

Works in the Exhibition

1. *89 Seconds at Alcázar*, 2004
High Definition video installation, 12 minute loop
2. *The Meninas*, 2004
Digital C-print, 40 x 30 in.
3. *Montage from 89 Seconds*, 2004
Digital C-print, 108 x 50 in.
4. *Empty Set*, 2004
Digital C-print, 45 x 30 in.
5. *Serving the Milk*, 2004
DVD, flat-screen LCD monitor, 10 x 16 in.
6. *The Dog Rolls*, 2004
DVD, flat-screen LCD monitor, 10 x 16 in.
7. *The Queen Turns*, 2004
DVD, flat-screen LCD monitor, 10 x 16 in.
8. *Erin as Maria*, 2004
Digital C-print, 45 x 30 in.
9. *The Widow on the Set*, 2004
Digital C-print, 40 x 50 in.
10. *The Three (Velázquez, Maria & the Infanta)*, 2004
Digital C-print, 40 x 50 in.
11. *The King & the Infanta*, 2004
Digital C-print, 40 x 30 in.
12. *Nico & the Mastiff*, 2004
Digital C-print, 40 x 30 in.
13. *Philip & Mariana Reflected*, 2004
Digital C-print, 50 x 40 in.
14. *Girls in the Dark*, 2004
Digital C-print, 40 x 50 in.
15. *King Sleeps*, 2004
Digital C-print, 40 x 50 in.

Acknowledgements

We are pleased to present *89 Seconds at Alcázar* by Eve Sussman, a work lauded at the 2004 Whitney Biennial and presently on display at the reopened Museum of Modern Art, New York. The exhibition, *Eve Sussman: 89 Seconds at Alcázar*, features the first large-scale high-definition video to be presented at the Haggerty Museum of Art. Also included in the exhibition are digital C-prints and three DVDs shown on flat screen LCD monitors.

I would like to thank the artist, Eve Sussman, and Joel Beck, Christian Viveros-Faune and Peter Ryan of Roebling Hall for their cooperation with this exhibition. Special thanks to the artist for providing a copy of *89 Seconds at Alcázar* and to Richard J. Massey for generously providing digital C-prints and videos from his collection. I would also like to thank Jon Pray, Associate Vice Provost of Educational Technology and the Instructional Media Center for technological support for the exhibition. *Eve Sussman: 89 Seconds at Alcázar* and this gallery guide were made possible in part from funding provided by the Richard and Ethel Herzfeld Haggerty Museum Endowment Fund.

Curtis L. Carter
Director



(King Stares) Still from *89 Seconds at Alcázar*, 2004



Eve Sussman *89 Seconds at Alcázar*

Haggerty Museum of Art
Marquette University
February 18 - May 22, 2005

Philip & Mariana Reflected, 2004, Digital C-print, 50 x 40 in.

Collection of Richard J. Massey

Photo: Benedict Partenheimer, © Eve Sussman and the Rufus Corporation



Diego Velázquez, *Las Meninas* (The Maids of Honor), 1656
Oil on canvas, Prado Museum, Madrid

On the Inspiration for *89 Seconds at Alcázar*

Originally called simply *Portrait of the Royal Family*, *Las Meninas* (or *The Maids of Honor*) is a seminal work in the history of art which has inspired countless artists. Its painter, Diego Velázquez, is one of the most important European artists of the seventeenth century, and *Las Meninas* is arguably his most famous work. At 10'5" x 9'5", the painting—which hangs at the Prado Museum in Madrid—is grand in its composition and scale.

Las Meninas has been interpreted as “a candid representation of an actual event” and a highly structured composition with visual and intellectual subtleties. It is an extraordinary portrait of the royal family from 1656, which includes a self-portrait of their official painter. Diego Velázquez was court painter to Philip IV of Spain from 1623 until his death in 1660. His primary responsibility was to document the royal family. In recognition of his achievements, he was made a knight of the Order of Santiago in 1659.

In *Las Meninas*, Velázquez is shown on the left-hand side of the painting standing in front of a large canvas. He is painting a portrait of King Philip IV and Queen Mariana of Spain, whose images are reflected in the mirror on the back wall of the room. The Infanta Margarita and her companions—the *meninas* or young ladies-in-waiting—occupy the center of the composition. Their attention is focused on the royal couple whose position, based on their reflection in the mirror, is the same as that of the spectator. With this technique, Velázquez effectively extended the space depicted on the canvas to include the real space the viewer occupies.

A staunch defender of his trade, Velázquez believed in the nobility of painting. He demonstrates this by placing himself in the picture, and giving us not only a portrait of the royal family, but a painting about the art of painting. It is the power of the piece as an artist's statement and as a snap shot of life at the Spanish court that motivated Eve Sussman to create *89 Seconds at Alcázar*, a video installation of unprecedented beauty.

89 Seconds at Alcázar

Eve Sussman's *89 Seconds at Alcázar*, 2004, is a High-Definition video tableau inspired from Diego Velázquez' famous painting *Las Meninas*, 1656, at the Museo del Prado. The video is an artistic revisioning of the moments leading up to and directly following the approximately eighty-nine seconds in time when the royal family and their courtiers would have come together in the exact configuration in Velázquez's painting.

To make *89 Seconds at Alcázar*, the artist assembled a team of thirty-five which included an architect, set designer, choreographer, costume designer, actors, actresses and a film crew. While the actual shooting of the 360° video using a Steadicam was done in four days, the project took over three years to realize.

Mariana of Austria: Helen Pickett
Philip IV: Jeff Wood
Diego Velázquez: Walter Sipser
Infanta Margarita: Sofie Zamchick
Mari Barbola: Peter Dinklage
Doña Marcela: Annette Previti
Menina Maria: Erin Kaleel
Menina Isabel: Andrea Huelse
Guardadamas: Nesbitt Blaisdell
Nicolasio: Zachary Mills
Jose Niento: Richard Tabnik
Costume Design: Karen Young
Choreographer: Claudia de Serpa Soares
Composer: Jonathan Bepler
Master Scenic: Rebecca Graves
Director of Photography: Jeff Blauvel
Steadicam: Sergei Franklin
FX: Josh Glaser
Producers: Eve Sussman, Jeff Blauvelt, Jen Heck, Cheryl Kaplan

Eve Sussman: Artist's Statement

My work originates from fascination with simple gestures and casual expressions, which I observe, capture, and stage in videos, films, installations, and photographs. Before making the move to High-Definition video in my last project, I often used Super-8 cameras and simple, low-tech surveillance devices to gain access to the situations and observe mundane relationships. I have referenced both scientific methods of long-term observation common in zoological and anthropological studies and the “cinema verité” tradition in filmmaking.

My piece, *89 Seconds at Alcázar* (2004), is a carefully constructed video that takes Diego Velázquez' famous painting *Las Meninas* (1656) as a point of departure, treating it as the seminal cinema verité film still. The piece ultimately looks baroque but was inspired by the opposite - an interest in the everyday. Restaging the situation leading up to the moment depicted in the painting, *89 Seconds* presents an imagined unfolding of minute movements that could have framed the scene. By linking the singular scene of the painting with a continuity of events I attempted to script and choreograph body language, instead of simply observing it in everyday life.

Over the past few years I have begun foraying into narrative, and became interested in how the seemingly untouched reality of cinema verité and the controlled operation of scripting and choreography overlap and collide. In my short film *Solace* (2001) I combined domestic documentary footage, shot during the days immediately following September 11, with staged video of the soprano Kati Agocs singing Henri Purcell's *Music for Awhile* to a group at a breakfast table who are oblivious to the singer's presence.

In the installation *Ornithology* (1997), I presented live-feed footage of pigeons in an airshaft behind the gallery where the work was shown. Wall-sized projections of pigeons observed from an extremely near vantage point both monumentalized animal and suggested a different economy of gestures. A bird watching tower in the airshaft was accessible to visitors via a ramp through the window. Once outside, the viewers became subjects under surveillance to be studied along with the birds in the video projections.

For *How to Tell the Future from the Past*, presented at the 1997 Istanbul Biennial, I wired the entire Serkeci train station with surveillance cameras and combined the live-feed video with narratives in Turkish and English. The synthesis of the live imagery with the stories created hybrid moments in which the action happening in the present became the illustrations for the recounting of the past.



(Back to the Camera) Still from *89 Seconds at Alcázar*, 2004

Exhibitions & Installations

- 2005 *Eve Sussman: 89 Seconds at Alcázar*, Patrick and Beatrice Haggerty Museum of Art, Marquette University, Milwaukee, WI
Union Gallery, London, UK
Rice University Art Gallery, Houston, TX
- 2004 Centro Galego de Arte Contemporánea, Santiago de Compostela, Spain
Museu Picasso, Barcelona, Spain
Re-Installation of the Collection; New Acquisition; MOMA, NYC
Focal Point Gallery, Southend-on-Sea, Essex, UK
Museum of Contemporary Art, Zagreb, Croatia
Whitney Biennial 2004, Whitney Museum, NYC
89 Seconds at Alcázar, Margaret Harvey Gallery, Hertfordshire UK
Sprawl, Hudson Clearing, NYC
- 2003 *The Paper Sculpture Show*, Sculpture Center, LIC, NY
- 2002 *Eye-Stalk*, Smack-Mellon Gallery, Brooklyn, NY
Artist to Artist, Ace Gallery, NYC
Brooklyn in Paris, Espace Paul Ricard, Paris, France
- 2001 *Dialogue of Things*, Mysliborz Regional Museum, Mysliborz, Poland
China/White - scenes from an exile, Bronwyn Keenan Gallery, NYC
- 1999 *Seven Year Itch*, Ambrosino Gallery, Miami, FL
In Situ, site-specific installation, Linda Hall Library, Kansas City, MO
- 1997 5th International Istanbul Biennial, Istanbul, Turkey
New York Drawers, Pierogi 2000, The Gasworks, London, UK
Ornithology, Bronwyn Keenan Gallery, NYC
Just what do you think your doing Dave?, WAH Center, Brooklyn, NY
The Road Show, Bronwyn Keenan Gallery, NYC
Casa Tua è Casa Mia, American Academy in Rome, Italy
- 1996 *River Blindness*, Sculpture Center, Roosevelt Island, NYC
- 1995 *Sculpture Space - 20 Years*, (film/video screening) Utica, NY
Who has enlarged this hole?, (sculpture/video installation) 53 W. 9th St., NYC
- 1994

- Rough Cuts: The Extended Artists Notebook*, Henry Street Settlement, NYC
- 1993 *Emerging Sculptors '93*, Sculpture Center, NYC
Monsoon Wait, Six Sculptors Exhibition, L.I.U. Campus, NYC
A Room with a View, indoor water/wind installation, Sharpe Foundation, NYC
Brooklyn-Queens, Space Program, NYC
- 1992 *Extrinsic/Divergent: Made in Germany*, Amerika Haus, Berlin, Germany
1992 the Americas?, Socrates Sculpture Park, Long Island City, NYC
- 1991 *Wasserwerke*, installation in the river Panke, Berlin, Germany

Film/Video Projects

- 2003 *89 Seconds at Alcázar*, single channel video based on Diego Velázquez' *Las Meninas*, 1656
- 2002 *Portman's Looking Glass*, a 4 projector installation, 150ft. 16mm loop
Fly Right, a video triptych of Hasidic girls playing dodge ball
- 2001 *Solace*, a short film featuring soprano Kati Agocs
- 2000 *China/White - Scenes from an exile*, 3 screen panoramic video installation
- 1999 *Ten Women and a Shark or 15 years in 5:30*, a short film
- 1998 *Town Topic*, 3 channel panoramic video installation, shot at Town Topic in Kansas City
- 1997 *How to tell the future from the past*, 12 channel surveillance video installation in the Serkeci Train Station, Istanbul, Turkey
The Whites were a Mystery, 3 channel video filmed in Lomé, Togo
- 1996 *Imagining Beforehand*, 3 channel video, NYC
- 1995 *Die Platzsünde*, collaboration with Ricoh Gerbl & Ivana Mestrovic, Rome/NYC
- 1993 *Real Time*, single channel video 989
New Koke: An Advertisement for Real Life, a short pixel-vision video with Karen Hatch

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