

Birch Forest Project

Part II *STIRRINGS STILL*

Curated by Juan Puentes

Curatorial Collaborators Andrea Monti (*Stirrings Still* Video Program), Robin Wallis Atkinson, Isaac Aden

Artists: The Blue Noses, **Stefano Cagol**, Carlos Irijalba, Tania Candiani, Todd Knopke, Ferran Martin, Alfredo Martinez, Mary Mattingly, Jonas Mekas, David Opdyke, Osmo Rauhala, Carl Skelton, Michael Snow, Roi Vaara, among others.

August 19 – September 7, 2010

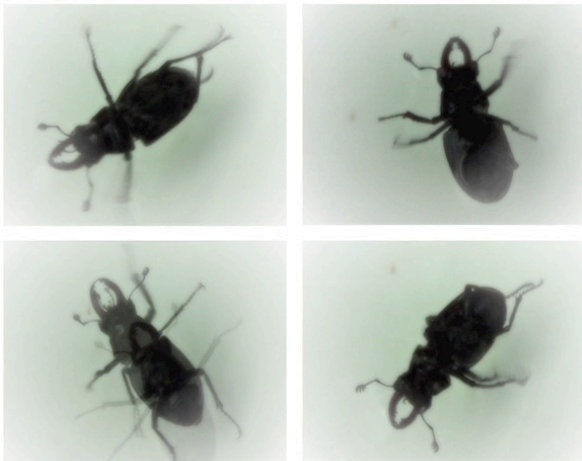
Opening reception August 19, 6-9 pm

The phrases Samuel Beckett pens in his final piece (*Stirrings Still*, 1986-9) embody a truly post-modern postulate that still addresses us in a tense present, urging us to consider ‘gathering’ together. In a song of farewell to fatigued elitist separations of art and real experience, the full text situates us in a “strange place seeking the way out,” urging return to more essential, common origins.

During the dot-com boom in the not-so-distant '90s, when the prosperous art scene mingled with the design and entertainment industries, artists of all sorts easily found solicitous admirers, fans, and collectors. Now, contemporary art presents as dislocated, colorful and entertaining commodities mediated by remunerated arts professionals into a spectacle gracing blogs, reality television, and the pages of glossy old media. This exhibition simply ponders the question of whether we have arrived—or not—at a moment in time where we need to drop our “heads on hands”—a recurring phrase in *Stirrings Still*— to thoroughly question the accrued social and cultural value of our incessant production. There is an imperative need for provocative expression in a Now stunned by swift communication, mesmerizing new artificial intelligence discoveries and unending applications extending to the arts.

Stefano Cagol will be part of *Stirrings Still* the video installation *REM* (2003). It’s an insect laying on its back and continuously moving without being able to change its situation.

The sudden reference is – of course – to Kafka. But he inserts steps further. It’s not a disgusting beetle, but an elegant stag-beetle (*cervo volante* in Italian and *ciervo volante* in Spanish) and at – one point – it becomes double, coming out from its body: this is Beckett! The one – and then its double – is continuously flaying, or swimming or moving in a milkich undefined white. Without solution, but the end. This idea of end, of an end as resolution more than destruction, is Beckett! This idea of end as oxymoron!



Stefano Cagol, *REM*, 2003, video DVD, 260 sec. Looped. Courtesy of the artist and Priska C. Juschka Fine Art, New York



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For more information visit: <http://www.whiteboxny.org/projectbirchforest/>

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White Box 329 Broome Street, New York. Summer Hours: Wednesday –Sunday 12 noon to 6 pm

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