

Stills from 'Fighting Gravity' Moscow/London-London/Moscow, suspended projections, 2010 (left); 'Suicide Stack', 2010 (below)

address the contradictions of importing and exporting.'

We are obsessed with the weather, but your exhibition reveals some startling connections between climate and the global economy. Can you explain?

'The "Cloud Machine" pictures are explicit references to [pioneering geoengineer] Stephen Salter's solutions to stop hurricanes and global warming. Others paintings have been made with silver iodide – a substance sprayed in the sky by the Russian authorities to stop rain. Essentially the weather functions within the exhibition as a metaphor for the political and economic climate in which we live. Our most innocent habits have consequences for the environment, the problem is how to influence the situation in a different way. The fact that we can pollute and poison the planet with our gestures proves that we could also affect it positively by functioning in a different political and social system.'

Can you describe how the 'Money Trap' works and what it's about?

'The money trap is a safe with a hole cut from its door. This hole is large enough to let a hand in, but too narrow to let out a fist. The title "Money Trap" refers to boxes – or coconuts secured by a chain containing peanuts – that are commonly used to trap monkeys. We have never aimed to present our work in a space alien from commercial relationships, but this exhibition is not necessarily a statement on the commodification of art. Our main concern is the commodification of life.'

Who was Mr Stack and why have you made a video of his last words?

'Mr Stack was a 50-year-old software engineer who flew a small airplane into the IRS office building in Austin, Texas in February 2010. He posted a statement online explaining his reasons in which he criticised the limits of capitalism. We have transformed it into a projection that looks like the end titles of a movie (pictured left). The confusion in Stack's suicide letter makes his final gesture understandable.'

Does art have the power to change?

'Art has the power to change when it's good and intense. But the changes that art can produce are not immediate and direct.'

'Fighting Gravity' by **Claire Fontaine** is at Regina Gallery until **Mar 12** (see Galleries West).

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Just who on Earth is Claire Fontaine?

Well, she's actually two artists on a mission to restore power to art. **Ossian Ward** meets her, or them, between London-to-Moscow flights

Taking its name from a French publisher of nondescript school stationery and exercise books, Claire Fontaine is not one person, but a two-headed artist collective formed by James Thornhill and Fulvia Carnevale in 2004 and now based in Paris. Describing themselves as 'assistants' to Claire Fontaine, they have variously responded to global events, politics and society through their use and misuse of powerful symbols and status objects.

Claire Fontaine has exhibited bulging backpacks and burnt slogans in galleries, as well as handed out 'Instructions for the Sharing of Private Property' through video tutorials and limited edition lock picks. A week after the catastrophic bombing of Moscow airport, Claire Fontaine opened

'Fighting Gravity', a show co-existing in both the London and Moscow branches of the Regina Gallery, as a comment not just on the constant air travel of the wealthy, but on Russia's manipulation of the weather.

You describe yourselves as assistants to Claire Fontaine, but she doesn't really exist, does she?
'Claire Fontaine isn't a person but neither is she a fictitious character. She is the name of a shared space of collaboration, where everybody is an assistant and there are no bosses.'

Your first London show is called 'Fighting Gravity'. Are you fighting against a lack of intellectual engagement within the art world?
'The title doesn't refer to our own practice, but to the condition of

people for whom distances are erased by their private jets, and the mistakes that they make – which cause the impoverishment of thousands of other people, but don't cost them anything. The gravity that they fight against, through their way of life, also refers to the weight of their actions that take place in an amoral space.'

You've opened the same show in Moscow. What does this doppelgänger exhibition mean?

'The show underlines the paradoxes of living and working between several places, of exporting a productive model to a completely different context. Both venues have a similar neon sign that states the name of the technician that produced it and the remuneration that this person received. We have requested for the neon sign that was produced in Moscow to be sent to London and vice versa. It's a way to

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