

# PARALLEL WORLDS? PANEL PRESENTATION



In conjunction with its current exhibition **Parallel World**, featuring the artists Vessna Perunovich and Boja Vasic, Modern Fuel has organized **Parallel Worlds?**, a panel presentation featuring Richard Day, Scott Lyall and Erin Morton.

Parallel World's images of shanty houses and their occupants reveal the precariousness of Belgrade's Roma community who remain marginalized in the crudest of living conditions. Taking the exhibition as a starting point, Morton will relate the histories of colonialism, war, and environmental disasters to the travel undertaken through modern tourism, parsing artists Vasic and Perunovich's paradoxical notion of the "forced nomad." Morton will consider travel as a way to examine the late-modern relationship between globalization and what Zygmunt Bauman calls its "human consequences," placing the idea of the forced nomad in relation to Bauman's suggestion that "[t]he vagabond is the alter ego of the tourist."

**Saturday 12 April 2008 @ 3pm**

Richard Day will respond to Mike Davis's book, *Planet of Slums*, which he regards as presenting a bleak picture that gives very little agency to those who live in the marginalized spaces of the global economy, and remains dubious in terms of the desire and ability of states or NGOs to effectively intervene. Without romanticizing the situation of those who live in what anarchist theorist Hakim Bey calls 'no-go' zones, Day will provide examples of autonomous community-based action that break the deadlock between individual victimhood and state-NGO dependence, relating them to a nascent social project in Kingston, and giving evidence that marginalized spaces can be, and sometimes are, crucibles of possibility for radical social change.

Scott Lyall will present on the idea of junkspace and place it within an expressly artistic context. Lyall argues that the manifest content of artistic images comes from inside of (and reflects tensions in) the general subject of art, as opposed to coming from outside according to the traditional model of the artist as an exemplary observer. Junkspace would be the name for a generalized spatial imagination, characterized by immersion and the fact that global contemporary art offers no given situation, nothing the artist can lay out in front of him or herself as either an object of observation or a horizon for decision-making. Representing Canada at SITE Sante Fe in 2008, Lyall will set his discussion in the context of the biennial, which is structured to allow reflections on these themes.

**Richard Day** is an associate professor of sociology at Queen's University in Kingston, Ontario. He is particularly interested in the possibilities for radical social change via the construction of alternative communities and politics especially in situations of indigenous resistance, queer and feminist organizing and anti-globalisation activism.

**Scott Lyall** received a Masters Degree from CalArts (Los Angeles) in 1993. His recent exhibitions include We Can Do This Now, a group show at The Power Plant, Toronto, in 2006; and the little contemporaries at SculptureCenter, New York, in 2007.

**Erin Morton** is a PhD candidate and a teaching fellow in the Department of Art at Queen's University. Her current research examines visual cultural production in Atlantic Canada, outlining the way it offers opportunities for bureaucrats and businesses to promote the region as a place where distinct aesthetic practices exist outside of modernity.