

The Heart of the Illusion: Landscape, Still Life and Self Portrait

Installation consisting of three separate tape programmes running concurrently on three monitors and reflected in three mirrors placed on the wall.

Colour

First shown at the Ikon Gallery, Birmingham, March 1981

The installation as always is developed from previous work with a continuing cross reference between the video image and painting. The still life includes vanitas objects, such as butterflies and shells, as before; the self portrait contains similar references; the landscapes also refer back to previous work. Each tape, shot in one single take, shifts gradually over a period of forty minutes from processed colour to natural to black and white and fades out to white. At certain times, the screens will appear black, or blue, red or green (the principle televisual colours) or white. Each shot charts a line with the change in colour between fictional representation and reality, between the world as we imagine it to be and the world as it is. A landscape hovers between a landscape as Richard Wilson might have seen it and a landscape eroded and despoiled by industry, in this case a nuclear power station. A still life set out as a pieter de Claesz or a Rembrandt, shifts from the artifice of ultramarine cabbage to the black and white representation of the media. The self portrait turns within the frame and fades into the white horizontal lines of the monitor. The head and shoulders of the newsreader, announcer, compere, critic, star and in this case, the artist is dissolved by an electronic signal.

I have based this work on various comments which I have collected over a period of time in relation to colour and reality, including writing by Godard, Truffaut and Wenders. I share the same feeling that for some reason which is difficult to describe at the moment, colour seems to be more appropriate to fiction and black and white to reality.

All the preparation for these tapes including location shooting, processing and editing was done with the assistance of Spafax Television, Ditteridge, Wilts.