
79 Walker Street
New York NY 10013
T_ 212 219 04 73
F_ 212 219 05 11
artingeneral.org



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Josh Melnick Suspends Time on the NYC Subway

Contact

Claire Sexton
212.219.0473 x31
press@artingeneral.org



The 8 Train

May 29-July 29, 2009

Josh Melnick

Opening reception Friday, May 29, 2009 6-8 pm

Art in General presents *The 8 Train*, an exhibition by Los Angeles-based artist Josh Melnick, on view in the 6th floor gallery from May 29 - July 18, 2009.

In *The 8 Train*, Melnick examines portraiture as a means of reorienting our awareness of human relationships. Through an ever-shifting combination of meditative video portraits, viewers are invited to enter the intimate worlds of strangers—each of whom could be any one of us.

Retrofitting a Vision Research Camera with cinema lenses and battery power to work in the field, Melnick has developed a hand held, close-range technique to shoot these portraits. Set against the familiar backdrop of the New York City subway, *The 8 Train* not only provides unusual access to the textures and narratives of others, but also directs attention toward the process of perception itself. These suspended, visually seductive black-and-white video studies can simultaneously lull the viewer while challenging their customary modes of seeing. Existing in a format that lies between still photography and cinema, the portraits engender a contemplative state where boundaries between the self and the recorded other seemingly dissipate.

The Vision Research Camera – customarily employed for scientific studies in which high-speed motion analysis is required – captures less than two seconds of real time, yet allows the footage to be extended to several minutes on screen. Projected within the gallery space, the extensive collection of slow-motion portraits are randomly played across four screens so that each viewer's experience of *The 8 Train* is unique.

Image: Josh Melnick, *The 8 Train*, 2008-09

Melnick's mastery of the technical aspects of digital fabrication results in a refined aesthetic for the multi-channel video installation that is equally painterly, sculptural, and filmic.

Josh Melnick is a graduate of Yale University. Formally trained in sculpture, Melnick began his career in film editing and directing. His work has been featured in film festivals around the world; he has twice taken part in RES, and twice taken part at Cannes. His music videos have garnered multiple MVPA and MTV nominations. In 2008, Melnick was selected for the Art in General New Commissions Program; in 2009, he received the ARC Grant from the Durfee foundation. This is his first solo exhibition.

About Art in General

Founded in 1981 in Lower Manhattan, Art in General is a nonprofit organization that assists artists with the production and presentation of new work. It changes in response to the needs of artists and engages the public with their work. In 27 years the organization has emerged as one of New York City's leading nonprofits devoted to supporting and stimulating the creation of contemporary art, providing an environment in which artists may exhibit unconventional work and exchange ideas with their peers.

Art in General is located at 79 Walker Street, NYC, one block South of Canal Street between Lafayette and Broadway.
Subway directions: take the 6, A-C-E, N-Q-R-W, or J-M-Z subway to Canal Street.
Gallery hours: Tuesday-Saturday 12-6 pm.

Support

The 8 Train is part of Art in General's New Commissions Program, which is made possible by The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts; The National Endowment for the Arts; the Jerome Foundation; and Agnes Gund and Daniel Shapiro.

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