

ARTFORUM

Mark Lewis

DANIEL FARIA GALLERY

188 St Helens Avenue

September 11–November 1



Mark Lewis, *Above and Below the Minhocao*, 2014, 5k transferred to 2k digital video, color, silent, 11 minutes 33 seconds.

Mark Lewis is a master of the long take. The London-based Canadian artist's single-shot silent films and videos unfold over time in a symphony of perceptual flux and cinematic form. There is a painterly, even sculptural sensibility to his meticulous compositions. When Lewis's camera slowly glides across densely layered sight lines of monumental landscapes or urban street views, the viewer is drawn past the static visual frame into a crescendo where meaning is ultimately, and unexpectedly, revealed.

Shot at the edge of the demilitarized zone between North and South Korea, *Observation in Cheorwon County*, 2014—one of three digital videos exhibited here—opens with a close-up of stones and concrete shards on a weather-beaten, corrugated-steel roof. The camera then pans over a tangled forest and abandoned military bunkers to a vista of frozen rice fields and finally rounds back to an aerial view of tourists on a platform gazing north across the border. These juxtapositions are a study in formal and historical contradictions, and the final image of a blue-and-white six-pointed-star helipad perhaps hints at Cold War-era standoffs still festering in other parts of the world. In *Derek Jawgeer*, 2013, the camera circles a roadway roundabout in suburban London then tracks through a pedestrian underpass to the title's guitar-playing busker in an antidrama of hidden socioeconomic resistance amid mundane modern city life. These cinematic and political concerns also manifest in *Above and Below the Minhocao*, 2014, which hovers above and around pedestrian traffic on an overpass in São Paulo. Recurring textural contrasts abound—a patterned sidewalk, makeshift construction hoarding, the expressway's linear cuts through city space. But it is the couples walking hand in hand, the cyclists, skateboarders, and other passersby whose increasingly long shadows in the waning hours of the day create the most telling and lasting sense of presence.

— Bryne McLaughlin

All rights reserved. artforum.com is a registered trademark of Artforum International Magazine, New York, NY