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## CHRISTOPHE BOURGUEDIEU *The Passengers*

The Perth we see in *The Passengers* appears at first sight so familiar. Eucalypts, bitumen roads, asbestos fences, jarrah floorboards, a Blue Heeler dog. And yet something about these pictures remains just beyond reach. It is this quality of the enigmatic, always present in Christophe Bourguedieu's photographs, which makes the work so compelling.

Bourguedieu's world is a finely nuanced universe. Outside ordinary suburban streets and laneways are empty, while inside hesitant young men and women in timeless Australian interiors wait for a possible encounter. Despite the loneliness evoked in these images, the characters are poised and calm. They are modern heroes trying to cope in an imperfect world. Objects become portents to their undecided fate. A white vinyl sofa with faded red velvet cushions sits absurdly alone in a room. Paint flakes off the scratched exterior of a partially opened door. The quality of the light and the sensuality of the colours maintain a carefully considered atmosphere. We have entered what Max Pam has called *Bourguedieuland*.

Shown for the first time in Australia, *The Passengers* is the latest body of work from the French photographer Christophe Bourguedieu, who produced this series from several trips to Perth between 2004 and 2006.

Christophe Bourguedieu studied law and criminal sciences before developing an interest in photography. He has taught at ECAL (Lausanne, Switzerland) and currently teaches photography at the Ecole nationale supérieure des arts décoratifs (Paris). He exhibits regularly in France and Europe, most recently at Galerie Box in Brussels and Musée d'Art Contemporain in Lyon.

Recommended reading:

Published by Le Point du Jour Editeur are Christophe Bourguedieu's other monographs *Le Cartographe* (2000), *Tavastia* (2002), and *Eden* (2004). His latest book *Les Passagers* (2007), which accompanies this exhibition, is the result of an affinity he developed with Perth, Western Australia as a result of attending FotoFreo 2004.