

the **UNDERPASS MOTEL**

with peter dailey
 amanda williams
 graham taylor
 patrizia tonello
 ben jones
 si hummerston
 & richard heath

9 OCTOBER – 7 NOVEMBER 2009
 opening 6 - 8pm Friday 9 October

*...it can turn those that fit anywhere...
 into those that can fit only one place.*

The Underpass Motel project has been described by its creators as a "small festival of manipulative, empty promises." Starting as a Fellowship for Stuart Elliott, from the Department of Culture and the Arts in 2005, the project has grown to include a number of other artists: Peter Dailey, Amanda Williams, Graham Taylor, Patrizia Tonello, Ben Jones, Si Hummerston and Richard Heath. This exhibition will premiere the Underpass Motel DVD, supported by paintings, drawings and props used in its making.

Stuart began with the concept of a fictional motel, located on the outskirts of civilization, on the edge of the world. He wanted to generate a movie trailer, for a non-existent movie based on the inhabitants and surrounds of this motel. He decided to bring in other people to build and share skills, Stuart stated, "the objective was to get together a group of stylistically diverse visual artists and generate a kind of visual art mosaic." The resulting movie trailers ignored a linear time-line, or formal narrative, aiming for fragments of myths or stories that never existed. They are like a "series of musings, or dysfunctional daydreams of varying length and intensity whose common denominator is the Underpass Motel" claims Stuart. The artists have created seven movie trailers for *The Underpass Motel*, often in collaboration with each other.

Using his sculptures, paintings, photographs and collages Stuart began to animate snippets of dark stories to life. Using a camera to create stop-motion effects, his motel inhabitants and vehicles have a creepy primal aura. Pivotal to the creation of the movie trailers was the involvement of Graham Taylor and Patrizia Tonello. Graham has a background in building and manufacturing before teaching himself 3D computer animation, web and graphic design. Patrizia, a well known local artist, brought not only artistic skills to the project, but also found herself developing great editing and film skills. Together they have created a world that has incorporated Stuart's themes and iconography, weaving a story about a yellow suitcase that keeps appearing, a case that is baffling police. Peter Dailey, with his similar sensibilities to Stuart's, has created a theme of Genesis in the motel lobby. Beautifully drawn creatures, including fish and birds, pass through the lobby, and a fight ensues between two fantastic beasts over the yellow suitcase that has reappeared. Amanda Williams piece is dark and wistful, featuring a puppet-woman trapped in her motel room, dancing by herself whilst watched by an ominous shadow. Ben Jones, Si Hummerston and Richard Heath have brought their artistic talents together to produce a trailer combining film, costume design and Richard's striking drawings.

Excerpt of dialogue from *The Underpass Motel*:

Some say the road less travelled is one of faith or rectitude. But roads less travelled also have the desperate and the careless, those for whom any road is the right road and the journey itself is the primary destination. The Motel used to be gracious and inviting when the highway coursed by its front doors and the world stretched out in all directions. Then the world shrank. The highway's once nourishing river became the Motel's stagnant ponds. The grace is long gone but the beckoning is still there.

In the past, it was said that motels had an obligation to entertain guests. Here, at the edge of the world, the guests entertain the motel.

The Underpass Motel.

The Underpass Motel DVD will be available for purchase, for just \$33.00, from Turner Galleries during the exhibition. The DVD contains the 7 feature trailers, mini trailers and extras, along with a booklet. A catalogue will also be on sale.



Department of
 Culture and
 the Arts

