

PRESS KIT



David Lynch

THE AIR IS ON FIRE
EXHIBITION MARCH 3—MAY 27, 2007

Fondation Cartier pour l'art contemporain

PRESS INFORMATION

LINDA CHENIT

ASSISTED BY HÉLÈNE CAHUZAC

TEL +33 (0)1 42 18 56 77/65 FAX +33 (0)1 42 18 56 52

LINDA.CHENIT@FONDATION.CARTIER.COM

MATILDE INCERTI

ASSISTED BY ANDREI KAMAROWSKY AND HERVÉ DUPONT

TEL +33 (0)1 48 05 20 80 FAX +33 (0)1 48 06 15 40

MATILDE.INCERTI@FREE.FR

IMAGES ON LINE: FONDATION.CARTIER.COM

DAVID LYNCH

THE AIR IS ON FIRE

March 3—May 27, 2007

Chief Curator: Hervé Chandès

Curators: Hélène Kelmachter and Ilana Shamoon

Exhibition Design Coordinator: Patrick Dutertre

Registrar: Corinne Bocquet assisted by Alanna-Minta Jordan

Sound: Dean Hurley with Renaud Biri

Video: Romain Augros

Lighting: Nicolas Tauveron

Installation: Gilles Gioan with Olivier Lounissi

Patines: Céline Miquelis

Interns: Julien Courois and Aurélie Prévot

Exhibition partners:

Crown Fine Arts: Michel Van Riel and Sylvie Fournier

Enia Tecsom Bâtiment: François-Xavier Arcangeli, Anne Barsive,

Gaëlle Merlin, Corinne Jourdain, and Pamela Roland

EPSON France: Laurent Ivanoff, Bruno Bonino, Didier Frétillet,

and Brian Laborde

Media partners:



L'EXPRESS

Le Monde

Special thanks to:

Melita Toscan du Plantier, Mary Sweeney, Marie-Thérèse Perrin,

Christine Borgoltz, Emily Stofle, and William Eggleston

The exhibition David Lynch, *The Air is on Fire* is organized with support from the Fondation Cartier pour l'art contemporain, under the aegis of the Fondation de France, and with the sponsorship of Cartier.

Cover: Untitled, undated, marker on paper, 7.6 x 7.6 cm; p. 1: *Distorted Nude*, undated, digital print; p. 2: Untitled, undated, black and white photograph, 27.9 x 35.3 cm; p. 3: Untitled, undated, mixed media on paper, 7.6 x 12.7 cm; *Do you want to know what I really think?*, 2003, oil and mixed media on giclé print, 152.4 x 296 cm, photo © Patrick Gries; p. 4: Untitled, undated, marker and pen on matchbox, 9.4 x 5.2 cm; p. 5: Untitled, undated, black and white photograph, 27.9 x 35.3 cm; *Rain*, 2005, watercolor on paper, 15 x 22.5 cm
For all images © David Lynch

David Lynch

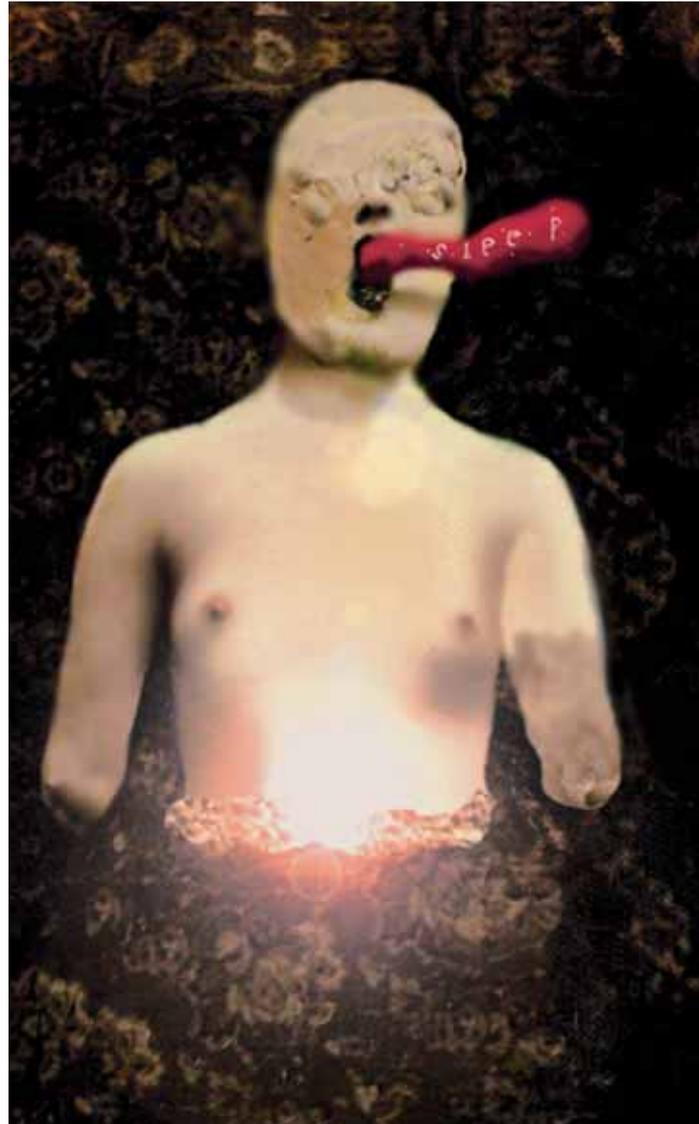
THE AIR IS ON FIRE/EXHIBITION MARCH 3—MAY 27, 2007

Since his years at the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, David Lynch has always devoted a considerable part of his creative activity to the visual arts. The most complete exhibition of this work to date, *The Air is on Fire* reveals this essential though little-known aspect of his creativity. Presented in Paris at the Fondation Cartier pour l'art contemporain from March 3 to May 27, 2007, the show brings together the various forms of expression employed by this versatile artist whose desire to paint has remained since childhood.

The Air is on Fire brings together a large ensemble of works produced since the 1960s; paintings, photographs, drawings, works on paper, experimental films, and sound environments were created especially for the occasion. Over 500 sketches and other notes carefully conserved by the artist in two binders, with no particular system of organization, are shown in their entirety. The *Distorted Nudes* series, composed in 2004 of digital images made by modifying scanned erotic photographs taken between 1840 and 1940, is also being shown for the first time. Lynch's very first short films are screened in a small theater inspired by his film *Eraserhead* (1977), and he has transformed one of his drawings into a space through which visitors may wander and where they are invited to discover both its inside and outside. Rendering the exhibition itself a fully-fledged work of art, Lynch has designed steel structures with curtains or canvases

as supports for his paintings, and transformed a set of interactive sound pieces into sculptures.

The remarkable book that accompanies this exhibition reproduces most of the featured works. With the exception of the paintings, these are deliberately presented with neither titles nor dates, excluding all chronology in accordance with David Lynch's wishes. The film stills featured evoke his cinematic universe. The publication comes complete with a double CD, recorded on December 15, 2006, on which the artist recalls memories and personal anecdotes while flipping through the 450-page mock-up of the book.



An artist through and through, David Lynch was personally involved in every aspect of this exhibition, rendering it a "total work of art" that embraces not only the multiple facets of his visual art production but also his passion for music. This passion is also manifest in the

program of concerts that he has conceived for the Nomadic Nights series within the context of the exhibition.

Revealing the multiplicity of an incomparable oeuvre, *The Air is on Fire* coincides with the European release of David Lynch's new film, *INLAND EMPIRE*. It offers a unique insight into his creative process and invites viewers to go deep into a fascinating and dizzying creative universe.

Hervé Chandès

Director of the Fondation Cartier pour l'art contemporain

The Exhibition

PRESENTED AT THE FONDATION CARTIER POUR L'ART CONTEMPORAIN IN PARIS FROM MARCH 3 TO MAY 27, 2007, *THE AIR IS ON FIRE* IS THE LARGEST EXHIBITION DEVOTED TO DAVID LYNCH AS A VISUAL ARTIST. EXPLORING THE MULTIPLE FACETS OF THIS WORK, IT BRINGS TOGETHER PAINTINGS, PHOTOGRAPHS, DRAWINGS, EXPERIMENTAL FILMS, AND SOUND CREATED SINCE 1960. THIS EXHIBITION EVENT OFFERS AN EXCEPTIONAL OCCASION TO DISCOVER AND TO REVISIT HIS CREATIONS WITH NEVER-BEFORE-SEEN WORKS, INSTALLED IN AN ENVIRONMENT DESIGNED BY HIM. IT IS COMPLEMENTED BY A SERIES OF NOMADIC NIGHTS EVENTS, INCLUDING CONCERTS AND PROJECTIONS, THAT HE CREATED.



Born in Montana in 1946, David Lynch spent most of his childhood sketching and painting. In 1965, he went on to study fine arts at the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts in Philadelphia, where his passion for the moving image was stirred: working alone in his studio, he saw a soft wind gently move the objects stuck onto the canvas before him, and six months later, his first

experimental short film was completed. This gave birth to one of the world's most treasured filmmakers, and the youngest director to receive the Venice Film Festival's Golden Lion for lifetime achievement, awarded in September 2006 after the premiere of his new film, *INLAND EMPIRE* (2006). Throughout his career, Lynch has actively continued painting, photographing, and drawing, and has even broadened his artistic practice to include animation, music composition, and sound production. The Fondation Cartier pour l'art contemporain is honored to present the most complete exhibition of his "behind the scenes" artistic expression.

The Air is on Fire was born from David Lynch's studio full of paintings, cupboards of black archival boxes, and shelves of labeled binders containing countless drawings. This well conserved collection of his own art dates back to his high school days and, until now, has primarily remained out of sight. These works are reassembled here in distinctive environments accompanied by pervading sounds, all conceived by the artist himself—a life-sized recreation of a living room drawing, fantastical spaces filled with large-scale structures upon which his paintings are hung, and a mini movie theatre inspired by *Eraserhead*

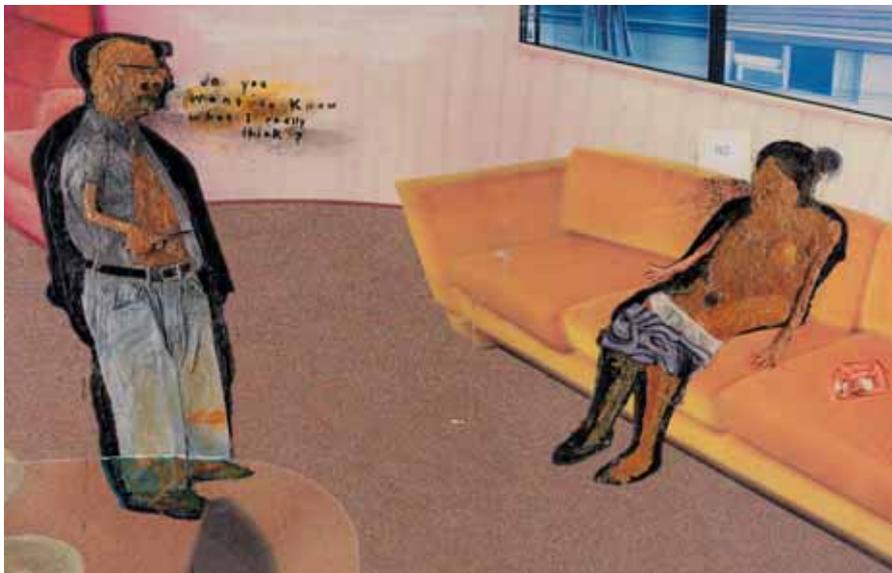
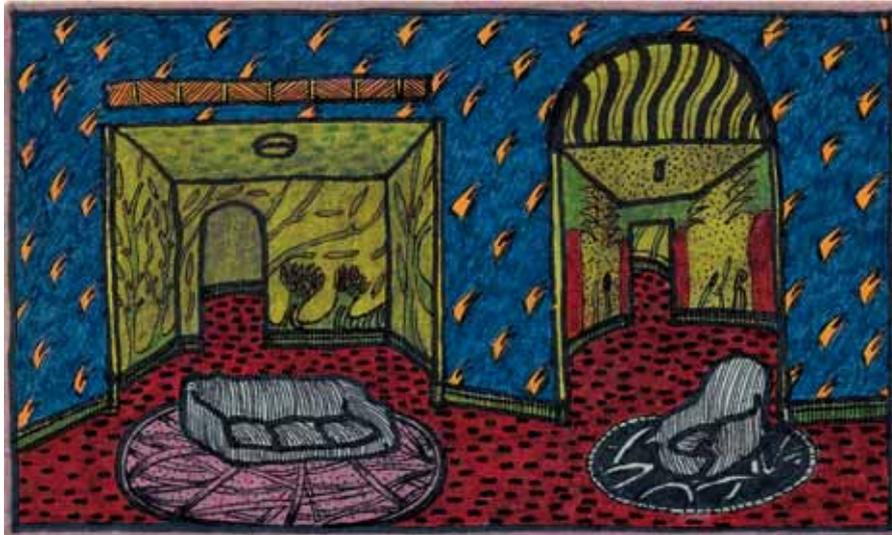
The Air is on Fire

(1977). These spaces form a highly personal show that offers the viewer a unique opportunity to interact with a new side of Lynch's vision in an environment that remains all his own.

David Lynch's paintings, photographs, and drawings reconstruct his childhood experiences, his adolescent fantasies, and his adult preoccupations. The recurring theme of the home, complete with its potentially sinister underbelly, is represented in dark paintings complete with cryptic messages and organic textures. Lynch's outrageous sense of humor, however, is also present in the difficult issues his paintings tackle, echoing the cutting comic relief found in even his most disconcerting film work. His photography also captures various moods and atmospheres, from sensual and dreamy to somber and troubling. The artist's nude studies, for example,

feature women with typical Lynchian characteristics like red painted lips and nails and alluringly glamorous attitudes. Photographs of industrial areas treat sewage pipes, bridges, and deserted factories with as much care as nude models, filling remote landscapes with sensibility and importance. The *Distorted Nudes* series consists of taboo black and white erotic photographs, dating from 1840 to 1940, that the artist digitally reworked to form creatures that remain human but adopt surreal forms and expressions. David Lynch's sketches and drawings compose the most intimate

aspect of his creations. On view for the very first time in *The Air is on Fire*, these works, kept since childhood and regularly consulted by Lynch for inspiration, offer an exceptional and uncensored glimpse into his creative process; they capture the artist's inspirations most clearly, exposing the common threads that run through his entire oeuvre.



David Lynch

Born in 1946 in
Missoula, Montana
Eagle scout

Filmography

1967 *Six Men Getting Sick*, 4' (45" film loops),
16 mm, color projection
on sculpted screen

1968 *The Alphabet*,
3'45"; 16 mm, color / 1970

The Grandmother, 34',
16 mm, color / 1973 *The*

Amputee, 2 versions:
4'52" and 4'05"; video,
black and white / 1977

Eraserhead, 85'; 35 mm,
black and white

1980 *The Elephant Man*, 118';
35 mm, black and white

1984 *Dune*, 131'; 35 mm,
color / 1986 *Blue Velvet*,

121'; 35 mm, color / 1990

Wild at Heart, 125'; 35
mm, color / 1992 *Twin*

Peaks: Fire Walk with Me, 129'; 35 mm, color / 1995 *Premonitions*

Following an Evil Deed in Lumière et Compagnie, 55"; 35 mm, black
and white / 1997 *Lost Highway*, 134'; 35 mm, color / 1999 *The*

Straight Story, 112'; 35 mm, color / 2001 *Mulholland Drive*, 141'; 35
mm, color / 2006 *INLAND EMPIRE*, 179'; digital video, color

1999 *The Straight Story*, 112'; 35 mm, color / 2001 *Mulholland Drive*, 141'; 35 mm, color / 2006 *INLAND EMPIRE*, 179'; digital video, color

A conversation with David Lynch

while perusing the catalog with Kristine McKenna

David Lynch: ...Yes. This is a whole series of matchbook drawings [pp. 56-57] and see, I kinda do like a series, so I don't know how these happened but in the old days, there were many more matches than there were lighters and the matches were a lot of times plain like these, so you could draw on them. And they're like diptychs, some of them anyway, and anyway, little drawings on the matchbooks seemed to feel good.

Kristine McKenna: How many of them did you do? Does this represent the best of them?

David Lynch: No, no, this is what's left. I would lose them. So I don't know how many I did.

Kristine McKenna: So this suggests that you're one of those people that draws on whatever is around?

David Lynch: Yes.

Kristine McKenna: Pages 58 and 59 are on napkins?

David Lynch: From Bob's Big Boy. They used to have, and I don't think they have them anymore, a chrome and metal napkin holder and so you could just reach over, get out a napkin and start your drawing and I would take a kit, you know, of magic markers and Sharpies and then I'd have my coffee and my shake and these are some of the things I was working on.

Kristine McKenna: On page 71, there's a drawing of an interior which to me looks exactly like the rabbits' place they live in, in *INLAND EMPIRE*.

David Lynch: Well, it's similar. I like these little rooms and did a whole bunch of drawings of little rooms. This is one of them and then there are rugs again. I love to build lamps now, and I want to build chairs, so there are a lot of things to do.

Kristine McKenna: What appeals to you about the drawings on pages 72 and 73? It's kind of 1930s, 1940s Deco, overstuffed.

David Lynch: They're more 1940s... You know, I don't know. I don't want to live in a place like that but I like to make a film in a place like that. I like to go into that world. And then this on page 75 is partially finished, another little interior.

Kristine McKenna: Well, that's a nude reclining...

David Lynch: On a divan. This comes from Philadelphia. This has a Philadelphia feel. The proportion of those windows, it's a Philadelphia thing; that lamp is a Philadelphia lamp.

Kristine McKenna: Speaking of Philadelphia, why did you go to the 12th floor of an old building in Philadelphia to do that first film [*Six Men Getting Sick*]?

David Lynch: The school owned that building. And they gave it to me as a studio for that project.

Now, these are about 5x7 cards [pp. 76-77] and I've lost so many of these small drawings but this is with a *really* sharp pencil and I would get into these real small drawings, again with the idea of photographing them and blowing them up.

Kristine McKenna: When were you doing these?

David Lynch: These are sort of 1970s, I think.

Kristine McKenna: Are the drawings on pages 78 and 79 getting bigger or are they still really small?

David Lynch: These are the same as before.

Page 78, that's *Mr. Jim's Home by the Sea*. So, I did many Mr. Jim drawings and they're not here; I don't know where they are. *Mr. Jim Mentally Projects Three Floating Mice, Mr. Jim Does Three Magic*

Tricks Simultaneously, things like that.

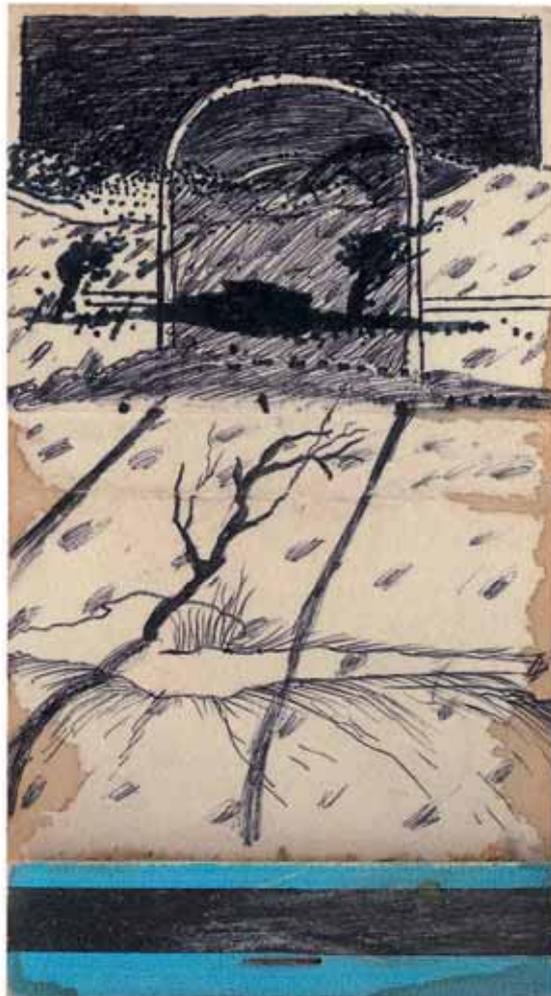
The next pages are also 5x7 cards. No, the left one is a 5x7, the right one is a different proportion but I wouldn't know what that's on.

Kristine McKenna: Now for several years were you only working really small like this?

David Lynch: Well, for sure. Big canvases cost a lot of money and so, I was working small.

Excerpt from David Lynch's conversation with Kristine McKenna, recorded on December 15, 2006 in Los Angeles. Reproduced in its entirety on CD in the exhibition catalog

Kristine McKenna is an art critic, journalist, and curator.



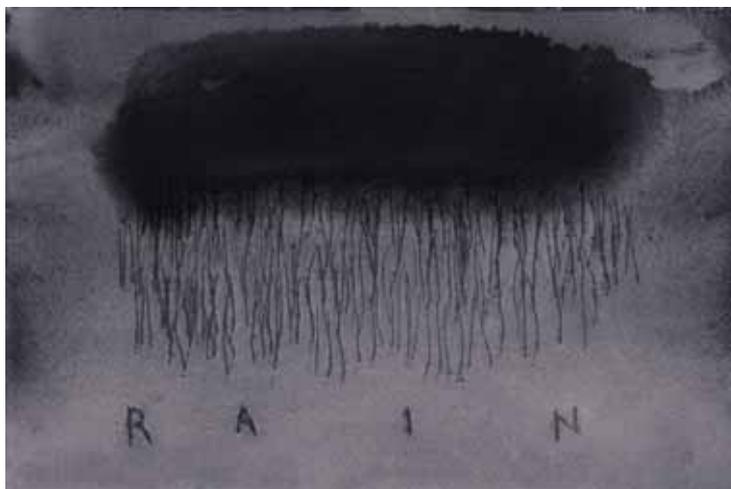
On the Art of David Lynch

A conversation between Boris Groys and Andrei Ujica

Andrei Ujica: Filmmakers whose origins lie in painting have always been in the minority. As we know, most filmmakers come from literature, in fact mainly from prose; some also come from theater, and a few from poetry, all of which makes it apparent that film is primarily a narrative art. Those filmmakers whose source of creativity lies in painting constitute the smallest group. However, within the history of film they have

been anything but insignificant. The most indicative examples of such filmmakers are Murnau, who studied art history and whose fundamental achievement was to transpose a painterly style, Expressionism, to film, and Tarkovsky, whose most profound aspiration was always to be a painter. That he never trusted himself enough to pursue this desire beyond the limits of a hobby, just as he could never follow his other great desire, to become a poet, doubtlessly had to do with his father, who was both. In order to make space for his creative drive he therefore had to find an *ersatz* medium, a replacement, and so he developed a cinema that is fundamentally painterly and poetic. Here, another reference to the specificity of film seems apposite, namely that the emphasis on the visual inevitably prompts an activation of the lyrical.

David Lynch aligns himself with this tradition, but he does so in a manner entirely his own. Neither a defected theoretician nor a failed painter, he has worked in the visual arts from the very beginning, and continues to do so to this day. Although of course at some point in his youth, he arrived at a crossroads as his films gained international renown while his artistic work followed a hidden path.



Boris Groys: I think that at this point, at the very beginning, it might be useful to brave an attempt at specification, namely to ask ourselves what kind of visual art we are talking about—to which tradition of visual art does David Lynch belong? Whether we look at Lynch's earlier or later work, the art historical context in which he operates is, in my opinion, very clear. It is modernist European 20th century art, predominantly those artists

who perceived the tragic and the dangerous in man and wanted to depict it—the Expressionists and the Surrealists. They all saw humanity to be endangered by the inhumane, be it from inside or externally. Their themes were the dissolution of the human figure into something unhuman, the attack from outside or the explosion from within that would demolish human bodies. It was the kind of art brought by those artists emigrating to America in the 1930s and 1940s from a Europe threatened by the Nazis. They brought an insight into both the fragility and the precariousness of human nature. And this insight was something which contradicted the optimism prevalent in America at the

time, a particular *ur-belief* in the immanent goodness of nature intact—human nature included—and the possibility of finding earthly happiness. The expressionist-surrealist tradition of modern art viewed man as a creature involved in a fundamental conflict with himself and the world.

...

Excerpts from the exhibition catalog

Boris Groys, philosopher, and **Andrei Ujica**, filmmaker, both teach at Hochschule für Gestaltung in Karlsruhe, a university run by the philosopher Peter Sloterdijk, that reunites a unique group of scholars in the domains of media, image, and art studies.

The Exhibition Catalog

A major publication in both English and French containing numerous reproductions of David Lynch's fine art and film work will accompany the exhibition. It will feature a CD recording of a conversation between the artist and American journalist Kristine McKenna, who comment on the book's illustrations with ideas, anecdotes, and interpretations. A rich conversation between Boris Groys and Andrei Ujica explores the connections between art and cinema within the framework of 20th century art history, and more particularly investigates Lynch's body of work. It thereby provides a theoretical understanding of the manner in which this important filmmaker, painter, sculptor, and photographer constructs his entire oeuvre.

David Lynch

The Air is on Fire

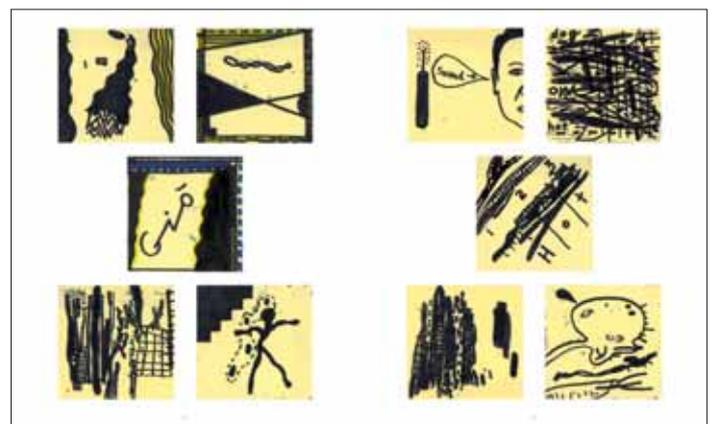
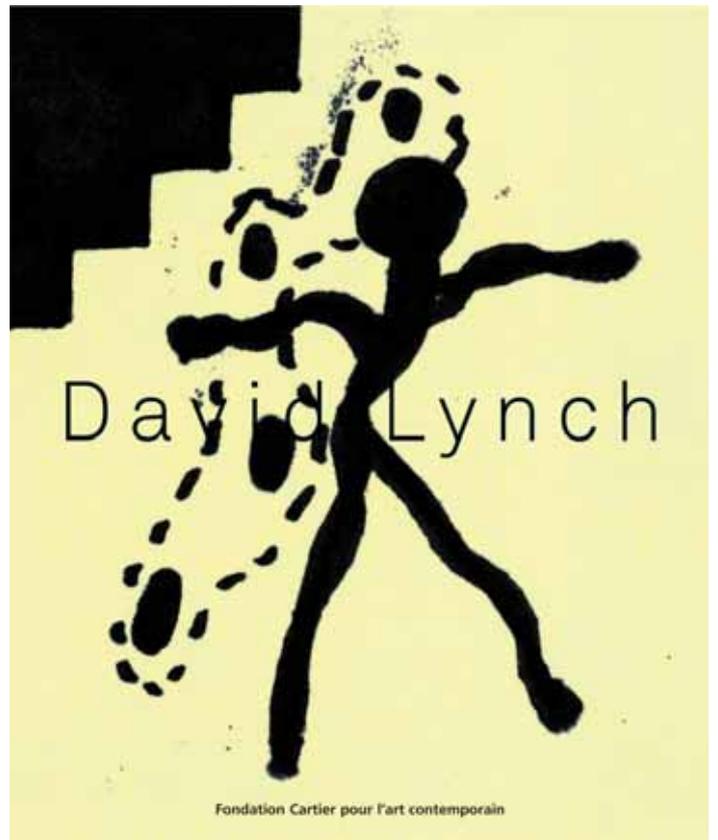
Fondation Cartier pour l'art contemporain, Paris

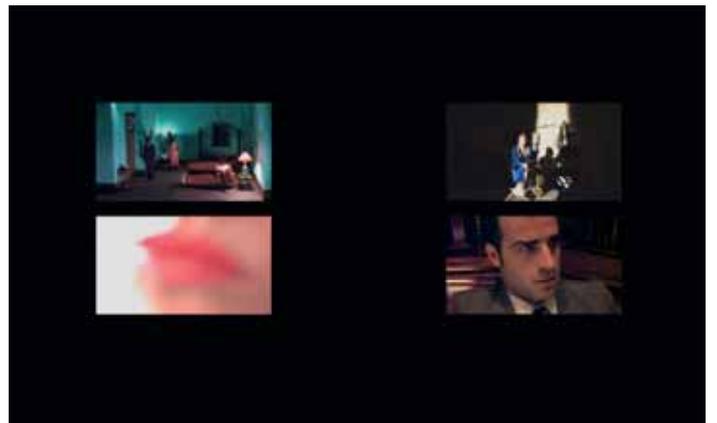
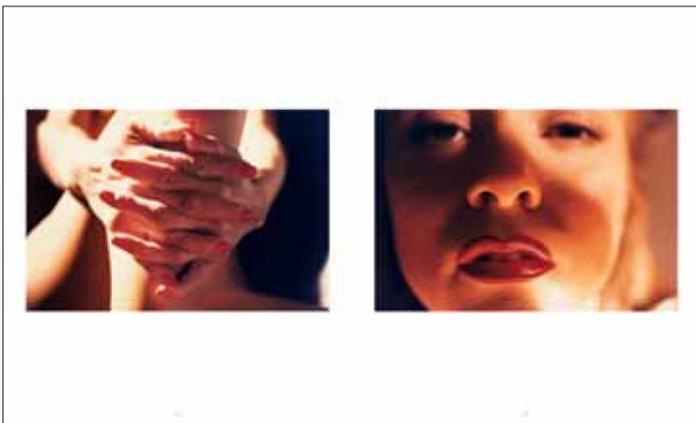
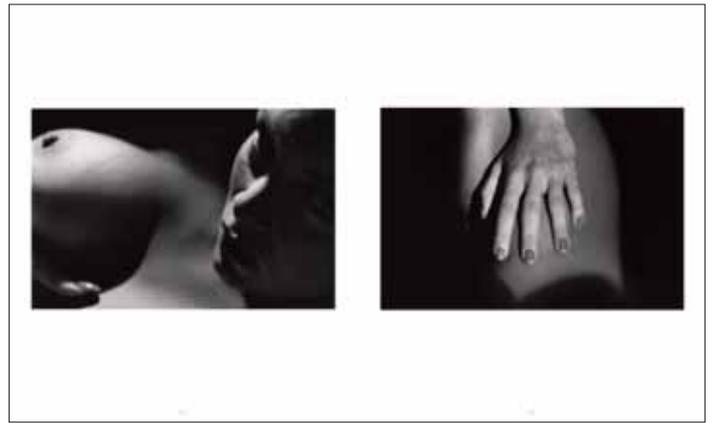
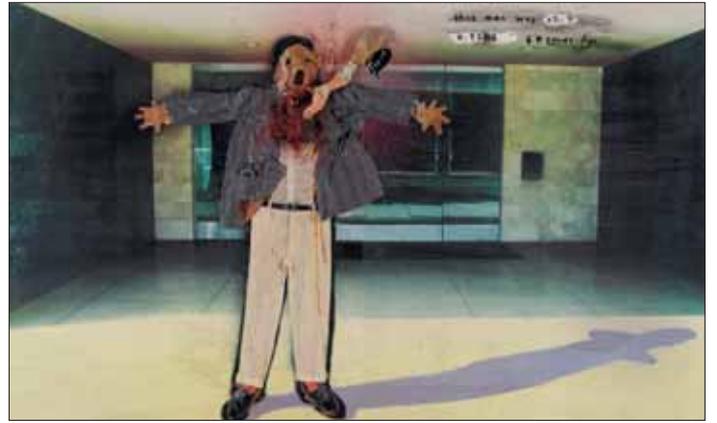
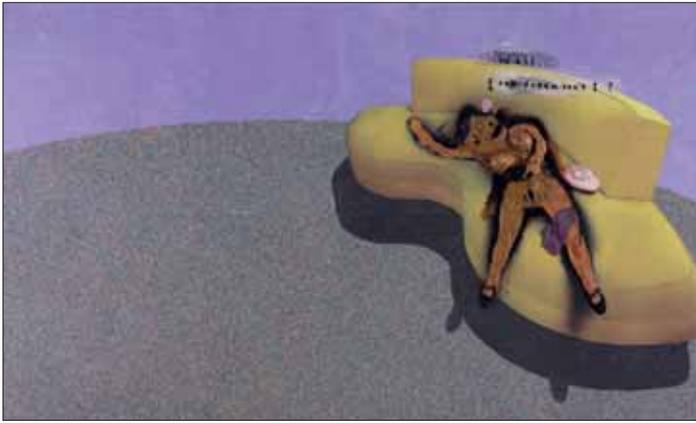
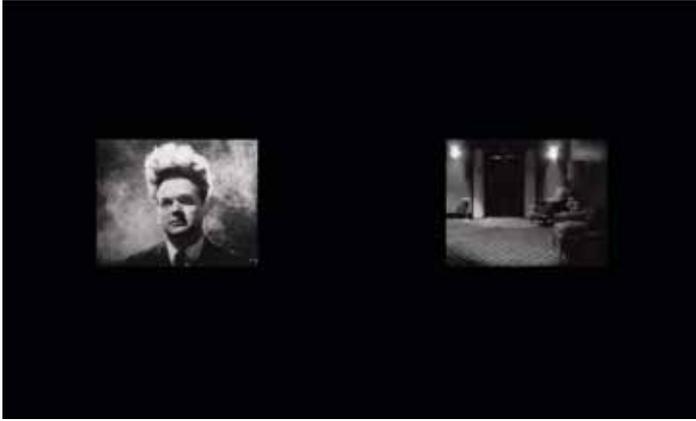
Thames & Hudson, London/New York

Hardback, English, 23 x 28 cm, 452 pages, double CD

305 color reproductions, 95 black and white reproductions

Price: 50€/£34.95/\$70





Special Editions

David Lynch *Snowmen*

This little book presents 8 never-before-seen black and white photographs taken in Boise, Idaho at the beginning of the 1990s, and is accompanied by a handwritten text by David Lynch.

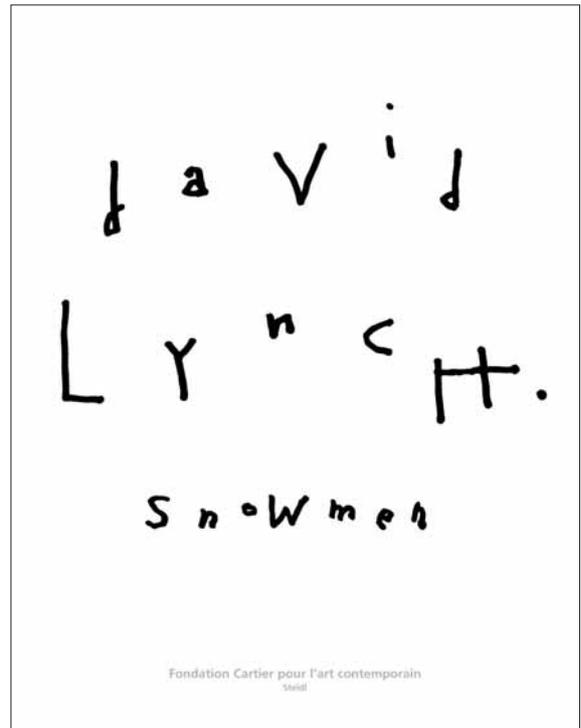
David Lynch
Snowmen

Fondation Cartier pour l'art contemporain, Paris
Steidl, Göttingen

Hardback, English, 14 x 18 cm, 20 pages

8 black and white reproductions

Price: 15€



Espresso Kit by David Lynch

Coffee cup, saucer, and spoon made from Limoges porcelain
Multiple produced from an original model created by David Lynch
Limited edition of 100 numbered kits
Co-edited by the Fondation Cartier pour l'art contemporain,
Paris and CRAFT – Centre de recherche sur les arts du feu
et de la terre, Limoges



The Air is on Fire shirts

Two shirts were created in collaboration with *agnès b.*
especially for the David Lynch exhibition, *The Air is on Fire*.
They are sold exclusively at the Fondation Cartier pour l'art
contemporain Bookshop.

Long sleeved black or white shirts

Female (sizes 1, 2, 3)

Male (sizes 1, 2, 3)

International program

Raymond Depardon in Berlin

February 11—April 1, 2007

As part of its international exhibition program, the Fondation Cartier pour l'art contemporain presents *Villes/Cities/Städte*, a Raymond Depardon exhibition, in conjunction with the Museum für Fotografie in Berlin. Featuring 12 films and over 300 photographs shot in 12 cities around the world, this solo exhibition by one of today's greatest filmmakers and photographers opened during the Berlinale 2007, a major venue for international film.

In response to a commission by the Fondation Cartier pour l'art contemporain, Raymond Depardon shot seven short films* in 2004 and another five films in 2006 in the cities of Rio de Janeiro, Shanghai, Tokyo, Berlin, Moscow, Addis Ababa, Cairo, Buenos Aires, New York, Johannesburg, Dubai, and Paris. Raymond Depardon chose to spend no more than three days in each city, taking along a vertical camera, an Aaton camera, and ten 5-minute spools of Kodak A-Minima film.

For Raymond Depardon, the exhibition *Villes/Cities/Städte* is a way of experimenting with cinema in an exhibition setting, of developing an exchange between the moving image and photography. Presenting this exhibition in Berlin, a major center of contemporary art, gives the Fondation Cartier pour l'art contemporain an opportunity to introduce a broad public to one of France's greatest photographers and filmmakers, to his way of looking at the world.

**MUSEUM FÜR
FOTOGRAFIE** S M
B Kunstbibliothek
Staatliche Museen
zu Berlin

Museum für Fotografie, Jebenstrasse 2, 10623 Berlin

tel + 49 (0)30 266 2188 fax +49 (0)30 266 3255

www.smb.spk-berlin.de

*Originally presented at the Fondation Cartier in Paris from November 13, 2004 to February 27, 2005 in the Raymond Depardon exhibition *7 x 3, An Exhibition of Films*

Upcoming exhibition

Rock'n'Roll 39-59

June 22—October 28, 2007

The Fondation Cartier pour l'art contemporain is pleased to present *Rock'n'Roll 39-59*, an exhibition devoted to the genesis, evolution, and history of rock'n'roll in the United States between 1939 and 1959. A musical and social phenomenon rooted in various musical styles of the 1940s, predominantly rhythm & blues, rock'n'roll reached its apogee with Elvis Presley and began to spread beyond the frontiers of the United States in 1956. However, signs of decline were already apparent by the end of the decade: Elvis joined the army, Jerry Lee Lewis mired in disgrace, Chuck Berry got in trouble with the law, Little Richard turned to religion, and Buddy Holly died in a plane crash. Meanwhile, mediocre, manufactured imitations of the original rockers were beginning to flood the market.

In the years following World War II, rock'n'roll reflected the dynamism of a society emerging from the constraints of racial segregation. From the uninhibited vocals of Little Richard to the exhilarating energy of Jerry Lee Lewis, from the raw sensuality of Elvis Presley to the witty lyrics of Chuck Berry, the world has never quite been the same again after the birth of this new musical genre.

This exhibition takes us on an aural and visual journey into the heart of this transgressive musical phenomenon. It is divided into two parts: the first captures the hedonism and incredible surge of freedom that were at the heart of the rock'n'roll explosion in the mid-1950s, while the second historical sequence takes us back to its origins and guides us through the history of its key figures, places, and events.

With its priceless period posters, records, and rare objects, its photographs, films and, of course, music and sounds, this exhibition invites visitors to relive a key cultural phenomenon in American history, one that mirrored and drove a major social transformation whose heritage remains vibrantly alive today.

PRACTICAL INFORMATION

The Fondation Cartier pour l'art contemporain is open every day, except Monday, from 12 p.m. to 8 p.m.

Admission: 6.50€, reduced rate*: 4.50€

Priority admission tickets are available at all Fnac ticket booths and on fnac.com

Circle of Friends annual pass: 38€**

Nomadic Nights

Information and reservations (imperative), every day, except Monday, from 12 p.m. to 8 p.m.: tel +33 (0)1 42 18 56 72

Admission: 6.50€, reduced rate*: 4.50€

Educational Activities

Lecture series

Activities for children

Guided tours and group visits

Information and reservations: tel +33 (0)1 42 18 56 67

For our complete agenda, please visit fondation.cartier.com ("What's on" section)

Access

261, boulevard Raspail 75014 Paris

tel +33 (0)1 42 18 56 50

fax +33 (0)1 42 18 56 52

métro Raspail or Denfert-Rochereau

Bus 38, 68, 88, 91

RER B: Denfert-Rochereau

fondation.cartier.com

*students, individuals under 25, carte Senior, Amis des Musées, unemployed.

Free admission: Circle of Friends members, individuals under 10, ICOM

**students/seniors rate: 25€, duo rate: 58€