

Time Out

London

MAY 28 – JUNE 3 2009 £2.99 No.2023

Reviews

Karen Russo

★★★★

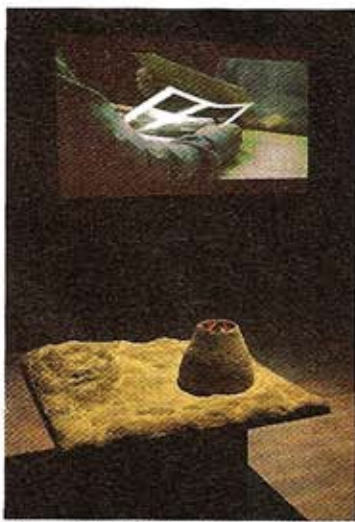
Paradise Row

Bethnal Green to Hackney

There is a moment in Karen Russo's video, 'Target: 090913977', when her subject realises things are not what they seem. 'Oh,' he pronounces calmly. He has just been handed a photo of a crater on the dark side of the moon, the hitherto unknown 'target' that he has been psychically tuning into and describing. The man is a remote viewer, one of a group of trained telepaths that the CIA once used to gain knowledge of secret locations with nothing more than a set of coordinates and some ESP. Initially intriguingly accurate, he envisions the lunar orb as a place of dust, desert and space, before making a tantalising digression: rather than astronauts he sees pyramids and a jackal-like idol being worshipped. Russo stages this wild proposition against a dark backdrop like TV's 'Mastermind' quiz, but this simple setting also suggests the psychic term 'black box': a catch-all for anything beyond our understanding.

All sorts of queries about perception, creativity and the subconscious ping back and forth inside Russo's void, including this problem of how we bracket what cannot be explained. The truth is most definitely not out there, but Russo cleverly exposes an alternative truth, glimpsed in the hidden recesses of the mind. While remote viewers were trained by the US government, a further work documents the activity of a more unruly social deviant: William Lyttle aka the Mole Man. This Hackney local has been compulsively digging functionless tunnels under his house for four decades, a process likened by Russo to that of making art. Lyttle, it turns out, was too unstable to work with and the remaining photos are unprepossessing, showing a dank excavation punctuated by humdrum junk. It's a mystery tale that, like the tunnels, ends abruptly.

Sleye Sherwin



'Target: 0909139779 Crater on Moon'

Critics' choice Galleries

Diane Arbus

Timothy Taylor, Mayfair to Sloane Square
Awkwards and eccentrics as shot by one of photography's most iconic, tragic figures (see *Exhibition of the week*).

Karen Russo

Paradise Row, Bethnal Green to Hackney
Russo's remote viewers tune in and psych out (see *Reviews*).

Marianne Vitale

Ibid Projects, Bethnal Green to Hackney
Animated bronze beasts by this New York sculptor (see *Reviews*).

David Claerbout

Hauser & Wirth, Mayfair to Sloane Square
Epic films by video's marathon man.

The Sculpture Show

Biscuit Factory, Southbank to Deptford
An unholy mess upstairs and a dingy crawl space downstairs, but a great inhalation of sculpture nonetheless. Ends on Sunday.