvillard
3. No conclusion \Rightarrow nothing standing out to say ~~where~~ why go and see this.
4. Good introduction of martin \Rightarrow I like the thought and intention.
5. Questions to consider:
 1. Would you go and see him perform?
 - 2.

to 778-896-5729

Jasmine's Birthday potluck on Aug 2nd.

7:00 w \rightarrow vegetarian \rightarrow then dancing...