

Marcel Dinahet

Marcel Dinahet's area of investigation - the coastline and seabed - has for a long time cut an atypical figure in contemporary art. If his early works dealt more specifically - in an original fashion - with sculpture, experiments with the immersion of objects, the move to video as a medium is for the artist both the result of research and of his formal enrolment within current preoccupations.

The video installation *Les Finistères (Newlyn version)*, 1998, relates a project built around those 'ends of the earth' which punctuate the coast. From Cabo da Roca in Portugal to Cape Wrath in North Scotland, Marcel Dinahet has put together an itinerary from marine maps which take shape on site, paying particular attention to the journey preceding arrival at the destination. For if the artist's aim is to film the seabed at each stage, the preparatory work effected on site measuring the details of climate and identity of the place plays an essential role in his work. In this way *Les Finistères (Newlyn version)* alternate seabed with land sequences.

The seabed sequences, silent or interspersed only by the diver's breathing, are led by the very particular movement made by the video camera which is used by the artist not has an extension of the gaze but of the body. Placed on the stomach, the camera no longer responds to the viewfinder's logic but to the floating body which embraces the seabed in its movements. By contrast, the land sequences tell of the approach to the chosen site before the dive in a sometimes almost trivial manner: a car runs along, the sky is grey, a noisy radio programme disturbs the environment... However other scenes taken outside seem to announce the fluidity of the submarine world, from the rain that streams down the windscreen to the intermediate and unstable images taken by the camera between sea and sky.

Between two sequences, a place where reference points are lost, Marcel Dinahet explores this imbalance in his most recent works by seizing hold of physical phenomena. *Rotations 2000*, tests our senses by presenting images filmed from car which rotate continually.

The feeling of vertigo arising from this work, very far from the almost exhilarating rocking to-and-fro of the sea depths, seems to open up a new field in his continual questioning of limits resolutely at the core of Marcel Dinahet's work.

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