

M E D I A R E L E A S E



Andrew Forster, *Moot*, 2005, live event and installation.
Photo Courtesy of the Artist.

**ANDREW FORSTER
DUET / TRIO / QUARTET**

28 June – 3 August 2008

Opening Reception: Friday, 27 June 2008, 8:00 pm

Artist Talk: Saturday, 28 June 2008, 2:00 pm

In this age of terror and control, how is trauma manifested in the human body? That is the question posed by a thoughtful exhibition of new works at Saint Mary's University Art Gallery this summer. Montreal artist Andrew Forster, in *Duet / Trio / Quartet*, explores a choreography of fear in video projections and sculptural installations.

The exhibition features several works that re-enact the gestures of a would-be suicide bomber. Hassam Abdo, a Palestinian teenager wearing an explosive body pack, surrendered to Israeli forces near Nablus in 2004. Observed and recorded by a military camera, Abdo attempted to follow instructions called out by soldiers, slowly removing outer clothing and his vest bomb. From this real-world event, Forster extracts Abdo's movements and restages them using different subjects, such as actors, a Western man in a business suit, or pairs of improvising dancers. Forster's restagings remove the weaponry (both Abdo's and the soldiers') to explore the body language of a tense confrontation where two parties attempt to avert a violent outcome.

While the work is "disarming" in more than one sense, it also highlights the anxiety of ordinary situations, manifesting the ubiquitous presence of danger, terror, surveillance and armed control. A large text work on a translucent curtain, *Sorry*, is derived from the response of a First Nations woman to a performance that Forster staged in a Montreal park frequented by the homeless and destitute. Although the performance was not being filmed, the woman demanded the removal of any cameras that might be recording her and her environment. Surveillance cameras, ever-present in urban settings, rarely prompt such protest and resistance. Forster's work confronts the viewer with uncomfortable questions about how the artist (and his audience) might be implicated in cultures of surveillance and to what extent they expose those cultures to critique and resistance.

The exhibition will open with a public reception on Friday evening, 27 June 2008 at 8:00 pm. The artist will be present, and will also give a public talk on Saturday afternoon, 28 June 2008 at 2:00 pm. All events are free of charge and open to the public, at Saint Mary's University Art Gallery in the Loyola Building, 5865 Gorsebrook Avenue. Refreshments will be served.

Andrew Forster: *Duet / Trio / Quartet* appears at Saint Mary's University Art Gallery from 28 June through 3 August 2008. The Gallery will produce a full-colour catalogue, with an essay by curator Robin Metcalfe, at a later date. Saint Mary's University Art Gallery gratefully acknowledges the support of the Province of Nova Scotia through the Department of Tourism, Culture and Heritage. All exhibitions and associated programmes at Saint Mary's University Art Gallery receive significant support from the Canada Council for the Arts.

-30 -

Contact: Robin Metcalfe
Phone: 902 420-5445
Email: gallery@smu.ca
Website: www.smuartgallery.ca
Digital images available



Canada Council
for the Arts

Conseil des Arts
du Canada



NOVA SCOTIA
Tourism, Culture and Heritage



SAINT MARY'S
UNIVERSITY SINCE 1802
One University. One World. Yours.