



Robert Hengeveld  
*Natural Revision*

Roman Signer  
*Cinema*

25 March–30 April 2011  
Opening: Friday 25 March, 7 PM









Robert Hengeveld, *Installation Study, Natural Revision*, 2010. Synthetic material and objects.

In *Natural Revision*, with his aesthetic shifts from realism, and proffering of maudlin, pre-fab palimpsests of the natural, Hengeveld has redrawn the borders of the hole that hold the puddle, and in so doing, proposes an equitable relationship based more on wonder, cohabitation and the aspirational. This is a move from literal representation to the littoral—the inhabitation of a new borderline where lines are not clear and cannot necessarily be known, and thereby controlled.

In his short essay “Halos,” philosopher Giorgio Agamben reiterates Walter Benjamin’s version of an ancient parable in which “the world to come”—the messianic afterlife—is exactly as we know it here, but with the most minute of changes. These minor shifts are present not (only) in “real circumstances, in the sense that the nose of the blessed one will become a little shorter,”<sup>10</sup> but (also) in a shimmer of change to their sense and their limits: “It does not take place in things, but at their periphery, in the space of ease between every thing and itself.”<sup>11</sup> It is in this littoral space that Agamben wedges Saint Thomas’s thoughts on the halo, the modification to perfection, the augmentation of the beatified, as the random heightening that indicates the blurring of boundaries and borders of being.<sup>12</sup>

In Hengeveld’s *Natural Revision*, a fake rock seemingly hovers above the ground, slowly rotating and brightly underlit, casting its glow onto the surrounding floor. This is a punctus and an aesthetic counterpoint to other elements in the installation. With its actual halo it makes concrete the proposition here: the borders are blurred, we are implicit in this unfinished, gestural microcosm, and these unclear edges are indications of not only the idea of heightened being but our relationship with it.

—Katie Bethune-Leamen

#### Notes

1 Giorgio Agamben, “Halos,” *The Coming Community*, trans. Michael Hardt (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1993), 53.

2 Jorge Luis Borges, “The Aleph,” *The Aleph and Other Stories, 1933–1969*, trans. Andrew Hurley (New York: Penguin, 2004), 1-3.

3 *Ibid.*, 2.

4 *Ibid.*

5 This phrase is the title of English satirist Douglas Adams’s 1982 novel *Life, the Universe and Everything* (London: Pan Books, 1982).

6 Jorge Luis Borges, “The Aleph,” *The Aleph and Other Stories, 1933–1969*, trans. Andrew Hurley (New York: Penguin, 2004), 3.

7 Jorge Luis Borges, “Partial Magic in the Quixote,” *Labyrinths: Selected Stories & Other Writings* (New York: New Directions Publishing, 1962).

8 Scottish writer Thomas Carlyle, “Sartor Resartus” (1833) as quoted in Jorge Luis Borges, “Partial Magic in the Quixote,” *Labyrinths: Selected Stories & Other Writings* (New York: New Directions Publishing, 1962), 196.

9 Douglas Adams, “Parrots, the Universe and Everything,” University of California, Santa Barbara. Lecture April 5, 2001. <[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=\\_ZG8HBUJigc&feature=related](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_ZG8HBUJigc&feature=related)>.

10 Giorgio Agamben, “Halos,” *The Coming Community*, trans. Michael Hardt (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1993), 53.

11 *Ibid.*

12 Agamben also describes the halo as an indicator of the “transfiguration of the commodity into enchanted object” as a (Marxist) sign of the Industrial Revolution’s presentation of the commodity fetish. See Giorgio Agamben, “The Universal Exposition,” *Stanzas: Word and Phantasm in Western Culture*, trans. Ronald L. Martinez (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1993), 38.



## OPENING RECEPTION

Friday 25 March 2011, 7 PM

## BIOS

**Robert Hengeveld** is an installation and multi-media artist whose work explores the boundaries between reality and fiction, and where we find ourselves within that relationship. He is currently living and working in Toronto, Canada. He completed his MFA at the University of Victoria in 2005 and received an AOCAD from the Ontario College of Art and Design. Current and upcoming exhibitions include *Kentucky Perfect* at Galerie Sans Nom (Moncton); *Wile Wild* at the MacLaren Art Centre, (Barrie); *Witness* at the Harbourfront Centre (Toronto), Latitude 53 (Edmonton) and Hallwalls Center for Contemporary Art (Buffalo).

**Roman Signer** was born in Appenzell, Switzerland in 1938. He studied at the Schule für Gestaltung in Zurich and Lucerne from 1966-1971, and the Academy of Fine Arts in Warsaw, Poland from 1971-1972. His works have been shown in museums and galleries worldwide, as well as the Venice Biennale (1976 and 1999), Documenta 8 (1987) and Skulptur Projekte Münster (1997). He is the subject of numerous books, monographs and catalogues, the recipient of many awards, and in 2008 was a finalist for the prestigious Hugo Boss Prize. In 1996, he collaborated with director Peter Liechi on the film *Signers Koffer (Signer's Suitcase)*, which documents a series of his action sculptures and interviews with people he encounters during his travels performing the work.

**Kathryn MacKay** is a visual artist, film curator and projectionist. She is the programmer at the Images Festival, a co-founder and programmer of the screening series Early Monthly Segments, and has curated programs for the Cinematheque Ontario's Free Screen and Independents series. She has had solo exhibitions of her paintings at the Engine Gallery, the Fountain Gallery and at the Arts and Letters Club Toronto.

**Katie Bethune-Leamen** is an artist who also writes. She holds a MFA from the University of Guelph. Her recent solo shows include *Older, Sadder, And All In White This Time* at Latham Gallery (Stouffville) and *Dazzle Shizzle* at MKG127 (Toronto). Recent group shows include *Cognitive Dissonance* at Cottage Gallery (Los Angeles) and *On n'enchaîne pas les volcans* at Point de Fuite (Toulouse). She will be completing a residency in May/June 2011 in Reykjavik, Iceland.



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