

PHOTO, MEDIA AND DIGITAL ART

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For Immediate Release (June 8, 2005)

Isabelle Hayeur: *Verge*

June 16 to July 30

Prefix Institute of Contemporary Art (Toronto), in association with the Agnes Etherington Art Centre (Kingston), presents new work by Isabelle Hayeur. Curator Jan Allen has conceived the exhibition in complementary parts to be presented separately at the two venues under the collective title *Verge*. The selection includes panoramic landscapes, architectural portraits, and the international premiere of the new video installation, *Drifting*. *Verge 1* will be on view at the Agnes Etherington Art Centre from July 2 to September 11, 2005. Prefix Institute of Contemporary Art presents *Verge 2* from June 16 to July 30, 2005.

Since the late 1990s, Hayeur has been known for large-format digital montages and video production, while also producing several public art installations and web-based works. Her recent exhibitions include Canada's Cultural Program at Expo 2005 (Aichi, Japan, 2005), the Massachusetts Museum of Contemporary Art (2004-2005), and the Neuer Berliner Kunstverein (Berlin, Germany, 2005). Hayeur has consistently cast her eye on the dramatic upheavals which are occurring within our natural, rural and urban environments. In grappling with these transformed locales, Hayeur notes that "the current landscape is a coming together of radically different and often contradictory spaces. For us, this ever-more fragmented territory has become familiar, and we often traverse it without awareness."

The works collected in *Verge*, beckon a heightened attention to three types of sites: a suburban residential development, a highway landscape, and a former limestone quarry (the basis for her newest video installation, *Drifting*). Across these works, Hayeur proposes new possible words that probe how we construct our views of the land and consider what meaning or preconceptions we ascribe to it. Reflecting on the exhibition, Jan Allen writes, "In the terrain of her impossible landscapes, Isabelle Hayeur discovers a subtle aesthetic zone that blends political acuity with gorgeous, understated immanence and deadpan absurdity. The artist digitally fuses images from around the globe and inserts elements plucked from the world wide web to produce affecting, paradoxical images. The forced hybridity of her photographs speaks to the incursion of human habitation on the environment and the erosion of locale, while tweaking our ability to recognize the natural and discern its disruption."

A critical essay by exhibition curator Jan Allen and a portfolio of Isabelle Hayeur's work will be featured in *Prefix Photo 12*, scheduled for release in November 2005.

Prefix is pleased to celebrate the opening of the exhibition *Isabelle Hayeur: Verge* on Thursday, June 16 from 7-10 pm at Prefix Institute of Contemporary Art, located at 401 Richmond Street West, Suite 124, Toronto. The artist and curator will be present. Admission is free.

The Agnes Etherington Art Centre gratefully acknowledges the support of the Canada Council for the Arts and the Ontario Arts Council.

Prefix Institute of Contemporary Art is a non-profit organization based in Toronto. Prefix's mandate is to promote the appreciation and understanding of contemporary photographic, media and digital arts through exhibitions, publications and related activities.

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