

ARTFORUM

Lindsay Seers

GALLERY TPW

56 Ossington Avenue

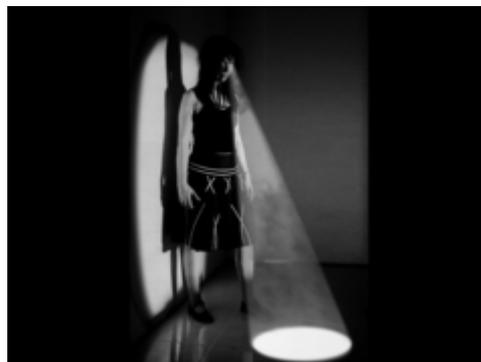
April 2–April 30

The primary component of Lindsay Seers's installation *Extramission 6 (Black Maria)*, 2009, is a profound video that ruminates on memory and perception by means of the artist's invented biography. Projected inside a structure that resembles a tarpapered shack—a reconstruction of the original Black Maria, Thomas Edison's late-nineteenth-century film production studio—the video assembles the artist's curious self-mythology through interview clips, third-person narration, and archival material. Its core narrative tracks Seers's attempt to recoup her photographic memory—which she lost in her first encounter with speech—by becoming a living camera, and it then follows her later transformation into a projector.

Extramission 6 thus marks the beginning of this implausible yet poetic shift, wherein as much as Seers looks out at the world she is also looking inward. Couched in this biographical fantasy, Seers's documented methodologies of taking and making images are a means of overcoming the speculative traumas alluded to in her video as well as the critical histories of her chosen disciplines. As one of her interview subjects attests offscreen, the act of photography is passive and melancholic in its preservation of the past, while a projector maintains an undeniable optimism by casting light forward and into the future—which for Seers is an effective therapy.

Seers's invocations of “extramission,” an early theory of sight proposed by Plato, and of the Black Maria are perhaps ways for her to suggest that to understand technology and history we must embody it—just as we sit inside her tarpapered shack. Or perhaps she is proposing that we wear it, too, as she does at the end of the video. Perched on Seers's head, a hat-*cum*-model of Edison's studio lends a pedigree to her investigations of the image and becomes a lens through which to see the world and herself.

— Jen Hutton



Lindsay Seers, *Extramission 6 (Black Maria)* (detail), 2009, still from a black-and-white video, 15 minutes 25 seconds.

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