Stan Douglas
Mise en Scène

Stan Douglas is one of today's most important visual artists. His work touches on themes of modernism, politics, race, music, cinema, and theater. This comprehensive volume features images from Douglas's most recent large-scale photographic series. It also includes images from much-anticipated works: the video piece 
Luanda-Kinshasa
, the cinematic stage production
Helen Lawrence
, and the mobile app
Circa 1948
. A series of essays discussing the Canadian artist's influences and themes rounds out this impressive book.

Stan Douglas est l'un des plus grands artistes visuels de notre temps. Son travail traite de modernité, de politique, de race, de musique, de cinéma et de théâtre. Cette importante publication montre les dernières séries photographiques, souvent grand format, de Douglas, ainsi que, pour la première fois, des images de la vidéo 
Luanda-Kinshasa
, la production scénique
Helen Lawrence
et l'application mobile
Circa 1948
. Des contributions analysant les influences et thèmes de cet artiste canadien parachèvent l'ouvrage. Ce livret contient la traduction française des textes.

With contributions from

- David Campany
- Diedrich Diederichsen
- Seamus Kealy
- León Krempel
- Chantal Pontbriand
- Catherine Soussloff

Texte auf Deutsch · Textes en français

H A U S D E R K Ü N S T
Stan Douglas
Mise en scène

Edited by León Krempel

With essays by
David Campany
Diedrich Diederichsen
Seamus Kealy
León Krempel
Chantal Pontbriand
Catherine Soussloff

Foreword by
Okwui Enwezor
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Stan Douglas has long been one of the most original conceptual thinkers on all matters pertaining to the relationship between cinematic forms and their various technological structures. To many people, Douglas is most familiar through his visually absorbing and sophisticated films and videos. His constant archiving of the technical and conceptual feasibility within reproductive technologies, his innovative use of editing techniques, and his computer software codes have generated some of the most critically praised artistic works in contemporary art. In a stellar career marked by major transformations in the technical and visual supports of film and video, Douglas has been a relentless pioneer, helping us reimagine the historical specificity of time-based, projected works without falling into the solipsism of excessive technophilia. At the same time, as an artist of wide-ranging interest, Douglas has also employed still photographic images to create works based on video tapes and projections. Stan Douglas—Mise en scène is the first significant exhibition to be devoted to his relationship to the medium. Rather than covering the entire scope of his career, the exhibition focuses on large-scale works often conceived in ‘tableau format’ produced between 2009 and 2014.

The exhibition features different series of photographic works that are conceptually linked. The occasion of the exhibition in Haus der Kunst will see the introduction of two new works: The first is a new video, Luanda-Kinshasa (2014), that is connected to the overall thematic framework of the photographs. The second, Helen Lawrence (2014), is Douglas’s very first theater work, a live cinematic piece of theater. It will mark its European debut at Munich’s Kammerspiele theater. In addition, Douglas has recently broken new ground with the app Circo 1986.

Nevertheless, photography will occupy the most prominent space within the exhibition. The images are chiefly concerned with narrating transitions in global histories, linking previous reflections on social imaginaries to the postwar industry of documentary photography. Political themes bleed into cultural histories, such as the investigation of postcolonial liberation struggles and the reenactment of counter-cultural disputes between urban subcultures and policing. This convergence of historical periods and socio-cultural events from the first half to the last quarter of the twentieth century is reflective of how Douglas constantly attempts, in all his works, to complicate and undermine expectations of documentary accuracy. In these images photography mediates the reading of history, but it also generates reflections on how historical narratives are produced, and how the documentation of events shapes cultural memory. In the curating of tracing of time, image, and history, Douglas’s interjection of fiction or invented models of representation draws the viewer deeper into the language of cinematic postproduction.

For all these reasons and more, it has been a singular privilege to work with Stan Douglas to shape this exhibition. We are immensely grateful to him and to members of his studio, especially Linda Chinien and Brodie Smith, for making the exhibition possible. In putting together this survey of Douglas’s photographic work, the curators of the exhibition—León Krempel at Haus der Kunst, Séamus Kealy at the Irish Museum of Modern Art, Dublin, and Jean-Marc Prévoast, director of the Carré d’Art, Nîmes—have provided a careful and considered examination of the artist’s exemplary career. Lending further insight to the understanding of the work are the contributing essayists: David Campany, Diedrich Diederichsen, Catherine Soussloff, Chantal Pontbriand, Séamus Kealy, and León Krempel. We are thankful to them for their incisive texts. We also wish to acknowledge the excellent collaboration we have enjoyed with Katherine Haderer and Sandra Lalette at Prestel Verlag. The director of the Münchner Kammerspiele, Johan Simons, as well as members of his team, Alexandra Tweng and Ana Zipper, and the Kammerspiele’s dramatic adviser, Jörgen Versteede, have all been important partners and collaborators in the production and staging of Helen Lawrence, Douglas’s first foray into the world of theater.

Several supporters and institutional partners have been instrumental in making the exhibition possible. We would like to thank David Zwirner, Angela Choon, Anna Drozda, and Justine Durrett from the David Zwirner Gallery, New York and London, and Victoria Miro and Erin Manns from the Victoria Miro Gallery, London, for their support. The realization of the exhibition in Munich was generously supported by the David Zwirner Gallery, with additional support by the Victoria Miro Gallery. Lead support for the exhibition in Munich was provided by the Alexander Tutsek-Stiftung, with further contributions by the Embassy of Canada in Berlin and Henning and Brigitte Freybe. We are grateful for all their generousity and contributions. The exhibition was supported by the Centre Culturel Canadien in Paris.

Many colleagues at all three museums have contributed to the success of this ambitious endeavor and have been instrumental to its realization. While we cannot name all of them, we would like to specifically mention Beatrice Piauareau and Dalphine Vernières-Gautier at Carré d’Art; Tina Köhler, Anton Köttl, and Ulrich Wilmes at Haus der Kunst; and Rachel Thomas and Sean Kissane at IMMA.
With the exception of the Klatschatu Portrait (2006), Crowds and Riots are the first examples of staged photography by Douglas. Street photography risks taking on a subject that is both difficult and rare, if it was ever recognized as a subject at all. Depictions of a crowd of people as agents of collective action are familiar from the history painting of the nineteenth century. Douglas probably looked more to historical reportage photography than the appearance of a mass or a crowd. The doubling of the photographic image, for instance, makes use of the idea of the state or commonwealth by Baruch Spinoza. Some years before the completion of Crowds and Riots, Spinoza’s concept of the monster had been reintroduced into political philosophy and popularized as “swarm intelligence.”

The series interiors—completed in 2005—only fully printed and given its title in 2009—once again takes up the subliminal theme of history. And the viewer? Before 2008 there was only one decidedly linear plot, such as the one in Hindenburg. It seems to end with the female protagonist’s death, determined in advance by some mysterious and nameless force. In contrast to the man in the crowd, she is one who has at his disposal a multiplicity of objects and through time has created his own system for ordering them. The spectator—an artist’s cabin, places for selling shoes, junk, groceries—appears utterly full in the chosen segments, as if very little would be required to create disorder. The inhabitants or owners, who may have changed over time, remain unseen, as does the commanding authority behind the police deployments in Crowds and Riots. In contrast to many of the earlier works, these series signifi es a tremendous advance coupled with a renunciation, namely a departure from the dubious representation of autonomous or heteronomous crowds, his representations of autonomous or heteronomous crowds, his series signifi es a tremendous advance coupled with a renunciation, namely a departure from the dubious representation of autonomous or heteronomous crowds, his representations of autonomous or heteronomous crowds, his series signifi es a tremendous advance coupled with a renunciation, namely a departure from the dubious representation of autonomous or heteronomous crowds, his representations of autonomous or heteronomous crowds, his series signifi es a tremendous advance coupled with a renunciation, namely a departure from the dubious representation of autonomous or heteronomous crowds, his representations of autonomous or heteronomous crowds, his representations of autonomous or heteronomous crowds, his representations of autonomous or heteronomous crowds, his...
In what turned out to be the last few years of his life, the German critic Walter Benjamin became deeply interested in the idea that moments in history do not remain permanently accessible to posteriority. Rather, they lie dormant until a new circumstance makes them understandable and pertinent. "Every now... is the now of a particular recognizability, in which things put on their true—surrealist—face," he wrote in his opus of notes published as The Arcades Project. Suddenly and unexpectedly, a past moment may become meaningful to a present that has the means to grasp its deepest character.

The opportunities for this may be very brief and we ought to presume that more often than not they pass us by. But when they are seized, by a society or perhaps by an individual, something like a time tunnel appears to connect two moments, present and past. It's an illusion of course, because we can never really go back. What happens is better described as an allegorizing of the past by the present, or perhaps an allegorizing of the present by a past it now claims as its own.

Stan Douglas came of age as an artist in the 1980s, at a time of renewed interest in allegory as an artistic mode. The myths of pure presence and straight speaking that motivated so much modernist art were beginning to frustrate and to reveal their limitations. A "postmodern turn," as it was named in haste, signaled a range of reconnections between art and everyday life, between high art and popular culture, between the here and the far away, between artistic mediums, and perhaps most significantly between the present and the past.

At the center of this turn were photography and film, two mediums that, although having their own distinctive identity within high modernism, became attractive to artists of many kinds because they seemed to belong everywhere and nowhere in particular. Some critics, notably Craig Owens, went so far as to suggest that photography is inescapably allegorical: it operates at the intersection of numerous rhetorics, genres, and discourses, none of which belong to it exclusively. Moreover the photograph offers only a fragmentary account of a world it steals, quotes, and even subdues in order to pick out fragments presumed lost or irrelevant. And perhaps it is upon this fissure he is prompted to make new images.

The allegorical photographer backs into the future. Perhaps his own images ripe up before him. Perhaps he scavenges the greater pile produced by the culture around him. Perhaps the new archival technologies of his own moment—today it is the Internet—allow him to reach further down into the pile, further back into the past, to pick out fragments presumed lost or irrelevant. And perhaps with his findings he is prompted to make new images.

Photographs can only be made in the present, although they immediately convert that present into something past. But if the past is to enter into the photographer’s frame it must do so either through the traces it has left behind in the world or through a re-imagining. Stan Douglas pursues both approaches. That is to say, he makes fairly “straight” documentary photographs of places where the past might be still discernible and thinkable, and he makes photographs that stage or restage moments from history. He explains:

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He explains:
NURSE: Oh, it's just a guy. You know who she is?
AIDE: I think she's French.
NURSE: French?
AIDE: Not sure.
NURSE: I think she's French.
AIDE: You think so?
NURSE: Yes. I'm sure she's French. You know that she's French?
AIDE: Yes, I do.
NURSE: Fine.
AIDE: I think she's French.
NURSE: Could be French.
AIDE: I don't think she's French.
NURSE: I think she's French.
AIDE: I think she's French.
NURSE: I think she's French.
AIDE: I'm sure she's French.
NURSE: You don't think she's French.
AIDE: I think she's French.
NURSE: You think she's French.
AIDE: I think she's French.
NURSE: You know that she's French?
AIDE: Yes.
NURSE: Fine.
AIDE: I think she's French.
NURSE: You think she's French.
AIDE: Yes, I do.
NURSE: Fine.
AIDE: I think she's French.
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NURSE: Fine.
Why would an artist want to create an app, as Stan Douglas has just done with Circa 1948? Apps have become particularly common since smartphones have invaded the marketplace. They give a surplus value to these phones that are conceived for multiple uses and go far beyond the basic functions of telephoning, text-messaging, and e-mailing. Apps offer information and provide services and entertainment in an immediate, reactive fashion. Smartphones in general are enabling, as they work their way through so many diverse functions, increasing communication in terms of time and outreach (space). One’s territory is augmented, with access to the personal environment, contacts, and various services ready at hand.

These may be some of the reasons an artist would want to create an app. Working on the notions of immediacy, augmented space, interactivity, and multiplicity can all be challenging to a contemporary artist. The app combines basic tropes of contemporaneity which, associated with accessibility, relate to these same notions. Being in the world today is a condition that goes beyond the common time and space one situates oneself in. Time and space have become multidimensional, because technology now enables the collapsing of time into multiple formats, durations, interruptions, and resumptions. Time can be extended and it can be contracted. Space encounters similar distortions. Space can be experienced in a variety of ways, through communication media as well as through accelerated travels made possible by ever-evolving transport technologies.

Douglas’s project revolves around a script he wrote with Kevin Kerr titled Circa 1948. It is a series of dialogues that sprout up in different locations in the app. The two main locations are the Hotel Vancouver and Hogan’s Alley, both of which are situated in Vancouver and recall existing places in the postwar city. It is the magic of cinema to be able to restore eras and places that have disappeared with time. The app, a device which is an exponent of virtual reality, brings one backwards in time and proposes the experience of revisiting not only the aforementioned locations, but also the era and a particularly Vancouverian zeitgeist.

The choice of date has to do with one of those moments in history that represents a historical shift, that of the post-World War II period, which signals a time when the economy, politics, and values were still shaken by the traumatic years gone by. The Hotel Vancouver had been the main grand hotel of the city (and apparently of the British Empire). Its existence corresponds to a municipal policy for an open city, which led to corruption and the tolerance of certain types of criminal activity, such as bootlegging, gambling, and prostitution. Built in 1916, the hotel was demolished in 1949, having served as barracks for the Canadian troops and as a refuge for the homeless in its final years. The choice of 1948 carries a double heritage: that of the hotel’s heyday splendor and glory, and that of the scars of war and crime. The grand palatial scale of the hotel contrasts with the working-class neighborhood of Hogan’s Alley. Situated in a district of Vancouver called Strathcona, which was home to immigrants of diverse origins, from Chinese to Japanese to Italian, the alley also included the city’s most important concentration of black people and was at the time a red-light district. It featured bars and gambling joints as well as brothels. The area was eventually demolished to give way to the construction of a freeway following a redevelopment plan in the 1950s, which in turn led to the eradication of the black presence in Strathcona. Strathcona is linked to Canada’s historically important railway system, as it is bordered by the Canadian

**History Resubjectivized (Doubly)**

Essay by Chantal Pontbriand
Crowds and Riots

2008

Series of 4 color photographs
Digital C-print mounted on
dibond aluminum

Edition of 5

Powell Street Grounds, 28 January 2012
59 1/2 x 104 in. (151.1 x 264.2 cm)
Frame: 63 x 107 1/2 in.
(160 x 273.2 cm)

Bellevue Pier, 16 June 1935
35 1/2 x 73 in. (90.2 x 185.4 cm)
Frame: 48 x 78 in.
(121.9 x 198 cm)

Hastings Park, 16 July 1935
59 1/2 x 88 in. (151 x 225.4 cm)
Frame: 62 1/2 x 92 in.
(158.8 x 233.7 cm)

Abbott & Cordova, 7 August 1971
70 1/4 x 104 1/2 in. (178.4 x 265.7 cm)
Frame: 73 1/4 x 118 in.
(187 x 300 cm)

Cast:

Powell Street Grounds, 28 January 2012

Agnatha: 

Jenny Gartner, Billy Marshenski

Constables:

Sepey Bretheau, Darley Higgins, 
Devin Hinchey, Corin Kavanagh, 
Michael Mclean Smith, Charlie 
McSorley, Michael Root, Gordon 
Tolik

Inspectors:

Richard James, Stephen Luckhardt

Spectators:

Daryn Akwen, Steven Arcand, 
Patrick Alpine, Kristin Anderson, Dominique 
Armand, Amanda Azzopardi, Brian 
Bachler, Christine Bibb, Russell 
Benzhoff, Gerald Boul, Jason 
Boysen, Christiane Castonguay, George 
Cavanagh, Terry Kong, Patrick Kools, 
Robert Louis, Wil McQueen, 
David Mervish, Robert Reid, 
Bill Russell, Tim San, 
James Thomas, Robin 
Thompson, Gerald Veldij, 
Jim Walsh, Robert Woods, Mikala 
Zacharias

Abbott & Cordova, 7 August 1971

Bystanders:

Robby Baker, Stefan Buse, 
Tina Cockerham, Adam Barlett, 
Chad Coccia, Michelle Cowley, Shrugs 
Dachner, Luciana D’Arunacioso, 
Bill Decker, Anthony Dodd, Andrew 
Drummond, Brad Dyckson, Emily Enid, 
Ted Garbutt, Bill Glidden, Ian Gwaze, 
Micheal Gruzd, Lorna Riding, 
Charanjit Singh, Wolf Suth, Ken W

Constables:

Wesley Almus, Dave Ambrosio, Currie 
Auld, Samuel Barnes, Scott Davis, 
Colin Fotherby, Nick Haigton, Mike 
McIlveny, Royal Morro, Randy Noel 
Hippie:

Jocelyn Adamson, Michael Babiuch, 
David Berry, Kimberley Birmans, 
Samantha Cribb, Rob 
Campbell, James Berke, Gary 
Elliott, Vladimir Fedalev, Andrew 
Ghan, Megan Ginon, Justin Gough, 
Lucky Guyle, Rhythm Hughes, 
Jandee Kennedy, Simon Kedl, Janet 
MacLeod, Christine McNab, John 
Morrison, Madeline Myshyq, Greg Ng, Mitchel Nelson, Veronika Prida, 
Michael Prosser, Walter Suddaby, 
Wayne Sudbury, Troyan Tyzen, Jason 
Vassilakis, Clay Virtue, Stuart Wallin, 
Dina Weiler, J. Wilkens, El 
Zagoudakis, Jenny Zinger

Mounted Police:

Mike Garthwaite, Kerry Harren, 
Quentin Schneider

Narco:

Lee Clarke, Brent Bowie, James 
Compton, Michael McQueen, Steve 
McLaren, Ethan Rush

Creative Team:

Executive Producer (Abbott & 
Cordova – Westbank Projects / 
W Redevelopment Group)

Producing Executive Producers (Powell Street 
Grounds, Bellevue Pier, Hastings Park) – David Zwirner, 
Stan DuBois

Director, Photographer, Editor – 
Stan DuBois

Producer – Anika Limatineau, 
Heather Howe

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Assistant Director – Lee Koppelson 
Second Assistant Director – William 
“Big Sleeps” Stewart

Camera Assistant – Hien Trinh 
Gaffer – Sean Rooney

Best Boy – Tony Richardson 
Dresser – Hugh Madekwa

Lamp Operators – Mark Alexander, 
Scott Clark, Calvin Hsia, Christian 
Schauf

Costume Coordinator – Jacob 
Delpino, Deryck Level, Lisa 
Jochum, Leonard Taylor

Set Wardrobe – Warren Bruce

Key Grip – Miguel Gehweis, 
Rob Spearing, Jason Robert 
Gris – Dan Babanoff, Troy Bascett, 
Jeff Benny, Mike Piedlar, 
Jain Humphrey, Ryn Kitchtn, 
Adrian R. Nielsen, Kirk Rutenberg 
Casting – Lisa Rota

Editing – Richard Kelly, 
Michael Heinz, Michael Kehoe, 
Stephen Eatherman, Carol Harm 
Set Decorator – Melissa Morland 
Assistant Set Decorator – Jacque 
Reynolds

Set Dresser – Tim Higgins 
Set Dresser – Todd Hall 
Buyers/Dressers – Jamie Morgan, 
Lori Nofzinger, Judy Stanick, 
Mark Meehan

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Props Assistant – Charles Newman, 
Jordan Piedler

Costume Designer – Sheila White 
Assistant Costume Designer – Patty 
Hunt

Costume Designers – Tyanne Lysted, 
Owen Day, Kyle fcino, 
Spectator Costume Designer – Darrel 
Briliski, Elvis Sydney

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Akila Limatineau

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Clearance Coordinator – Todd Guttman 
3D Modelling – Murray Giron 
Graphic Designer – Catherine Schrewer
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**Stan Douglas – Mise en scène**

held at Haus der Kunst in Munich from June 20 to October 12, 2014.

Curator and editor of the catalogue: León Krempel

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Curator: Jean-Marc Prévost

Exhibition itinerary:

Irish Museum of Modern Art in Dublin

2015

Curator: Seamus Kealy

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León Krempel
Chantal Pontbriand
Catherine Soussloff

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Stan Douglas is one of today’s most important visual artists. His work touches on themes of modernism, politics, race, music, cinema, and theater. This comprehensive volume features images from Douglas’s most recent large-scale photographic series. It also includes images from much-anticipated works: the video piece Luanda-Kinshasa, the cinematic stage production Helen Lawrence, and the mobile app Circa 1948. A series of essays discussing the Canadian artist’s influences and themes rounds out this impressive book.

Stan Douglas est l’un des plus grands artistes visuels de notre temps. Son travail traite de modernité, de politique, de race, de musique, de cinéma et de théâtre. Cette importante publication montre les dernières séries photographiques, souvent grand format, de Douglas, ainsi que, pour la première fois, des images de la vidéo Luanda-Kinshasa, la production scénique Helen Lawrence et l’application mobile Circa 1948. Des contributions analysant les influences et thèmes de cet artiste canadien parachèvent l’ouvrage. Ce livret contient la traduction française des textes.


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