

T.J. WILCOX

2 May – 16 June 2007
Private View, 2 May, 6-8pm

For his fourth show at Sadie Coles HQ, the American artist TJ Wilcox presents three separate films united under one title, *A Fair Tale (Extended Mix)*, as well as six large-scale collages relating to the film's protagonists. All three films are biographical collages which incorporate a mixture of found footage and original film, and continue the artist's modernist investigation into the genres of narrative film.



"Wilcox ... doesn't accept the documentary elements of ... life as the only truth worth reckoning with. Nor does he allow the truth to hamper the metaphorical veracity of his characters. ...As a kind of happy pendant, Wilcox looks at both sides of the story: truth and illusion. So doing, he makes us look at the truth in fiction, the facts to be found in these voices."

Hilton Als, T.J. Wilcox, *Garlands*, 2006

The longest of the three films, *A Fair Tale* takes us on an enchanted journey through small-town America in the 1970s, a silent memory seen through a child's eyes and narrated with short, clear subtitles. In the five-minute-long film, we follow a seven-year-old TJ as his parents' hippie friends take him on a trip in their Volkswagen Vanagon to a county fair in the quaintly-named town of Pullayup. Through his eyes we watch pig races, Native American dancing and skydivers falling from the sky. We share the young boy's amazement and happiness when he is covered by a parachute from a rogue skydiver and rescued from his silk prison by none other than the Indian chief himself! This is a naïve tale of an innocent yet exciting experience which stays in the mind of a young child.

The other films in the exhibition trilogy, *Sissi* and *The Jerry Hall Story*, track the lives of two iconic women living in very different times. *Sissi* focuses on the tragic life of the Bavarian heroine, Empress Elizabeth of Austria. In this film, Wilcox draws on Sissi's unhappy marriage at the age of nineteen to her cousin Franz Joseph, whom she grew to despise. After having her four children kept from her and raised by their grandmother she became increasingly erratic and obsessive. In 1898 poor Sissi's unhappy life came to an end when she was assassinated by an anarchist whilst walking by Lake Geneva. Wilcox positions the story around her love of horses and mixes footage of Lipizzaners shot in Texas with appropriated cuts from a cult narrative of her life.

The Jerry Hall Story tells the unlikely rags-to-riches story of the iconic model who started her career after winning eight-hundred dollars in compensation after a car accident. She moved to Paris, became queen of the disco, launched her modeling career and became engaged to Brian Ferry. Wilcox collages film he shot in Texas, Jerry Hall's home state, with archival footage of the model.

TJ Wilcox has recently exhibited at the Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam, and has had film screenings at Museum Ludwig in Cologne, Tate Modern, London and MOMA in New York. He lives and works in New York.

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