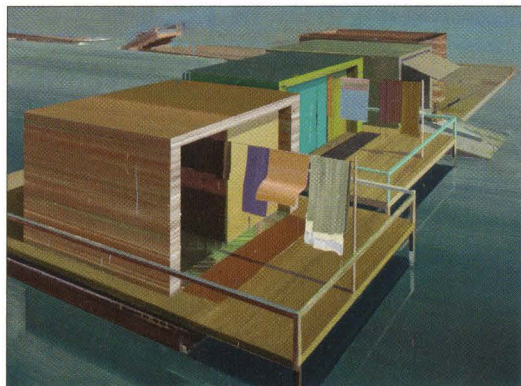


rivals those painters in technical skill, and his spare, unpopulated landscapes deserve greater recognition.

For the seven oils in "Evasive Quarters," Puder scraped and dripped paints



Ulf Puder, *Neue Insel (New Island)*, 2005, oil on canvas, 59" x 82". Artcore/Fabrice Marcolini.

onto large canvases, depicting buildings that are at once modern and derelict. He skillfully pulls texture from paint, leaving occasional patches of bare canvas, and makes deft use of a low-contrast palette of browns and dark violet supplemented with acid green, bright turquoise, rose, and pale yellow.

In *Strömung* (Fast Stream, 2005), blocks of taupe and brown form two houseboat-like structures linked to land by a bridge. The forms create an inverted, receding Z shape, typical of the strong diagonals that Puder uses to draw the viewer's eye into the work. In *Sand* (2005), scattered drips and scratches lend a weathered appearance to a group of desolate trailers. The drab color and basic forms of the structures in *Neue Insel* (New Island, 2005) suggest a video-game world, and the dramatic overhead perspective gave a feeling of swooping through an unreal landscape.

Puder's treatment of banal scenes transformed them into refined compositions that straddle the line between representation and abstraction.

—Andrea Carson

Gwen MacGregor

Jessica Bradley Art + Projects

Using the personal GPS device she carries with her everywhere, Gwen MacGregor charts her wanderings through the world. The data she gleans in this

way became material for the exquisite works in her exhibition.

Employing a set of five tiny steel-encased monitors and a split-screen format, MacGregor juxtaposed dazzling satellite images of the spinning Earth with sharp, almost calligraphic lines that, in 30-second animations, draw her movements over the planet's surface during a three-hour period. The result brought together the vastness of the big picture and the progress of the individual.

For the poignant *7pm II* (2006), MacGregor and her partner, Lewis Nicholson, who were often in different cities, recorded a few minutes of their activities each evening for 150 days. Projected on adjacent screens, the resulting videos show lives that are touchingly disconnected and out of sync—MacGregor attends a New York gallery opening while Nicholson eats take-out food at home in Toronto.



Gwen MacGregor, *Cruise (detail)*, 2005, four-channel video installation on flat-screen monitors. Jessica Bradley Art + Projects.

MacGregor's four-channel video installation *Cruise* (2005) offered small monitors showing a cruise ship's TV screen-like windows, through which the viewer could take in the passing scenery—an Alaskan sunset or a glacier, for example. After a while, it became clear that each screen's loop moved at a different pace. It was as if experiencing nature were just a matter of changing channels.

—Gary Michael Dault

Tony Romano

Diaz Contemporary

Tony Romano's work involves taking things apart to see how they work, and then putting them together again in such a way that his subject is cannily or—in the case of the "Three Tales" in this exhibition—wickedly critiqued. Two of the tales were presented as films with accompanying still photographs.

Projected in two parts on the opposite



Tony Romano, *The Lost Rose: Untitled Still*, 2004-6, C-print, 17½" x 21½". Diaz Contemporary.

sides of a wall, *The Lost Rose* (2004) is Romano's interpretation of a fable lifted from Georg Büchner's 1837 play *Woyzeck*. The story is about a suddenly parentless girl left alone to wander the earth. But this retelling—recounted in scenes of a young woman in a red dress walking aimlessly through tracts of sun-dappled or shade-heavy woods or dozing in the grass—is all middle, with no beginning or end. The viewer, hoping the projection on the other side of the wall would complete the narrative, found that dashing back and forth led to an accumulation of fragments of pastoralism without context.

Equally disquieting was *The Last Act* (2006), in which passages of stilted dialogue lifted from a porn film have been reshot with Romano's friends taking on the roles. With all the sexy bits removed, the result is titillation without consummation. The third work, *The Fisherman and His Soul* (2005), a virtuosic light-and-sound installation, turns an Oscar Wilde fairy tale into a song for two voices. The voice of the soul sings sometimes in harmony, sometimes in dissonance, with the voice of the bodily self. By skirting the main narratives and focusing on other themes from the original sources, Romano creates wholly new works.

—Gary Michael Dault