

4 BÂTIMENTS, FACE À LA MER (4 BUILDINGS, FACING THE SEA)

In June 2011, the operator of the Fukushima nuclear plant set a livecam on site. Displaying a fake transparency, this propaganda tool shows the unique images of an endless disaster.

A single, continuous, static shot reveals a lethal landscape exuding an invisible toxicity and a strange, paradoxical beauty. Earthquakes, shrouding mists, smoke coming out of the reactors, ravens flying across the sky, radioactive rains... those images of a geographical landscape wiped off the map follow on from each other outside the human timeline.

Yet, a defiant gesture made by an anonymous liquidator towards the ocular device takes us back from this forbidden outerworld.

47 mn – HD – 16/9 – colour – stereo – France – 2012 – sound, editing, filmmaking : Philippe Rouy
language : japanese with english subtitles – screening support : Blu Ray disc (HD, 16/9)

Festival : FID, international competition, Marseille 2012 – Special mention

« The images of the official webcam installed by Tepco (the operator of the Fukushima nuclear plant) are interesting because of all the paradoxes they encompass. They are used for the communication of a firm, yet they give direct access to an off-limits outerworld, where an irreversible process of uncivilisation is underway. They scrutinize a space devastated by some literally invisible evil – namely radioactivity. Also, it illustrates the beauties of nature in a deadly environment. These paradoxes of the visible are what first prompted the idea of making a film. But soon, the length of images became a central issue of the project. How can you make a film out of a single still long-shot that could last up to forty years (the predicted duration of the nuclear plant dismantling)? What can be made of this inexhaustible gaze ? When should it be interrupted ? I stopped collecting collecting images when it started snowing on the site, after eight months of non stop recording. When I started logging footage, I realized that the unusual length of images opened a door onto the inconceivable temporalities induced by nuclear power and radioactivity. Then I tried to dig through all the layers of time that a simple propaganda webcam could hold. »

Philippe Rouy, interview in Daily FID, 2012

« It has the beauty of a bottle at sea saved from sinking by sheer luck. Its images are as strange as the messages that drift bottles contain : distant archives sent from another world. »

Antoine Thirion, *Independencia*

« By the sheer power of editing, Rouy turns the images of this mechanical eye filming day and night, come rain, come wind, into sickly beautiful spectral sequences. »

Nicolas Feodoroff, *FID Marseille catalogue*, 2012

Philippe Rouy lives and works in Paris (France).

Filmography : 4 bâtiments, face à la mer, 2012 – 1862, 2011 – La Voûte, 2010 – Cheval blême, 2009 – Hypn, 2009 – Au fur que tu perdras la vue, 2008 – Survisions, 2008 – Passe] [port, 2007 – Etán, 2004 – Beyrouth, littoral, 2002

Festivals (selection)

FID Marseille (FR) – Hors Pistes, Paris (FR) – IFFR, Rotterdam (NL) – EXIS, Séoul (COR) – ISF, Oberhausen (ALL) – L'Alternativa, Barcelone (ESP) – Athens Video Art Festival, Athens (GRE) – Côté Court, Pantin (FR) – Filmwinter, Stuttgart (GER) – Curtas, Vila do Conde (POR) – FIFA, Montréal (CAN) – etc.

Awards

Special Mention, International competition / FID Marseille (FR), 2012 – Best film award / Filmwinter Festival – Stuttgart (GER), 2010 – Special mention / Vallecas Puerta del cine – Madrid (ES), 2010 – Special mention / Alternative Film Festival – Belgrade (SER), 2009