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Field Work Dave Lewis

17 April - 9 June 2010



Dave Lewis is a photographer and film maker interested in identity and the ways in which people feel they belong to a particular place. *Field Work* is a new body of work generated through an innovative combination of the role of the artist as a 'stranger', and that of the anthropologist as someone concerned with understanding cultural identity. In the process of gathering first-hand evidence in two particular locations - Newtown in mid Wales and Sway in the New Forest in Hampshire - the artist draws parallels between these two roles, suggesting how they pursue similar methods of investigation and share some common aims. Newtown and Sway are linked through this process of interviewing local residents and documenting events such as festivals and carnivals. At the same time there is a more reflexive moment in which the 'stranger' mediates on the land he sees but does not fully understand it.

The resulting work examines the role of the individual within society, how boundaries with outsiders are perceived, and how both of these relate to how people identify themselves with a particular place and cultural identity. The exhibition as a whole seeks to problematise issues around race, environment and identity weaving these themes into complex narratives that question the viewer's own attitude and understanding of what it is to belong.

For his exhibition at Oriel Davies, the artist will present a series of large-scale landscape photographs taken on the outskirts of Newtown and Sway, as well as video work which presents two filmed 'journeys' following the 'stranger' as he conducts his research.

Dave Lewis gained a BA (Hons) in Film and Photographic Arts from the Polytechnic of Central London (now University of Westminster). He has recently finished as a Visiting Research Fellow at Goldsmiths University of London, Department of Anthropology.

Recent exhibitions and screenings include: Photo-ID, Norwich Forum, 2009; 'Hybridity', Sainsbury Centre for Visual Arts, 2008; 'Anywhere but Here', Southwark Gallery, 2008; AfterShock: Conflict, Violence and Resolution in Contemporary Art, SCVA 2007.

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Editors Notes:

1. Dave Lewis: Field Work is a co-commission by Autograph ABP, ArtSway, and Oriel Davies Gallery.
2. The exhibition preview will take place on Saturday 17 April 2010
3. 12 May 2010. 12.30pm free. Lunchtime tour of the exhibition with Alex Boyd, Curator
3. Oriel Davies is an independent public art gallery based in mid Wales. The Gallery organises and tours innovative exhibition featuring artists from Wales, other parts of the UK and internationally, and provides an extensive art education programme. Oriel Davies is a Registered Charity no: 1034890 and is revenue funded by the Arts Council of Wales and Powys County Council.
4. In 2008, Oriel Davies received an Arts Council of Wales Beacon Company Award 2008-10 for excellence and innovation.
5. Further information and press images: please contact Alex Boyd, Curator alex@oriel Davies.org tel 01686 625041

