

## CYPRENGALLARD: THE LAKE ARCHES

Posted on: 4th December 2006 | Posted by: [Emily Hill](#)

Cyprien Gaillard

There are people with weird beards, old men with horn rimmed glasses, art students arraigned with trousers nipped in at the ankles, scarves, sticks, umbrellas, and suitcases; a Swedish actress flirting with a moustachioed sound man; a small child playing with her father's green clogs. We're all waiting in slight bewilderment in the lecture theatre on the 30<sup>th</sup> floor of Guy's Hospital, the clock is stuck at just past 6 (although its well past 7) and someone is trying to entice sound artist Koudlam from the fire exit. The lights go out and Koudlam emerges in brown trilby, sunglasses and a thin brown leather jacket. He grips two microphones, pushes them to his mouth and starts moaning ominously. Shaky footage flickers onto the screen behind him. As his voice gets stronger, many men gather in a blank, wasted landscape. More and more crowd together, forming two groups before suddenly erupting in violence, as strings and a beat kicks in. The beat dies down and the screen changes. A frenetic neon lightshow plays out on a run down Parisian skyscraper, the tempo builds while flares and fireworks burst out, before the whole building explodes, and plummets downwards, replaced by a thick cloud of dust. Koudlam's sounds and lyrics permeate the whole, creating an eerie, excited dread of what is to come. And then the screen changes again as a helicopter slowly beats across a snow smattered Kiev estate, circling and circling until you feel dizzy.

This was 'Landscapes' the extraordinary opening live exhibit of Cyprien Gaillard's *The Lake Arches* which is now on at the Laura Bartlett Gallery, near London Bridge. His body of work forms a mesmeric celebration of the beauty and fear of urban living, summed up for him in the brute glory of concrete. Belief in the Age of Disbelief, a series of black line drawings of tower blocks crept into 17th century Dutch etchings, shows the tower block's rough edged defiance and violence, creating the same sinister unease as 'a Mary Shelley paperback'. Downstairs, Part V of his

series Real Remnants of Fictive Wars shows just one of the explosions in the landscape that the artist has carried out and filmed since 2001. This, Gaillard's first exhibition in the UK, should on no account be missed and is on at the Laura Bartlett Gallery until 16 th December.