

PRESENTATION HOUSE GALLERY

NOVEMBER 27, 2010 TO JANUARY 16, 2011

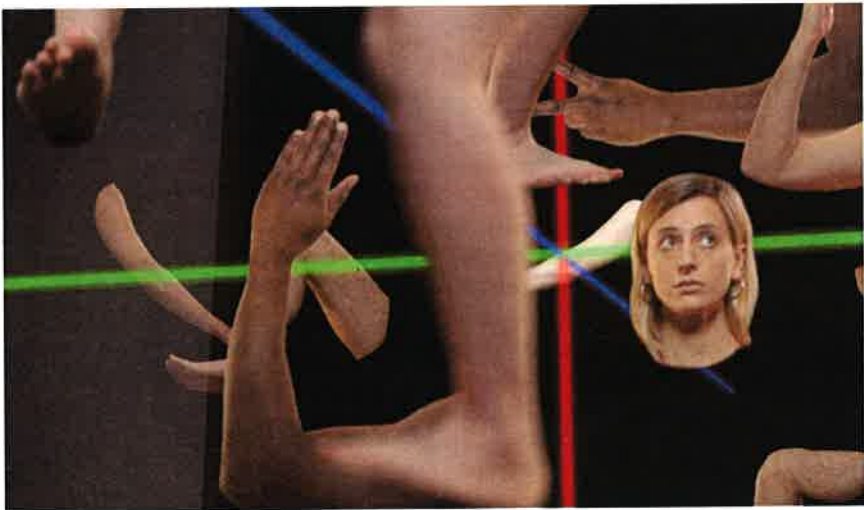
POPULAR UNREST  
MELANIE GILLIGAN

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Melanie Gilligan works in video, film, performance, installation, text and music. This exhibition features two of her recent multi-episode film dramas that comment on the social impact of economic shifts in recent years.

Her newest film, *Popular Unrest* (2010), (below) presents surreal, satirical and disturbing narratives based on the current state of politics and the public realm in relation to the global economic crisis. Rather than take a documentary approach to its subject matter, the film offers a fictional future, in which

all monetary exchanges and social interactions are overseen by a system called 'the Spirit'. Its five episodes centre on eight unrelated people who are mysteriously drawn together to form a group. When assembled they feel a deep and persistent sense of connection. They are not the only ones; this phenomenon of 'groupings' is happening world wide. Meanwhile, a rash of mysterious and disturbing killings has broken out across the globe. These murders often take place in public but witnesses never see an assailant. As the story develops, the killings become the thread that ties the



## POPULAR UNREST

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group to 'the Spirit', but they need to discover how and why.

*Popular Unrest* was shot in London with a cast of twelve main actors. While writing the script, Gilligan was partly inspired by David Cronenberg's 'body horror' and American television dramas like *Bones*, *CSI* and *Dexter*, in which reality is perceived through a pornographic forensics of empirical and visceral phenomena. As with her recent video works, the film's episodic structure takes its cue from television and the medium's ability to dispense a storyline in stages, emphasized by the five viewing booths of the installation.

While *Popular Unrest* explores a world in which the self is reduced to a biology directly subjected to the needs of capital, in *Self-capital* (2009) (right) contemporary capitalism is represented as a person undergoing therapy. After the traumas that recently shook the global economic system, capitalism's deep-seated problems are worked through in order to rehabilitate it to its previous and more 'functional' state. Under hypnosis the patient is submitted to a series of body-focused exercises to circumvent the patient's conscious mind. Conceived as an ongoing series, the three episodes of *Self-capital*

were written and filmed at the Institute of Contemporary Art in London.

Melanie Gilligan was born in Toronto in 1979 and currently lives in London, England. She has a BA in Fine Arts from Central St. Martin's College in London and was a Fellow in the Whitney Museum's Independent Study Program. In 2010 *Popular Unrest* was exhibited at Chisenhale Gallery, London, Kölnischer Kunstverein, Cologne and Walter Phillips Gallery, The Banff Centre. It is available for viewing online at [www.popularunrest.org](http://www.popularunrest.org) and *Self-capital* can be watched on Youtube. In 2008 Gilligan released *Crisis in the Credit System*, a four-part fictional drama about the financial crisis made specifically for internet viewing and distribution, commissioned by Artangel Interaction. Other recent exhibitions include: *Manifesta 8* in Murcia, Spain (2010), Galleria Franco Soffiantino, Turin (2009), *Talk Show*, ICA, London (2009) and Transmission Gallery, Glasgow (2008). Her writing has been widely published in art magazines and journals, and she sings in the bands *Petit Mal* and *Antifamily*. Gilligan was the recipient of a Paul Hamlyn Foundation Award for Artists and the Illy Present Future Award at *Artissima 17* in Turin.



**WORKS IN EXHIBITION**

**SELF-CAPITAL, 2009**

digital video projection  
3 episodes, 23 min., sound

Commissioned by ICA, London. Produced  
by Franco Soffiantino Gallery, Turin

**POPULAR UNREST, 2010**

5-screen digital video installation  
5 episodes, 67 min., sound

Co-commissioned by Chisenhale Gallery,  
London; Kolnischer Kunstverein, Cologne;  
the Walter Phillips Gallery, The Banff  
Centre; and Presentation House Gallery,  
North Vancouver. It is supported by  
Galleria Franco Soffiantino, Turin and  
the Arts Council of England.

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EVENTS

**DISTINGUISHED VISITING ARTIST TALK**

Tuesday November 23, 5:30 pm  
At the University Of British Columbia  
Art History, Visual Art And Theory Department  
Buchanan Building, Block A, Room 203  
(Located Across the Main Mall from The Belkin Art Gallery)

**OPENING RECEPTION**

Friday November 26, 7 pm  
At Presentation House Gallery  
Artist in attendance

**PRESENTATION HOUSE GALLERY**

333 Chesterfield Avenue  
North Vancouver, BC Canada V7M 3G9  
[www.presentationhousegallery.com](http://www.presentationhousegallery.com)  
Hours: Wednesday to Sunday 12 to 5pm

Presentation House Gallery is grateful for the ongoing support from The Canada Council For The Arts, The BC Arts Council, The City Of North Vancouver and The District Of North Vancouver, North Vancouver Arts Office, BC Gaming Commission, Metro Vancouver, The Wosk Foundation and Odium Brown Limited.

AHVAT Distinguished Visiting Artist Program is made possible by the generous support of The Rennie Collection