

I made *Voyage to Italy* in 2006 when I was invited to produce a work in response to the photographic archive at the Canadian Centre for Architecture, Montreal. The point of departure for the work is an image from an album of photographs of Pompeii by the nineteenth-century Neapolitan photographer Carlo Fratacci. In the foreground of the image a wide flight of stone steps leads to a rectangular space flanked by broken columns. In the middle-ground is the standing figure of a woman. The photograph is captioned 'Basilica'.

*Voyage to Italy* is installed at Richard Saltoun Gallery as an ensemble of independent but interrelated works: two photo-text pieces, a single screen video with voice-over narration, and the same narrative repeated as a wall text. Fratacci's 1864 photograph is presented via its reproduction in my 2006 book *Voyage to Italy*. The photographs in *Voyage to Italy* were produced in Pompeii. At the site of Fratacci's own photograph I made two 360 degree panoramic images of the Basilica: one from the position of the woman in Fratacci's picture, the other from the point-of-view of the photographer. I also photographed each of the columns that delineate the rectangular space in which the woman stands.

I think of the 'images' with which I work as essentially psychological events located 'between' photographs and text in a space of associations, memories and fantasy. As I worked I found that the absent couple formed by Fratacci and his model became joined with another couple photographed at Pompeii – the warring protagonists in Roberto Rossellini's 1953 film *Journey to Italy*. While the written components of the photo-text works are suggested by Fratacci's photograph, the soundtrack of the video is based on my descriptions of the first and last sequences of Rossellini's film, but in a looping narrative that drifts from the verbal conflict of the film into dreamed scenes of physical violence and devastation. Like a photographic plate exposed to light, the surface of the city of Pompeii received an imprint that irreversibly transformed it. Pompeii is itself a *catastrophic* image, and its shattered walls readily evoke the wartime ruins that haunt the history of film and photography.

The content of *Voyage to Italy* derives from ideas and associations prompted by Fratacci's image: the enigma of the relation between photographer and model, and the eternal return of conflict within the couple and between social groups. The form of the work elaborates relations between still and moving images, combining references to an early documentary photograph and a classic narrative film within the space of an art gallery.