

## Rachel Cattle and Steve Richards

★★★★★

**Transition Gallery East End**

The charm of Cattle and Richards' short video projection lies in its incongruous combination of sketchy, amateurish animation – the shaky camerawork and pencil-scribbled, cardboard dioramas – with a sweeping, romantic musical score including classic songs by Barbra Streisand, Lee Hazlewood and John Lennon. Only in the concluding scene do soundtrack and imagery coincide, as a cardboard model record-player spins a drawing of an old 45, while Roxy Music's 'Same Old Scene', from which the title of the piece as a whole is taken, plays.

The preceding scenes, though, are more obscure and oblique: a steam train passing along a mountain bridge above a desert landscape; a moon that segues into a mirror-ball; a couple dancing in a ballroom. Or rather, not a couple, exactly; just a pair of legs, male and female, cut off above the knees – like some kind of fetish image, or something transposed from a photographic source. And indeed, in the accompanying handout, the artists specifically mention the ballroom scene from 'Last Tango in Paris', before going on to discuss more general themes to do with the vagaries of memory, the

distortions of emotional association. There's also a comic book, with drawings by Cattle relating to the main piece, but with additional, free-floating text balloons containing philosophical statements about cinema and music, nostalgia and illusion.

Presumably, then, all the scenes stem from movies, half-recollected; or perhaps images conjured up by certain songs. Not that it's ever possible to recognise the specific references, rather, the film depicts a mental landscape stripped down to its most rudimentary and evocative. In this sense, Cattle's crude, immature drawing style is entirely appropriate, suggesting a realm of emotional experience and personal significance, of memories dredged from childhood. *Gabriel Coxhead*



*Still from 'Same Old Scene'*