



AES+F, *Last Riot* (detail), video still, 2005–07

All images © AES+F Courtesy Triumph Gallery (Moscow) and Multimedia Art Museum (Moscow)

LAST RIOT AES+F

Tatiana Arzamasova
Lev Evzovitch
Evgeny Svyatsky
Vladimir Fridkes

In collaboration with

**VANCOUVER
BIENNALE**

Richmond Art Gallery

February 4 – April 3, 2011

Opening Reception: Thursday February 3, 7–9pm

The Richmond Art Gallery, in collaboration with the Vancouver Biennale, is pleased to present the first Canadian exhibition of *Last Riot*, a computer generated video installation by the Russian artist collective, AES+F. *Last Riot*, one of the most celebrated presentations at the 2007 Venice Biennale, is a three-screen high definition video based on the aesthetics of computer animation, video gaming, and commercial advertising where stylized acts of violence set in a digital landscape form a critique of contemporary culture. The exhibition opens Thursday, February 3, 7–9pm at the Richmond Art Gallery, and continues until April 3, 2011.

Last Riot is a montage of elements generated from a range of historical and contemporary sources. The work abounds in references to art historical paintings from the Renaissance and Baroque periods. Employing the aesthetics of cinema, advertising and fashion AES+F expose the fantasy visualization of pop culture. Superimposed on a surreal landscape, beautiful airbrushed youth dressed in camouflage sportswear, wield baseball bats, golf clubs and swords enacting a choreographed slow-motion battle accompanied by the music of Wagner's *Götterdämmerung*. Weapons are raised and threaten repeatedly and brutally, yet the hand-to-hand combat is bloodless and painless.

References made to technology, consumption and energy resources direct attention to increasing global tensions leading to a world gone awry. *Last Riot* is a complex, hyper-realistic work that critiques the media's depiction of violence and raises questions concerning the values and direction of Western culture.

AES+F, is an acronym for Arzamasova, Evzovitch, Svyatsky and Fridkes. The artists came together as AES in 1987, then when photographer Vladimir Fridkes joined in 1995, the collective became known as AES+F. They work collectively in media ranging from photography, sculpture and drawing to video, performance and computer-based media.

Richmond Art Gallery would like to thank the Vancouver Biennale, Barrie Mowatt and his associates, Sarah Creedon, and Gillian Wood. Thank you also to Ruth Addison of the Triumph Gallery in Moscow, for facilitating the loan of the artwork and to George Arzamasov for his technical assistance. The Richmond Art Gallery gratefully acknowledges the support of the City of Richmond, the British Columbia Arts Council and the Province of British Columbia.

Two of the artists from AES+F, Tatiana Arzamasova and Lev Evzovitch, will be in Vancouver from February 26 to March 5th.

RELATED EVENTS

Young People's Image World: Media Literacy for the Digital Age **A discussion with Dr. Stuart R. Poyntz, Ph.D.** **Saturday, March 5 from 1:00-2:00 at Richmond Art Gallery**

This discussion looks at the impact of digital media on youth culture. How does imagery from television, film, video games, and fashion magazines impact our youth? How do we navigate our children and ourselves through the bombardment of violent and sexualized images that we are exposed to on a daily basis?

Dr. Stuart R. Poyntz is an Assistant Professor of Media, Technology and Production for the School of Communication at Simon Fraser University. Dr. Poyntz looks at children's media culture, theories of the public sphere, and young people's historical thinking in relation to digital media. He has an extensive background in the history of media literacy, nationally and internationally, and has published writing in the *Canadian Journal of Education*, the *Review of Education*, *Pedagogy and Cultural Studies*, and various edited collections. His new book, *Media Literacies: Between Past and Future*, will be published by Wiley-Blackwell in 2011.

ARTIST BIOGRAPHIES

Tatiana Arzamasova Born in Moscow in 1955. Graduated from the State Architectural Institute in 1978. Lives and works in Moscow. Practised conceptual architecture. Awarded the Grand-Prix in the OISTT/UNESCO competition 'Theatre of the Future'. Participated in conceptual architecture exhibitions in London, Paris and Venice.

Lev Evzovitch Born in Moscow in 1958. Graduated from the State Architectural Institute in 1982. Lives and works in Moscow. Practised conceptual architecture. Awarded a prize in the OISTT competition 'The Touring Theatre' in Stockholm. Participated in conceptual architecture exhibitions in Milan, Frankfurt and Paris. Worked as a designer and director of animated film and also as designer of the film 'Sunset'.

Evgeny Svyatsky Born in Moscow in 1957. Graduated from the Book Design Faculty of the Moscow Printing Institute. Lives and works in Moscow and New York. Worked as a designer in publishing and advertising. Participated in international poster competitions and exhibitions of book illustration, graphic design and posters. Was creative director of a number of Moscow publishers.

Vladimir Fridkes Born in Moscow in 1956. Lives and works in Moscow. Worked as a fashion photographer for publications such as Vogue, Harper's Bazaar, Elle, Marie Claire, Cosmopolitan and Sunday Times Style. Participated in the Moscow Photo Biennale in 1986, 1998 and 2002; in the Fashion and Style in Photography Festival in 1997, 1999 and 2001; and in Art Moscow in 2001

The artists came together as AES in 1987. Photographer Vladimir Fridkes joined in 1995 and the group became known as AES+F. The artists live and work in Moscow.

LIST OF WORKS

Last Riot

AES+F

- 1) AES+F, *Last Riot*, 2005–2007
Three-channel HD video, 19 minutes 25 seconds
- 2) AES+F, *Last Riot* video still, 2005–2007
The Tank & Waterfall
- 3) AES+F, *Last Riot* video still, 2005–2007
Tondo #5

ARTIST STATEMENT BY AES+F

The virtual world generated by the real world of the twentieth century is growing exponentially, like an organism in a Petri dish. Crossing its own borders in to new zones, it absorbs its founders and mutates in to something absolutely new. In this new world real wars look like a game on www.americasarmy.com. Prison torture appears more like the sadistic exercises of modern-day valkyries. Technologies and materials transform the artificial environment in to a fantasy landscape of a new epoch. This paradise is a mutated world where time is frozen and the past is neighbor to the future. Its inhabitants are devoid of gender, becoming more like angels. This is a world where the severe, the vague or the erotic imagination appears natural in the artificial unsteadiness of 3D perspective. The heroes of the new epoch have only one identity, that of participants in the last riot. Each fights both self and the other, there's no longer any difference between victim and aggressor, male and female. This world celebrates the end of ideology, history and ethics.

PRESENTERS INFORMATION

The **Vancouver Biennale** is the World's Open Air Museum featuring sculpture, new media and performance work situated along scenic bike routes, beachside walkways, rapid transit stations and urban plazas. The objective is to celebrate contemporary art in public places, transforming the urban landscape into a cultural experience for people to enjoy where they live, work, play and transit throughout the day. The 2009–2011 exhibition *in-TRANSIT-ion* includes 40 works of art by renown and breakthrough artists from 15 countries worldwide with a focus on Asia. The Vancouver Biennale also produces supporting programmes including interactive school curriculum, cycling events, and public symposium, and is committed to leaving a legacy of public art in host communities.

CONTACT INFORMATION

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Gallery Hours

Monday to Friday, 10am to 6pm
Weekends, 10am to 5pm
Closed for statutory holidays

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