Excerpt from exhibition catalog, page 1 of 2: Brougher, Kerry, "Hitch-hiking in Dreamscapes," <u>Notorious: Hitchcock in Contemporary Art,</u> Tokyo: APT International and the Toyko Opera City Art Museum, 2001





Excerpt from exhibition catalog, page 1 of 2: Brougher, Kerry, "Hitch-hiking in Dreamscapes," <u>Notorious: Hitchcock in Contemporary Art,</u> Tokyo: APT International and the Toyko Opera City Art Museum, 2001

## HITCHCOCK ON HOLIDAY

This desire to be somewhere else, whether it be in the past, present, or future is one of modernism's impulses, and it is fully exploited by Hitchcock. Hitchcock liked the viewer to travel virtually: a chronological survey of his films creates a spiral outwards, from London (*The Lodger*, 1926) to Scotland (*The 39 Steps*, 1935) to Holland (*Foreign Correspondent*, 1940) to New York (*Rear Window*, 1954) to Morocco (*The Man Who Knew Too Much*, 1956) to the top of Mount Rushmore (*North by Northwest*, 1959) and ultimately to Norman Bate's hotel somewhere off the main road and out of the sane world (*Psycho*, 1960).

Hitchcock often weaves travel into the narrative. Whether it is a man on the run in foreign territories (*The 39 Steps; Foreign Correspondent; Saboteur,* 1942; *North by Northwest*) or people on holiday (*The Secret Agent,* 1936; *To Catch a Thief,* 1955; and both versions of *The Man Who Knew Too Much,* 1934 and 1956) Hitchcock extends the desire for exotic locales that arose in nineteenth-century painting and photography into the more persuasive medium of cinema. His view of these locales has in turn altered our view.

In Chris Marker's 1982 film essay Sans Soleil, we take a tour of San Francisco, but our narrator presents the city through the eyes of Hitchcock. It is no longer just San Francisco, but a city that has been transformed by the cinema, a city that exists not just as a place but also in its relationship to Vertigo (1958); it is a real place turned into a dreamscape by Hitchcock and resurrected as fact by Marker. This approach is echoed in the work of Cindy

Bernard who in Location Proposal #2 (1997-99) has digitally recreated shot by shot the sequence in the redwood forest in Vertigo bringing the celluloid dream into the digital domain. In Victor Burgin's photographic installation The Bridge (1984), in his video Venise (1993), and again in his video installation Case History (1998), the artist has created works based on the San Francisco of Madeleine, the ghostly figure who roams the city and the nearby forests in Vertigo. David Reed's installation Scottie's Bedroom (1994) resurrects a set from Vertigo with one of the artist's paintings finding its way into the story. Recently a street in Glasgow became San Francisco when Douglas Gordon erected a vertical sign spelling out EMPIRE with its overtones of Hitchcock and Warhol; the sign glows with the same green light of the original sign seen through the window of a bedroom in Vertigo, only the sign here is reversed, as it would be in a wonderland dreamscape.

Hitchcock's films place his protagonists in unfamiliar territory and in an imbalanced state making their quests even more difficult. Even within familiar terrain the main characters seem uncomfortable. Architectural spaces dwarf Hitchcock's characters while long-shots give way to brutal close-ups. Indeed, the sets themselves often have a degree of artificiality about them. This artificiality does not appear to be the result of inadequate special-effects techniques, for it runs throughout Hitchcock's career from the early British films, which clearly use model trains and painted backdrops, all the way through *The Birds* (1963) and *Marnie* (1964), their matte paintings and rear-screen projection so obvious that they create a strange space between reality and theatricality. These other-worldly spaces of Hitchcock's travels reflect the vertiginous, disoriented state of mind of his characters. Cindy Bernard's digitally recreated shots of *Vertigo*, which highlight this artificiality, can be seen as artifacts of the consciousness of the now absent characters.