

JONATHAN HOROWITZ
FREE STORE

30 April – 30 May 2009
9 Balfour Mews London W1

In Jonathan Horowitz's third show at Sadie Coles HQ, everything is recycled. A new film titled *Apocalypto Now* is made entirely from found documentary footage and fragments of TV shows and films. Scenes from classic movies are interspersed with obscure bits of media detritus, forming pointed critical connections between disparate fictional and historical accounts.



Out of this montage approach, Horowitz constructs incisive new narratives which powerfully reflect on important topical cultural and political issues. The star of the piece is Mel Gibson, a figure whose avowed Catholic faith is at apparent odds with his public relation catastrophes. The presentation of the film is carbon neutral, with a solar panel just outside the gallery space harnessing energy to fuel the piece. In another work, a 'Free Store' has been built out of recycled plastic planks. This modular sculpture comprises a series of bins, and visitors are invited to recycle their own possessions by bringing something to place in or on one of them, and taking something away by way of trade. In its broadest sense, the Earth can be interpreted as a 'free store': as with Horowitz's sculpture, it requires a social contract from man in order to function, and in extreme interpretations, survive.

Working in video, sculpture, sound installation, and photography, in the first instance, Horowitz's work often constitutes an investigation of media, something perfectly surmised by his 1990 video *Maxell*, in which the name of the eponymous videotape manufacturer was copied and copied until it became illegible. Later into the 1990s, Horowitz's work took a distinctly more political turn as he began to derive material from a wide spectrum of political ideas and motivations – from race to Aids, from Congress to veganism, and from war to body politics. Throughout, Horowitz's art is characterized by a confluence of the personal and the political. Using simple mechanisms – juxtaposition, superimposition, or the foregrounding of a given medium's structural properties – Horowitz conveys significant meanings. In his photographic piece *Official Portrait of George W. Bush Available for Free from the White House Hung Upside Down* (2001) the act of quite literally turning the leader on his head conveys a mordant political message. A poignant sense of humour often pervades, as in *Go Vegan (!) (200 Celebrity Vegetarians Downloaded from the Internet)* (2002). Here, as elsewhere in Horowitz's work, a specific media fixation or cause becomes an eloquent microcosm for the 'bigger social picture'.

Jonathan Horowitz was born in New York in 1966 and studied at Wesleyan University, Middletown, Connecticut. He currently has a solo show at Museum Ludwig in Cologne, as well as at P.S.1., New York. Other solo shows include *Jonathan Horowitz/Silent Movie/MATRIX 151*, Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art, Hartford, Connecticut, 2003, and *Time, Life, People: Jonathan Horowitz at Kunsthalle St. Gallen*, St. Gallen, Switzerland, 2001. Horowitz has been included in numerous key group exhibitions of recent years including *Good News for People who Love Bad News*, Studio 495, Swiss Institute, New York, 2007; *Lines, Grids, Stains, Words*, at the Museum of Modern Art, New York, 2007; and also in 2007, *Art in America: 300 Years of Innovation*, the National Art Museum of China, Beijing, touring to Shanghai Museum and the Museum of Contemporary Art Shanghai, organised by the Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation and the Terra Foundation for American Art. He lives and works in New York.

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 Opening hours Tuesday – Saturday 10 – 6pm