

Thursday, July 2, 2009

Khaled Sabsabi - Integration, assimilation and a fair go for all

After migrating to Australia from Lebanon in the 1970s, Khaled Sabsabi has worked in music production, audio-visual design and the visual arts for the past 16 years. This exhibition incorporates three video installations over both floors of Gallery 4A.

Australians, 2006/2009, on the ground floor is multi-channel video installation and is viewable 24 hours a day through the street window. The pastiche of interchanging face parts: eyes; noses; mouths, meticulously oscillates over 12 monitors to show bold portraits of multiplicity and multiculturalism.

On the upper level industrial clanging and mysterious sounds permeate and draw you in to the installation. At first the shards of stringy-bark strewn as a landscape prevented me from getting close to view the main wall. The half light created by the red projection of a small pool or well in a cycle of spilling and filling in the centre of the floor also made it difficult to navigate the installation. After a few moments with eyes adjusting to the landscape, the oversized black lettering on the 8 metre black walls, Fuck off We're Full hit me with confronting brevity.

I love the way Sabsabi says so much about contact, traditional ownership, migration, occupation, policy and politics in this single work.

The third installation continues to bridge the creative and the political by reconfiguring another landscape. Left-Centre-Right presents footage taken of a thunder storm over Newcastle in 2007, where the lightning is abstracted and fragmented to extent you are left wondering whether the phenomena is in fact footage from a man-made warzone rather than nature unleashed.

I left the exhibition pondering the title as much of a question as a statement.

Gallery 4A - Asia-Australia Arts Centre
13 June - 25 July 2009
Tuesday - Saturday 11am-6pm

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www.4a.com.au

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http://wherforartnow.blogspot.com/2009_07_01_archive.html