

# REHEARSAL

## (AERIAL ARTISTS)

Live Art with Video      by Tina Keane

The performance attempts to explore a different strategy of production of an IMAGE.

"The body has been widely used in performance art to highlight the ideological assumptions behind it, most recently in pursuit of an 'authentic' femininity. Yet in this culture, is it possible to create a positive image of the female body? It is culturally coded to such a vast extent that it is doubtful whether there is a gaze that is not complicit, or not implicitly male. Keane summons these and other questions in her attempt to combat prevailing attitudes embodied in the male/female dichotomy. With the backdrop of a public experience which is regulated by a phallicentric discourse, Keane toys with acts of empowerment. Her females are self-fulfilled subjects, not objects, attempting to step outside the usual codes of representation."  
(Daina Augatitis, Banff Centre)

The Space is transformed into a location for Rehearsal (Aerial Artists), with a 30ft Crane, 20ft X 16ft. back projection screen, 20ft. rigging tower, video mixing deck, spot lights, sound equipment, cameras and operators. Two female aerial artists. The performance creates a live dialogue between aerial artists. The piece opens with pre-recorded images projected onto the large screen, giving the illusion of an open-air cinema. The screen features the rhythmic actions of a trapeze artist and through variation in framing and film speed, it becomes a study in skill and agility. The image flies from the screen to a small T.V. encased in metal, suspended by a winch at the top of the 30ft. crane, a speck of brightness and movement against the night sky. The crane lowers the T.V. and swings it towards and above the audience giving a sinister edge to the piece. The T.V. lands in the centre of the space, is then exchanged for a trapeze bar, and live aerial artists are winched up slowly, performing as they ascend. They are lit only by spot lights and recorded by two cameras. This is where the camera becomes an integral part of the performance. One camera is situated from a point below the aerial artists, to create a sharp, upwardly raking perspective evoking a sense of elevation and danger. The other camera, situated at the top of the rig, uses close-up and mid-shots to re-emphasise agility and skill, and to afford a rare perspective of the body. The images are relayed and interchanged through the mixing deck onto the screen. The filmed and the real combine within the space and dislocate the gaze. Sound has been specifically composed for the piece.