

**JOHN BOCK**  
**Dandy****22 Feb – 24 Mar 2007**  
**Private View, 22 Feb, 6-8pm**

For his second show at Sadie Coles HQ, German artist John Bock presents a new film and related sculptures. The film, *Dandy*, is a dazzling cross between *Un Chien Andalou* and Sherlock Holmes.

"Dandyism in certain respects comes close to spirituality and to stoicism... These beings have no other status, but that of cultivating the idea of beauty in their own persons, of satisfying their passions, of feeling and thinking .... Contrary to what many thoughtless people seem to believe, dandyism is not even an excessive delight in clothes and material elegance. For the perfect dandy, these things are no more than the symbol of the aristocratic superiority of his mind."

Charles Baudelaire in "The Painter of Modern Life", 1863.

*Dandy*, made in 2006, was filmed at Chateau du Bosc, the family home of the aristocratic dwarf Henri de Toulouse Lautrec. Toulouse Lautrec is clearly the inspiration for Bock's character, the fictional 19th century aristocrat Monsieur Lautréamont, a hypochondriac dandy committed to the pursuit of true aesthetic perfection which he calls "urge-ingeniousness". In the same way that adopting the persona of a dandy could allow artists of Lautrec's period to transcend boundaries of artistic taste, by embracing the persona of Monsieur Lautréamont, Bock allows us step into his strange and uncanny world.

The film focuses on the interplay between Lautréamont and Louise, his seductive servant, and switches back and forth between Bock as the master and his reliance on Louise who is all at once nurse, servant, inspiration and lover. The film crosses the boundaries of surreal fantasy and period drama, with Bock playing the tormented genius, an inventor attempting to achieve perfection in every creative aspect: poetry, perfume, and even nature.

In the final scene between Louise and M. Lautréamont, Bock's own bizarre items of clothing, with their phallic shaped appendages and inventions, take on the characteristics of fetishes in a surreal orgy in which the strange social boundaries which have established their relationship up until this point are abandoned and animal instincts take over.

John Bock is based in Berlin and has exhibited in numerous museums and galleries worldwide including the 51st Venice Biennale in 2005 and the Moore Loft Space in Miami in 2006.

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