Art Review – April 2010

RACHEL CATTLE, STEVE RICHARDS: COSMOGRAPHIA / TRANSITION GALLERY

5.55pm. They have almost locked up at Transition, but the attendant switches the video back on. *Cosmographia* is a monochrome video in which a hand is seen pencilling a geometric design on paper, then manipulating two mirrors to create kaleidoscopic patterns and movements. There are also shots of hands handling various fragile polyhedral objects, also apparently made from paper or card. There's a slightly ridiculous operatic vocal soundtrack to this, and the whole thing seems unwitting, naive in its delivery, but still grasping towards a vaguely understood sentiment about the exotic and intoxicating prospect that utopian Modernism once offered. Fugitive Modernism, hibernatory Modernism, postlapsarian Modernism. It's clear that, even for all the shit that artists get taught, what they really want is Modernism back. Or instead, that these stylistic ciphers of Modernism operate as placeholders for something invisible, that is, that 'the future' is worth holding onto. But it's ten past six, and it's time to switch the projector off. Lights out.

THE END