

SEFT-1 Abandoned Railways Exploration Probe: Modern Ruins 1:220

Ivan Puig and Andrés Padilla Domene

The Arts Catalyst in partnership with Furtherfield

Private View: Friday 20 June 6-8pm

Open 21 June–27 July 2014

Friday, Saturday and Sunday, 11am-6pm

Gallery tour with the artists, Saturday 21 June 2pm



“Adapting their car into a small personal railway locomotive, they travelled Mexico’s forgotten railways, many of which have slumped into disuse since the national railway system, created in the 19th century, was privatised in the 1990s.

Ruinous desolate stretches of track slowly decay back into the fertile landscape in the pictures they took on their journey into a past that is also an image of some dystopian future when our world is abandoned and reverts to jungle and forest.”

Jonathan Jones – *The Ruin Hunters* (The Guardian, 11th June 2014)

Artists **Ivan Puig and Andrés Padilla Domene (Los Ferronautas)** built their striking silver road-rail SEFT-1 vehicle to explore the abandoned passenger railways of Mexico and Ecuador, capturing their journeys in videos, photographs and collected objects. The iconic Mexican railway infrastructure lies in ruins, much of it abandoned due to the privatisation of the railway system in 1995, when many passenger trains were withdrawn, lines cut off and communities isolated. In this, their first London exhibition, they explore how the ideology of progress is imprinted onto historic landscapes and reflect on the two poles of the social experience of technology - use and obsolescence.

Between 2010 and 2012, the artists travelled in the SEFT-1 across Mexico and Ecuador recording the landscapes and infrastructure around and between cities and interviewing people they met, often from communities isolated by Mexico’s passenger railway closures. They shared their findings online on a website where audiences could track the probe’s trajectory, view maps and images and listen to interviews.

The artists’ journeys led them to the notion of modern ruins: places and systems left behind quite recently, not because they were not functioning, but for a range of political and economical reasons.

In the second half of the 19th century the Mexican government had partnered with British companies to built the railway line that would connect Mexico City with the Atlantic Ocean – and beyond to Europe. For this new exhibition, the artists are inviting British expert model railway constructors as collaborators, creating scale reproductions of specific Mexican railway ruins exactly as they are now. Part of the gallery becomes a space for the process of modelling ruins. The room’s walls will show the pictures, documents, plans and other materials used as reference points for the meticulously elaborated ruin construction, in the manner of a dystopian time tunnel.

The actual SEFT-1 exploration vehicle will be situated outside the gallery on 20–22 June, 11–13 July, 18–20 July and 25–27 July 2014. Please feel free to take photographs of yourself with it.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Ivan Puig (born 1977, Guadalajara, MX) has exhibited internationally in Mexico, Germany, Canada, Brazil and the United States. He is the recipient of a number of awards and residencies including the BBVA Bancomer Foundation Grant for the SEFT-1 project (2010-2011) and the Cisneros Fontanals Foundation (CIFO) Grant in 2010. Puig, a member of the collective TRiOD (with Marcela Armas and Gilberto Esparza), lives and works in Mexico City.

Andrés Padilla Domene (born 1986 in Guadalajara, MX) has exhibited work in various contexts including ISEA 2012 (Albuquerque, New Mexico), The National Museum of Art MUNAL (Mexico City, 2011), 04 Transito_MX (Mexico, 2011), and EFRC, Centro de Arte Contemporáneo (Quito, Ecuador, 2012). His video work as director and producer with Camper Media includes documentaries, fiction films and TV shows.

EVENTS

Tue 17 June 6.30–9.00pm – artists Ivan Puig & Andrés Padilla Domene will be in conversation with The Arts Catalyst curator Rob La Frenais during London LASER 04 at University of Westminster (book here)

Sat 21 June 2pm – Gallery tour with the artists, FREE

Sat 21 June 3–5pm – *A de-industrialised estate* - Talk with Dr Malcolm Miles and discussion with the artists at Furtherfield Commons - (limited capacity £5, details and online booking here)

Sat 12 July 11.30am–1.30pm – Drop in to the gallery and meet model railway maker extraordinaire Neville Reid and artist Andrés Padilla Domene, FREE

Sat 12 July 2–4pm – *Death Collapsing Into Life* - Guided walk along Parkland abandoned railway with landscape architect, urbanist and writer Tim Waterman (limited capacity £5 and up to two children under 15 free, details and online booking here)

Sat 19 July 10am–12.30pm – *Create your own Railway Exploration Vehicle* family workshop for children 7-12 years led by Codasign (limited capacity, £30 one child £50 two children, plus one accompanying parent, online booking here)

Sat 19 July 2–5pm – *Code your own Retro Game with Python* - a beginners workshop for young people

aged 13-17 to learn coding led by Codasign (limited capacity, £36 please bring a laptop with you, online booking here)

ABOUT THE ARTS CATALYST

The Arts Catalyst commissions art that experimentally and critically engages with science. We produce provocative, playful, risk-taking projects to spark dynamic conversations about our changing world. www.artscatalyst.org

ABOUT FURTHERFIELD

Furtherfield provides platforms for art, technology and social change. Funded from Arts Council England since 2005, Furtherfield is now one of Arts Council England's National Portfolio Organisations. Furtherfield Gallery has established an international reputation as London's first dedicated gallery for networked and media art, hosting regular exhibitions and public events since 2004.

With the support of Haringey Council the gallery is now based at McKenzie Pavilion in the heart of Finsbury Park. www.furtherfield.org

FURTHERFIELD GALLERY

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