



## Pipilotti Rist *I Packed the Postcard in My Suitcase*

by Anna Raupach

Pipilotti Rist's video installations immerse us in her imaginary worlds of transforming landscapes, floating bodies, and enthralling dream-like journeys of fragmented movement and sound. These sensory wonderlands are immediately alluring, enticing us with their powerful aesthetic of saturated colour and psychedelic pattern, then entrancing us with the refreshing dominance of honest, enjoyable content.

*I Packed the Postcard in My Suitcase* is the first major survey of Rist's work in Australia. She has recently dominated the international and contemporary art scenes with her continued success at prominent exhibitions, festivals and biennales around the world. With a background in music, set design and cinema, Rist has built upon the language of film and performance to create a remarkably unique visual voice and style of utter pleasure.

The exhibition leads us on a journey through four gallery spaces. Each space uses a different mode of video projection and is themed around the classical symbols of fire, water, air, and earth. Rist establishes these as the sensory origins of her work, to challenge symbolism and twist clichés related to both the physical and psychological. The small, intimate scale of domestic picture frames, or the glow of hanging lamps, to the immersive space of light filling entire ceilings and floors or filtering through layers of floating fabric, not only capture our attention but also bring the broader questions back into our everyday.

The work *Small Laguna*, 2011, combines found landscape paintings of classical Venetian scenes with mesmerising visions of delving into vivid imagery of kaleidoscopic dreams. A collision of detailed, realistic 18th Century depictions with fleeting psychedelic encounters, the banal, touristic scenes come alive with the fiery magic of a night at Carnivale, where anything could happen. Like peering into a crystal ball, these exotic scenes contained in picture frames leave the viewer longing to step into this parallel universe that Rist has created. In the following galleries, this is exactly what the artist allows.



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*Gravity Be My Friend*, 2007, invites the viewer to lay down on mounds of carpet, set out like a topographic landscape, to gaze up at blob shaped screens suspended overhead. Rist takes us on an underwater journey which flutters between seduction and innocence, mischief and joy. However this playful adventure is underlined with something more sinister. By diving below the surface of light-heartedness we are suddenly out of our depth and although gravity keeps us anchored, we are hypnotised by the darker side of the fairytale. Rist uses her seductive pull to transport us into joyful states, then plunges much deeper into concepts of feminism, the body, rituals and symbolism, all on the backdrop of innocent fantasy.

Coming up for air, *Administrating Eternity*, 2011, takes us from deep aquatics to the mountain tops of the Swiss Alps, frolicking with animals in a beautiful transposed landscape projected onto light veils of fabric hanging from the ceiling. Set out in the form of a labyrinth with light and image appearing in unexpected spaces from ever-changing new perspectives, it is as if we have physically entered the flowing dream maze that Rist has created in our minds from the beginning

of the exhibition, to take us to our final destination.

Although the work is dense with classical references to icons and elements of mythological and religious histories, Rist encompasses this worldly journey into a enthralling experience of pure enjoyment. She captures our imagination and we are willingly enjoy the ride.

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1. *Administrating Eternity*, 2011, audio video installation, 4 projections, 2 video mirror units, sound system, voile curtains, aluminium mounts, video loop: 9 minutes 28 seconds (fix), 24 minutes 51 seconds (fix), 5 minutes 40 seconds (moving), 5 minutes 35 seconds (moving)

2 & 4. *Gravity Be My Friend*, 2007, audio video installation, 2 projections pointing to the ceiling, 3 players, sound system, 2 wild carpet sculptures, 2 suspended screens  
video loop: 11 minute 10 seconds loop (wet),  
12 minutes 37 seconds loop (dry),  
sound loop: 10 minutes 40 seconds,  
sound: Anders Guggisberg & Pipilotti Rist.

3. *Small Laguna*, 2011, video installation, 1 projection, 1 player, 1 oil painting on canvas, 36 x 57 cm, video loop

All works courtesy the artist, Hauser & Wirth and Luhring Augustine, New York.