

PILAR CORRIAS PRESENTS
MARY REID KELLEY
'YOU MAKE ME ILIAD'
10 SEPTEMBER – 6 OCTOBER 2010

PRIVATE VIEW: THURSDAY 9 SEPTEMBER 6–8PM

GALLERY OPEN: MONDAY – FRIDAY 10AM–6PM, SATURDAY 11AM–6PM



Mary Reid Kelley, video still from *You Make Me Iliad*, 2010, b&w digital video/sound, 14'49" © Mary Reid Kelley 2010

Pilar Corrias Gallery is delighted to announce the first exhibition of Mary Reid Kelley in the UK.

Mary Reid Kelley works with video, animation, painting and performance as means to question the stability of language and its role in historical narratives. The profound upheaval of the First World War and its art forms serve as setting and model for Reid Kelley's videos in which live-action performance is combined with stop-motion animation.

For her first exhibition at Pilar Corrias Gallery, Reid Kelley presents *You Make Me Iliad*, (2010) a new video commissioned on the occasion of the 2010 SITE Santa Fe Biennial.

Set in German-occupied Belgium towards the end of the First World War, *You Make Me Iliad*, features two central protagonists: a young German soldier, and a Belgian prostitute, each portrayed by the artist herself. A narrative built from their exchange of polluted metaphors and tangled verses still unfolds amidst German Expressionist-inspired animated backdrops and hand-drawn sets. Graphic cartoon language, verbal cliché and the rhythmic structure of rhymed verse are deployed here as accessible layers of meaning which each act as containers for more complex readings.

The 101 rhymed couplets of *You Make Me Iliad* imitate the heroic form of Alexander Pope's *Iliad*, while also drawing inspiration from that author's frequent inversion of epic into mock-epic. In abandoning the field of heroic deeds for the field of heroic words, the disillusioned soldier-turned-poet of *You Make Me Iliad* seeks a less treacherous expressive medium, yet is trapped between comic and tragic interpretation by the euphemisms, clichés and puns which riddle his speech.

You Make Me Iliad makes its European debut here alongside many drawings used in the production of the film, an addition to new works relating to it. Rather than existing as a work from which a single meaning can be distilled, *You Make Me Iliad* functions like a pun in itself, existing as a pivot for meaning, uncovering instabilities that exist as mere potential in language.

Born in Greenville, South Carolina in 1979, Mary Reid Kelley received an MFA in Painting from Yale University in 2009. Recent exhibitions include SITE Santa Fe Eighth International Biennial Exhibition (2010), Susanne Vielmetter Projects, Los Angeles (2010), and Fredericks & Freiser Gallery, New York (2009). Mary Reid Kelley lives and works in Saratoga Springs, upstate New York.

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