

## ***French Edges***

Looking towards the future, the videos in *French Edges* do not attempt to define national identity. Instead, they boldly skirt the uncharted social topologies of complex cultural landscapes in France and around the world. Born in or based in France, these artists' decentralizing gestures trace the increasingly fluid movements of bodies in international space, ruminating on cultural sensibilities far more nuanced than the clear-cut divides of border politics.

Curated by Liz Munsell

***ACHRONE***, 2011 (12 min)

Cécile Hartmann

Hartmann creates works between contemporary art and cinema. Her aesthetic and political concerns are often reflected through minimalist compositions and documentary premises. Filmed in 2008 during the economic collapse, *Achrone* documents construction sites in Dubai to echo a paradoxical state of simultaneous growth and deterioration. According to the artist, the French adjective 'achrone' - linked to 'achronology' - stems "from physics and from medicine, [and] indicates a region [in] which it is impossible to observe a precise temporality." *Achrone* explores the constantly mutating exchange systems of our global economy.

***LABYRINTH***, 2011 (3:15 min)

Yi Zhou

Zhou created this video from September 2010 to June 2011 and first showed it at the 54th Venice Biennale in 2011. For him, "*Labyrinth* is about the new apocalypse. All the war and peace imagery we've seen on the net, newspapers, Hollywood movies." The work was made at a time when the artist traveled back and forth between eastern and western territories - an experience that informs the cross cultural subworlds of his animations.

***LE TERRIER (THE BURROW)***, 2011 (6 min)

Elsa Fauconnet

Fauconnet sets the wanderings of two middle-aged characters in an incomplete and abandoned Parisian suburb. In her words, the video was "freely inspired by the unfinished short story of Kafka that tells the story of someone going insane after having obsessively dug his hole, and who persuades himself that he's threatened by the arrival of someone else." In turn, the story serves as a metaphor for the patterns of making one's home in the instable economic and social climates of Paris' marginalized suburbs.

***J'ACCUSE!***, 2011 (1 min)

***IMPOSTURE***, 2011 (1:30 min)

***BEAUTIFUL AGONY***, 2011 (1:40 min)

***HOME***, 2012 (2:15 min)

***THE FROG AND THE SCORPION***, 2012 (2:30 min)

Moussa Sarr

Sarr was born in Ajaccio, the capital of France's island of Corsica. By filming his performances in single, static-shot sequences, he creates confrontational commentaries on tense societal relations. Highlighting social and political critique, Sarr's work is never without an abrasive irony. Humor, violence and derision are key features in his work, which focuses on his immediate surroundings and relationships.

***SIC***, 2009 (15 min)

Eric Baudelaire

Baudelaire often uses photography to deconstruct staged reality. In *SIC*, he opts for the moving image as a means to depict the censorship of graphic material in present-day and historical Japan. Since the early 1900s a series of penal codes and court cases upheld bans on "obscene" literature and visual media. Baudelaire's "chronology of events" notes, "In a legal and semantic grey area that remains to this day, graphic materials imported into Japan are subject to subjective self-censorship: explicit anatomical representation is replaced with 'bokashi,' a fogging, blurring or scratching of male and female genitalia in films and publication."

**INACURRENIES**, 2011 (11 min)

Lili Reynaud-Dewar

Reynaud-Dewar parodies the touristic practice of being “cultured” by consuming an “othered” identity via seemingly traditional yet trite goods. Two white women dressed in western suits made of African cloth coldly exchange souvenirs wrapped in excessive packaging. These flight attendant-like characters’ voyeuristic stances are mirrored by the camera, which frames them as simultaneous perpetrators of a superficial internationalism and the objects of the gaze themselves.

**OR ANYTHING AT ALL EXCEPT THE DARK PAVEMENT**, 2011 (5:30 min)

Théodora Barat

Barat filmed a single night shot along the Franco-Belgian border in 16mm film and later transferred it to video. The highly formal, abstract outlines of buildings, coupled with the vertical camera movement, sketches out an expansive border economy immersed in darkness. While leaving room for reflection on geopolitical divides, for Barat this work is also infused with elements of personal: “Little by little the actions take over, isolated details from films, memories of journeys.”

**EXERCISE IN FASCINATION IN THE MIDDLE OF A CROWD**, 2011 (16 min)

Valérie Mréjen

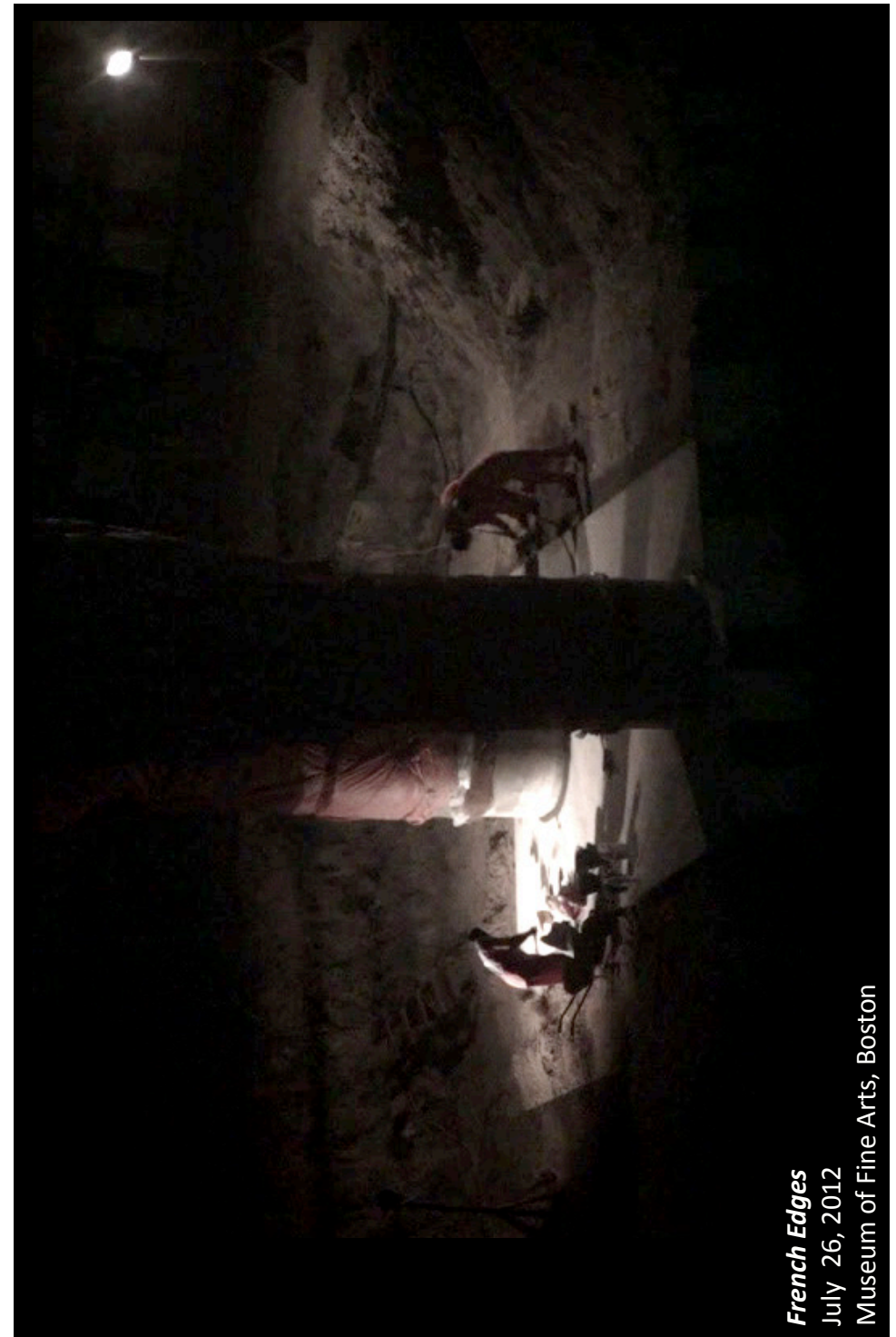
Whether directing short films, penning novels or shooting documentaries, Valérie Mréjen focuses on the banal intricacies of language, consistently mixing anecdotes with incommunicability and non-relationships. *Exercise* focuses on the artists’ examination of Shibuya, a district in Tokyo. Informed by a marked distance, for her the work “a choreographed portrait of a neighborhood and its faces.”

*Special thanks to Blair Dowd, Department of Contemporary Art Intern, for her indispensable assistance and input on French Edges.*

*The Boston French Film Festival is co-presented with the Cultural Services Office of the French Consulate in Boston. Co-sponsored by Edenred, Veolia Energy, Biomérieux, and TV-5Monde. Additional support provided by the French Cultural Center and the French American Chamber of Commerce New England.*

*Coordinated by Carter Long, Katharine Stone White Curator of Film and Video, Kristen Lauerman, and Dylan Leavitt. Anne Miller and Eric Jausseran assisted the selection process. French Edges was curated by Liz Munsell. Special thanks to MFA Projectionist/Media Technical Specialist Alec Tisdale and Film intern Savannah Gillespie.*

*Cover: Still from Cécile Hartmann’s Achrone.*



**French Edges**  
July 26, 2012  
Museum of Fine Arts, Boston