

“A chair is a place to sit. It doesn’t take you anywhere.”

Anonymous

Life itself is a confinement, which, through culture is decorated in such a way as to obscure the other end of the tunnel; the inevitability of death.

Culture as decoration?

Adapting to your environment is confining yourself to a set of circumstances. This is crucial to survival. The adornment of that environment, whether it is a mental construct, a series of actions or the use of materials, creates an atmosphere of belief and a system within which our functioning is acceptable to the world around us.

The myriad of ways in which we confine ourselves is endless. Different cultures approach their confinement by closing themselves down (or opening up) through a series of highly detailed rituals and ornamental decoration.

From the suburbs to hospitals for the mentally ill, we are all in a constant state of adaptation. We identify and adapt to our architecture and the objects within. The decoration of the home and the architecture of that space creates a means of acceptance within our culture(s) and reflect who we are or who we may wish to identify with. The house reflects our mental constructs; it pursues the notion that we can have intellectual reasoning that allows us to believe that we are right or wrong; it can engage us on emotional levels that we attach to ourselves, perhaps living and re-living events from the past and re-enacting them in the present in a variety of protracted ways.

“A chair is a place to sit. It doesn’t take you anywhere.” addresses the idea of the object as a metaphor for the thought. Does the thought take you anywhere? Should it take you anywhere? The chair is the thought. The chair is a place to sit; it’s not taking you anywhere and yet implies a resting place. However, the resting place becomes a confinement if you cannot or do not get out of it, inertia may set in; chair potato type of behavior encourages a belief that the chair is actually supportive. The onset of object tom-foolery begins.

One of the tenets of meditation is to quiet the mind, to watch the thoughts as they move through. By not attaching yourself to the thought you can be free. Yet, our society, our cultural inheritance is built on a perpetual construction of thoughts, layer upon layer of refined confinement.

The attachment to the decorative, to the ritual, to language perhaps reflects the self’s desire for a life everlasting. And in death the tomb decorates the landscape trying to lend credence to the temporality of eternity.

This show directs its attention to these questions through the metaphor of the object, its place in architecture and the thought that is the byproduct. Gloria Zein (Germany), and Caterina Verde (U.S. and France) have chosen to work together to explore these ideas.

Caterina Verde



video still from "Bill"  
installation  
running time 5 minutes



"Guillaume en allant vers le futur"  
C print  
80 cm x 120 cm

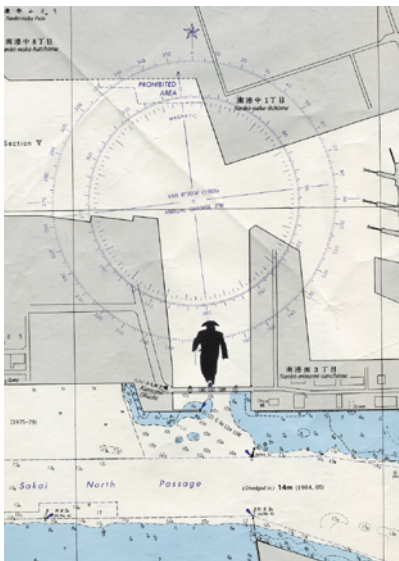


3 channel video installation, "Bill"  
11 meters x 3 meters  
Wall covered with synthetic grass carpet

Chapter one.

Bill

Bill is caught in a series of historical cameos, from French colonialist to contemporary man and meditating guru. His adornment (including his environment) is his confinement, as he never really reveals who he is, only perhaps some aspects of time and place. Bill is a template, a blank starting point. The thoughts we project onto him define him as our times dictate our thoughts and actions and that consequently become the decoration of existence. We experience confinement through matter, our thinking, our emotions; in the end it all becomes adornment

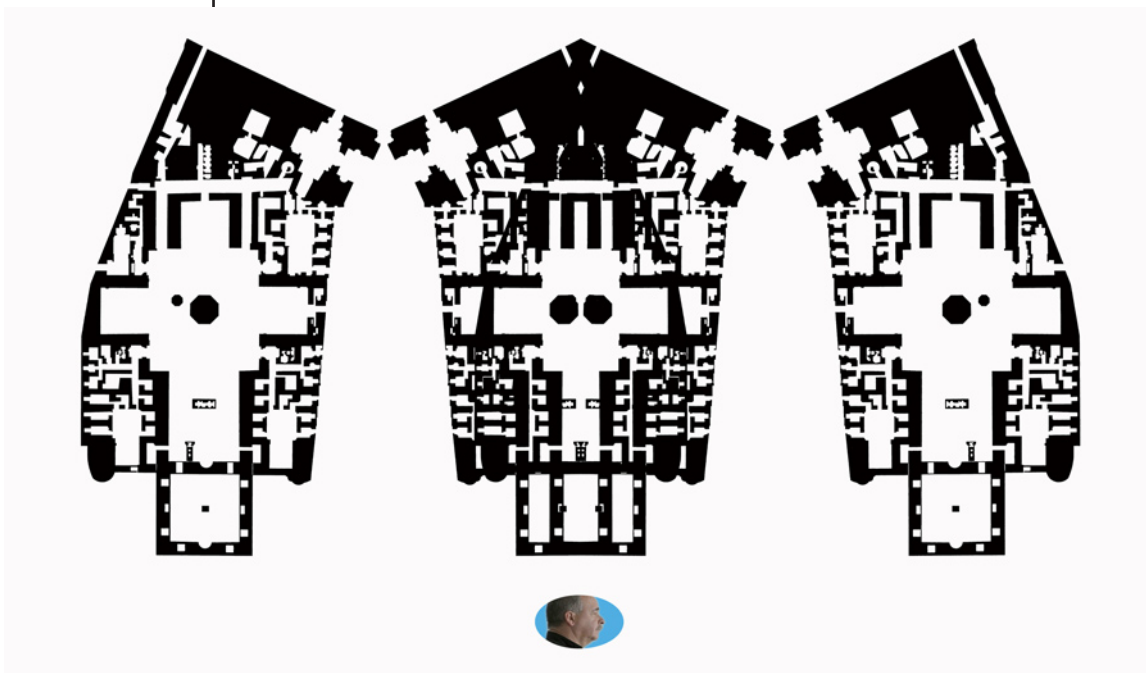


“osaka bill”  
archival inkjet print  
2006



“bill talk balloon after watteau”, drawing 2006, 60cm x 30 cm

Filmed as cameos of family portraits through the seasons, this work has as its form the historical tome gone awry with an emphasis on the moments of the in-between. “Decorative” texts intersect moving images that leave one confined and frozen; all dressed up with nowhere to go.



“floor plan/family portrait”, inkjet on vinyl, 2006