

Time to take in video art

Moving Image debunks the myth that media works are a hard sell for fairs

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Leslie Thornton's *SNAP: Oil/Air/Water*, 2013, is a two-minute film of the oozing and bubbling tar pits in La Brea Park in Los Angeles

Video art has long been perceived as a hard sell at art fairs, where collectors rarely have the time to dawdle and dealers are confined to pokey 40 sq. m booths. Ed Winkleman and Murat Orozobekov, who co-founded the video art fair Moving Image, have gone a long way to debunking this myth by staging the London leg of the fair in a four-storey warehouse on the Southbank for the past three years. As a result, Moving Image (17 to 20 October) feels more like a biennale exhibition than a commercial show—visitors are encouraged to explore the building and its darkened rooms—although all 35 videos on show are for sale, with prices ranging from \$3,000 to \$34,000.

Some of the works, such as Josh Azzarella's, *Untitled #160 (Balcombe)*, 2011-13 (edition of five, \$15,000 each), invite you to linger a while. Installed in a mini cinema room with a viewing bench, Azzarella's video runs for 92 minutes—the length of the silent film “*Nosferatu*”, which forms the basis of the artist's work.

Appropriately, the passing of time is the subject of several videos at the fair. Eve Sussman and Rufus Corporation's 40-minute video installation, *How to Tell the Future from the Past, v. 2*, 2009 (edition of six, \$34,000), depicts a 72-hour train journey across the vast and arid steppes of Central Asia. The artist captured the passing landscape on both sides of the carriage, and the two views are screened at Moving Image side-by-side. As if to confound the viewer further, one film runs backwards while the other runs forwards. The effect is repeated over three screens, resulting in six dizzying views of the landscape whizzing by.

Janet Biggs's *Point of No Return*, 2013 (edition of five, \$12,500)—one of five videos to be premiered at the fair—also depicts an artist's journey, this time through the Taklamakan desert in western China. Biggs travelled through the “desert of death”, as it is also known, with eight camels and their Uyghur handlers, documenting the fast-disappearing culture of the region.

Shorter—but not always sweeter—video works are also on show at Moving Image this year. For example, Leslie Thornton's *SNAP: Oil/Air/Water*, 2013 (edition of 12, \$3,000 each), is a two-minute film of the oozing and odorous tar pits in La Brea Park in Los Angeles—a work that moves so slowly it verges on photography.

Whether you only have half an hour or a whole morning to spare, it is worth spending time at Moving Image. As Winkleman says: “Video art is a significant part of what contemporary art is today. Collectors wanting to build a rounded collection should take the time to get to know the medium.”