

## Press Release exhibition

7 June – 3 August 2003

## Marion Coutts Everglade

'Marion Coutts mythologizes the mundane. With the insouciance and economy of a professional magician she makes the one-dimensional multi-dimensional and transforms stale habit into compelling ritual' Artforum, Jan 2003

firstsite is proud to host the largest presentation of Marion Coutts' work to date at a pivotal moment in her career, before she commences the Kettle's Yard Fellowship this Autumn. This comprehensive exhibition unites sculptural and film/video pieces developed over the past two years and includes a major new commission *Everglade*, produced in collaboration with Film and Video Umbrella.

Marion Coutts creates the remarkable out of the mundane. Appropriating everyday objects and activities, she transforms them into laconic, visionary sculptural pieces. Coutts uses her raw materials for their wealth of associations - coins, satellite dishes, jewellery, watching telly, a walk in the park.

*Everglade*, at the heart of the show, comprises a projector, a moving image and a free-standing projection screen. A sequence of changing landscapes in the form of vignettes float in the centre of the screen, green islands surrounded by an empty sea of light. Inspired by the 18th Century woodcuts of Thomas Bewick, *Everglade* takes parkland with its prosaic leisure activities and transforms it into a timeless scene, a vision of paradise. Another new work looking at inhabited landscape is *Prophet (2003)*, a bell-jar encapsulating a minute gesticulating preacher.

By contrast with the utopian mood of *Everglade*, the video piece *No Evil Star (2002)* presents a parched, elegiac wide-screen vision of landscape. It charts the decline and fall of a super-race of worms and makes the creatures - maggots, shot on a small, hand-made diorama - seem gigantic. *Some Enchanted Evening (2001)*, another wide-screen epic, shows a black, night-sky-scape composed of gold wedding rings on a velvet surround, arranged to mimic the constellations of the northern night sky. In *Sibyl (2001)* a TV satellite dish becomes a mysterious, shrouded prophetic figure.

As we navigate Marion Coutts' show at firstsite, we are struck by her unique, personal aesthetic, allowing meanings and cross-associations to unfold in the objects and themes she uses. The artist leaves the viewer to interpret, question and establish their own limits within these given landscapes.

Marion Coutts lives and works in London. In 2000-2001 she was artist in residence at Tate Liverpool. Recent solo shows include *Cult* at the Chisenhale Gallery (2002). In 2003-04 she will be the Kettle's Yard Fellow based at St John's College, Cambridge with an exhibition at Kettle's Yard in September 2003.

*Everglade* is commissioned by Film and Video Umbrella in association with firstsite, Colchester and Angel Row Gallery, Nottingham. Supported by the National Touring Programme of Arts Council England and Arts Council England East. The exhibition will be accompanied by a publication co-published by FVU and firstsite.

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**Open** Mon to Sat 10am – 5pm (Closed Bank Holidays)

**Admission free**

**For further press information, interview opportunities and images (including digital)**

**Please contact >>>>**

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