

MARK LEWIS

Fin

Since the 1990s, Mark Lewis has made films that explore the language of cinema and the mechanisms of image construction. Their minimalist narratives often allow room for the artist to explore different video recording techniques. And as silent works, their visual imagery completely absorbs the viewer's attention. Lewis's "slow-moving scenes" invite us to immerse ourselves in a specific setting to observe it in detail. Unfolding at a pace that is slightly slower than real time, the films create an uneasy temporality in which each person's movements, and the real-life settings they occupy, appear suspended in time.

The title that unites Lewis's two works on view this season at the MAJ is a nod to the end title in traditional French cinema, but more specifically to the conclusion of historical periods. *London (Near Death)*, takes us back to a recent event that marked the end of the long reign of Queen Elizabeth II, and unfolds near Buckingham Palace in the days following Her Majesty's death. While the work is unscripted, it immerses us in a very precise moment: when the world's media was on hold awaiting further instruction. In a long tracking shot, the camera slowly pans across a row of pop-up tents and hordes of journalists posted on the edge of a flower garden punctuated by British flags. The ordered repetitiveness of the setting, at once surreal and familiar, finally leads to the restless crowds gathering in the streets, unsure of what's to come.

From Casa do Povo to Art Palacio also references the idea of time, both through the film's subject matter and the technique used to make it. Thousands of still images recreate a three-dimensional view of a segment of downtown São Paulo, Brazil, where we roam the streets between two cultural monuments that are emblematic of the city's modernist era: the Casa do Povo and Art Palacio, an abandoned former cinema. The missing elements and deformations caused by digitally collaging these images offers an imperfect rendering of space. Everything seems to be disintegrating, lending a ghostly aspect to what was once considered the "city of the future." While the past is gradually erased, the work acts as a memory of the site and the history of its architecture.

Marianne Cloutier, Interim Curator of Contemporary Art

MARK LEWIS

Hamilton, Ontario, 1958

1. *London (Near Death)*, 2022

4K video, 5 min 7 s

Property of the artist

2. *From Casa do Povo to Art Palacio*, 2019

4K video, 12 min 24 s

Property of the artist

FLOOR PLAN

2nd floor

Salle Harnois

