



Shoppers at the corner of Granville and Robson may be surprised to see a solitary person doing the wave on the giant video screens that normally carry fast and colourful advertising. Vox Pop, a video project by Antonia Hirsch examining her fascination with the crowd wave at sports games, can be viewed every three minutes, Oct. 20 to 26, on the video billboards.

An art wave hits Granville and Robson

Ad action on giant video screens will be interrupted by a lone figure doing the wave

BY JOHN MACKIE
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The two giant video screens at Granville and Robson normally snap and crackle with quick-hitting, colourful ads for companies such as Telus, Fido and WestJet.

But next week, they'll be showing something completely different: two short films by internationally acclaimed artist Antonia Hirsch.

"You really get a contrast,"

Hirsch said with a laugh. "Most of those [ad] spots are like 10 seconds long, then you will get this epic one minute."

Non-profit organizations get some access to the screens as part of the agreement to put them up on the side of the building that houses Future Shop and Winners. Normally, the time is allotted to organizations like the Vancouver Symphony; Hirsch's films are the first art projects to be screened.

The work is called *Vox Pop*, and deals with a modern phenomenon, the crowd wave at sports games.

Hirsch has been fascinated by the wave for years.

"I found it interesting how it's really exhilarating in a way to be in it and to be participating, but it's also a little bit scary," she explained.

"Because it has that herd instinct in it, where you really don't know if any good intentions are kind of driving this."

One film is a slow pan of a sports stadium, at the same speed of a typical wave. The oth-

er shows a lone fan sitting in the stands, doing the wave.

"By isolating this figure, I tried to highlight the kind of oddity of that gesture," she said.

"Once somebody's just by themselves, it seems ridiculous, in a way, what they're doing."

As funny as it is to see a lone figure doing the wave, Hirsch said "it could also be a little bit sinister. It has something maybe of the sort of raised hand 'heil,' or [a] very fervent religious gesture."

The films will be shown in the middle of the regular ad spots, which she thinks might be quite jarring for passerby.

"It is very slow and uneventful compared to the other stuff that's going up on those boards," she said.

"I don't want to annoy people, but I do want to create a situation where people might stop and go 'Hang on for a second, what is this?' There is this wonderful moment that can happen by throwing something into a known context that's a little different — you start to question what you already know.

"It may make you look differently at advertising, it may make you look differently at the type of imagery that's thrown at us."

Hirsch, 40, was born in was born in Frankfurt am Main, Germany, and has lived in Canada since 1994.

Her works are in the collections of institutions such as the Vancouver Art Gallery, The New York Public Library, the Yale University Collection of Rare Books, The National Art Library at the V&A and the Tate Gallery Library in London, England.

Vox Pop will start running at 12:01 a.m. Monday and run through midnight next Sunday, Oct. 26.

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