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April 3-9, 2008

"Matthew Buckingham"
Murray Guy
By Joshua Mack



False Future (film still): Courtesy Murray Guy

Matthew Buckingham's pair of brainy, often dry films explore the complex role of personal experience and chance in the understanding of history and visual imagery. In *False Future*, for example, the story of Louis Le Prince, who apparently recorded motion pictures five years before anyone else, is the basis for slightly academic musings on the arbitrariness of the historical record and the mechanics of human perception.

Everything I Need, a far more poetic work, pairs images shot in a vintage jetliner with excerpts from the memoirs of Charlotte Wolff—a Jewish lesbian who fled Germany in 1933. Buckingham presents Wolff exploring the ways historical events informed her self-image, first as a German and later as an "international Jew with a British passport," with dreamlike close-ups of seat backs, safety belts and airplane windows appearing on screen. These images may suggest Wolff's 1978 trip to address a lesbian conference in Berlin; however, the links between picture and story remain tenuous. This ambiguity helps to indicate how images are open to interpretation and allow viewers to make their own connections, processes which parallel the evolution of Wolff's understanding of herself.

The essential thing evoked in that work's title seems to be Wolff's realization that she couldn't take her circumstances for granted, but had, in the words of the philosopher Edmund Husserl, "to look at the world 'anew' with [her] own mind and eyes." This independence of thought is also Buckingham's abiding principle, and *Everything I Need* pursues it with a lyricism rarely seen in his work.