

CONNER CONTEMPORARY ART

Bradley McCallum & Jacqueline Tarry : *Cut*
new video and photography

June 23 – July 29, 2006

Conner Contemporary Art is pleased to present *Cut*, a compelling new collaboration by New York-based performative video artists Bradley McCallum & Jacqueline Tarry. Comprising an evocative video montage of the couple as they shear each other's heads with a straight razor, *Cut* is at once a self-portrait of the artists and a troubling examination of issues of partnership, dominance, submission, intimacy and control.

Slow, careful dissolves and an organic movement between scenes imbues *Cut* with a sensuality that initially suggests a privileged glimpse into the relationship between McCallum & Tarry, who are both artistic collaborators and husband and wife. Yet the video's non-linear narrative and its soundtrack—which is limited to the grating sound of the razor as it is sawed back and forth through clumps of hair and the empty echo of the warehouse in which the couple sits—offsets tender intimacy with a tangible psycho-sexual tension. As individual scenes fade in and out, a complex and disturbing array of emotions emerges: fear, tenderness, resignation, impatience, anger, vulnerability, triumph, even disgust all come into play. The sensuality and intimacy of the act becomes tinged with the threat of violence, which is heightened by the implement the cutter wields. Although both artists submit willingly to the cutting, the act clearly means something very different to them as individuals.

Inspired in part by World War II-era news photographs of French collaborators whose heads were shorn as part of their punishment, McCallum & Tarry decided to cut each other's hair as a means of exploring the dynamics of their collaboration with one another. Raw and unflinching, *Cut* reveals the manifold emotions unleashed by their decision and in doing so, tracks the equanimity of their partnership. Ultimately the shearing becomes a potent metaphor for the dynamics that shape McCallum and Tarry's personal and professional relationship, revealing the complexity and instability of their collaboration. A brave act of self-revelation, *Cut* unselfconsciously examines the constant shifts in the delicate balance of power between the two.

Six still photographs by McCallum & Tarry and an illustrated catalog with a short story by Brian Keith Jackson accompany the exhibition.

Known for powerful videos and photographs that explore issues of race, gender and class, McCallum & Tarry have recently shown their work in the Netherlands, China, Japan, Seattle, New York and Washington, DC. The artists live and work in New York City and are represented by Conner Contemporary Art.

There will be an opening night reception at Conner Contemporary Art on Friday, June 23rd from 6-8pm. The artists will be in attendance.

The gallery is also pleased to announce the third in a series of artist's talks: *Discuss*. Going beyond the typical artist's talk format, these events will pair two gallery artists in conversation about the current gallery exhibition and their modes of practice.

Saturday, June 24th @ 2pm, McCallum & Tarry and Mary Coble will discuss social viewpoint in art. Attendance is limited: however, a podcast of each conversation will be available for download at: <http://www.itunes.com>

Conner Contemporary Art is located in Dupont Circle at 1730 Connecticut Ave., NW, 2nd Floor, Washington, DC 20009. Hours: Tuesday to Saturday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and by appointment. For further information, contact Leigh Conner at 202.588.8750 or via e-mail at info@connercontemporary.com.