

Fountains Foundation @ 916

Annette Barbier: Cycles

By Celine Browning

The work of Annette Barbier is sweetly humorous and gently mournful. The four videos chosen for the Fountains Foundation are absorbed in an exploration of cycles; cycles of time, cycles of nature, and cycles of the heart. With a deft, understated touch, Barbier's work is eminently relatable. Whether the focus is a clock in the family home, rippling reflections, or cracks in the pavement, these heartfelt, poignant videos evoke both the beauty and pain found in private moments.

In *Stages*, shifting reflections of serene verdure are abstracted by moving water and accompanied by the mournful drone of the 17-year cicada. This piece reads as a love letter to the curious insect, as well as a sweet, sorrowful look at the ephemerality of life. *Cracks* is composed of a long parade of still images that slip discretely into one another, joining the crests of waves with high-rise condo buildings and cracks in the pavement with thin lines of surf. The shifting erosion between natural structures and manmade ones provides a subtle commentary on the interconnection of these seemingly disparate environments. Both videos are driven by a similar drifting sense of time that leads the viewer smoothly through the work as slow waves of eroding images disintegrate into one another.

Barbier is generous with her audience, sharing just enough to evoke, to conjure, to lay bare that thread of truth so vital to the creation of a successful work of art. *Time* presents an amusing yet intimate family portrait, as the measured motions of the clock record the small daily struggles between the artist and her daughter. *The Moon* is a quiet, contemplative piece, presenting the difficulties of integrating into a new culture while yearning for home. The simplicity of these works is disarming; in both, a single circular object is foregrounded while a powerful narrative is presented through audio. Through these works, Barbier exposes the fears and pleasures encountered in daily life, catching reflections of the world around her.

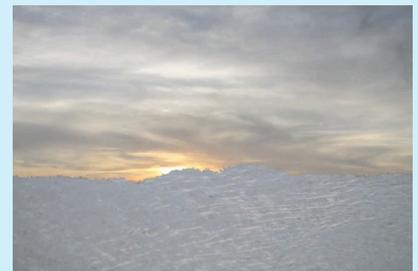
The inexorable ebb and flow of time, so vital to Barbier's work, is ultimately echoed by the fact that the videos are looped in the installation; the work blossoms, decays, slips through our fingers, and is born again.



Installation of video works at FF@916



Video Still from "Stages" 2007



Video Still from "Cracks" 2008



Video Still from "Time" 1993



Video Still from "The Moon" 1989