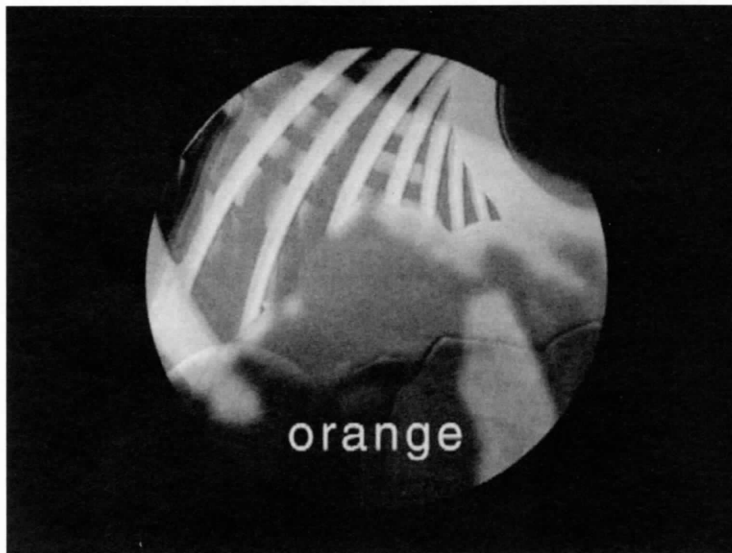


DE LA WARR PAVILION

7 October 2006 – 7 January 2007

MACBETH VOODOO



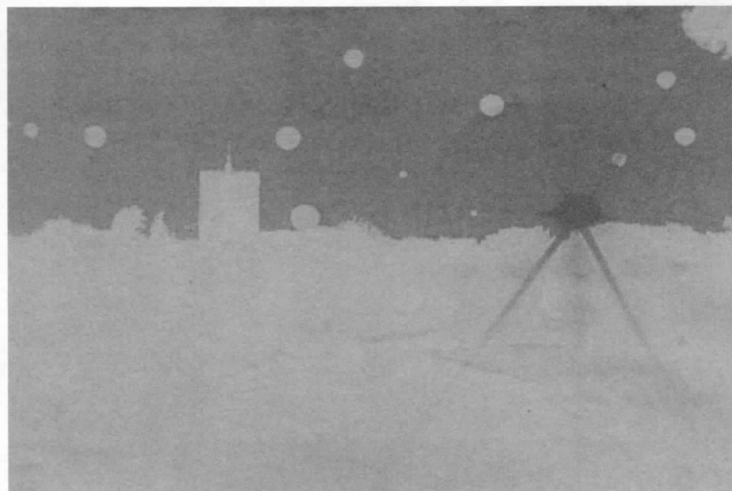
PHYLLIS BALDINO

Color without Color, 1999

DVD Video still

18:50 min

Courtesy the artist and
Electronic Arts Intermix,
New York



PHYLLIS BALDINO

Mars/NY/Rome/De La Warr, 2006

2 channel video stills

Left channel 28:42 min

Right channel 9:24 min

Courtesy the artist

Orson Welles (b. 1915 – d. 1985 USA) was a film, radio and theatre director, actor, screenwriter, broadcaster and producer. In 1936, the US Federal Theatre Project assigned him to work in Harlem, New York to create a production of Macbeth. Welles's production adapted the traditional Shakespearian tale by relocating it to early nineteenth-century Haiti. Featuring an all black cast, the play swiftly became known as Voodoo Macbeth.

This exhibition looks into two major themes. Borrowing its title from the ground-breaking project, it locates a moment when Welles became involved with the latter part of the Harlem Renaissance movement (c.1919 – 1929), resulting in the first production to take such a radical and new approach to the famous play, and the first to set it within an alternative cultural context. The second theme celebrates the essence, spirit, and cross art-form experimentalism of Welles's approach; his use of sound, spatial composition, exploration of light and dark and visual culture, which he developed throughout his career. The exhibition considers the historical and contemporary dialogue that Welles's work had and still has, with many artists.

Phyllis Baldino Baldino's moving image works have consistently explored links with science and our preoccupation with our interpretations of our universe. In Color without Color (1999) the artist describes the piece as 'a project about individuals who have complete achromatopsia (those born without colour vision). It reveals their ideas about colour and pioneers new ways of perceiving colour in a colour-normal world'. What is revealing about the piece is the importance Baldino gives to sound and the visual filmic way she has expressed the colour the participants describe which they are blind to. The sounds used in the interviewed sequences are not formal or traditional explanatory voice-overs, but intimate and revealing testimonies. The use of long tracking shots with distinct layers of monochromatic colour clearly illustrates Baldino's masterful control over the medium.

In Gallery 2, a specially commissioned audio-visual work Mars/New York/Rome/ De La Warr (2006) is presented. Here, Phyllis Baldino offers a contemporary take on Orson Welles's classic radio broadcast War of the Worlds, performed on the air on October 30th 1938 (note, Welles based his radio adaptation upon H.G. Wells's original novel). Orson Welles's now notorious live broadcast reportedly frightened many listeners into believing that an actual Martian invasion was in progress. Using extracts of the original soundtrack, Baldino's new work fuses this with film footage (taken by the artist) of a demonstration on the eve of the Republican national convention in 2004, together with footage of a demonstration on the Iraq war in April 2006. Mars/New York/Rome/ De La Warr suggests that what was the war of the worlds in the 1930s, has now become the invasion of the republicans and the invasion of the protestors in reaction to the 'War on Terror'.

PHYLLIS BALDINO (b. 1956 USA) is a New York based artist whose practice includes performance, video, sculpture and installation. Baldino received a BFA in Sculpture from Hartford Art School, West Hartford, Connecticut. Her work has been shown internationally and at the Museum of Modern Art, New York, the SoHo Guggenheim, Whitney Museum of American Art, Wexner Centre for the Arts, Contemporary Art Centre, Cincinnati, and in numerous national and international film and video festivals, including the Impakt Festival (2002, 2001, 1999), the New York Video Festival (2002), the Oberhausen Short Film Festival (2001), media city Seoul (2000), and the World Wide Video Festival (2000, 1998, 1996). In 2001 and 1996, she was a finalist for an international media/art award at the ZKM/ Sudwestrundfunk and International Video Arts Award in Baden-Baden.



Sacha Masour

Federal Banga leaning over body, 1930
from 'Le Sang d'un poete' by Jean Cocteau

Photograph
434 x 435mm

© The Artist's Estate, courtesy
of the Lee Miller Archives, England



Glenn Ligon

Warm Broad Glow, 2005 (installation view)

Neon and paint

Courtesy the artist and

Regen Projects, Los Angeles

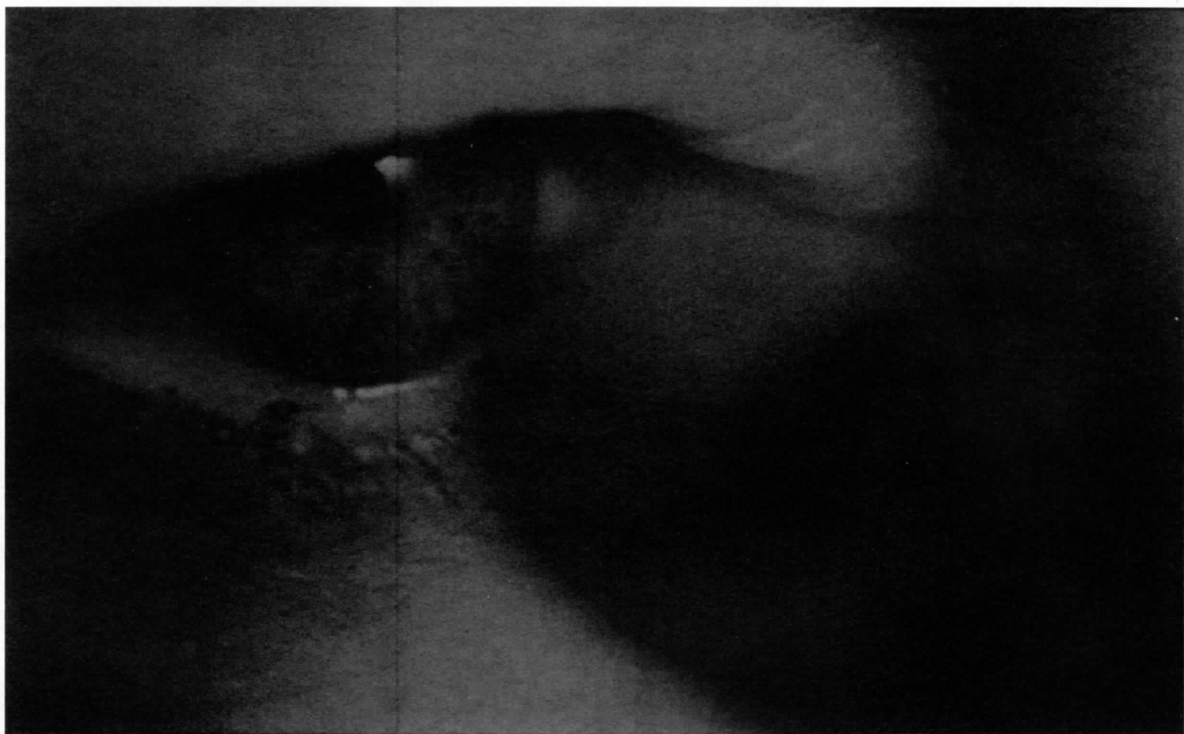
Jean Cocteau was a French artist and writer who made his name widely known in poetry, fiction, film, ballet, painting, and opera. In the 1930s Cocteau started to make films, the first of which, his surrealist masterpiece Le Sang d'un Poete (*The Blood of a Poet*) (1930), was based on his own private mythology. In this exhibition we present vintage 'stills' photographs taken by cinematographer Sacha Masour on the set of the film. 'Poets . . . shed not only the red blood of their hearts but the white blood of their souls,' proclaimed Jean Cocteau of his groundbreaking film, which serves as an exploration of the plight of the artist, the power of metaphor and the relationship between art and dreams. Further selected examples of these photographs can be seen on a monitor display within the gallery. In this context, we see Cocteau as a contemporary of Welles. In Le Sang d'un Poete Cocteau explores visual ideas and motifs within the idea of an expansive frame i.e. the blurring and synthesis of visual art, theatre, literature and film.

JEAN COCTEAU (b. 1889, d. 1963 France) Acknowledged for his brilliance and ingenuity, Jean Cocteau was a prolific filmmaker, novelist, artist, playwright and entrepreneur. Above all he regarded himself as a poet, indeed he saw poetry as central to his vision of all the arts. As an artist he utilised all the media available to him, fusing imagery and text, poetry and prose, fact and fiction, realism and fantasy, history and modernity. Doubting his own ability as a film director, he was a master with the medium. His extensive filmography begins with the ground-breaking 'Le Sang d'un Poete' which he directed and wrote, and includes 'La Belle et La Bête' (*The Beauty and the Beast*) (1946), and 'Orphée' (1949), which is widely considered his most accomplished work as director, being consistent with the rest of his work and representative of his own personal obsessions.

Glenn Ligon The opening credits for Welles's film Citizen Kane, (1941) are minimalist but incredibly powerful with the text 'CITIZEN KANE' in upper case lit-up in a neon effect in white, on a black background, with a silent soundtrack. It is this same use of words, play on space and sound which has been a preoccupation of the artist Glenn Ligon, whose work explores issues of race, sexuality and genre and how these might be presented to audiences in a gallery setting. Within his diverse practice, Ligon is best known for his appropriation of texts from a wide range of sources including in this instance, Gertrude Stein's short story 'Melanctha' (1909). In Warm Broad Glow (2005) the words 'negro sunshine' are constructed into a neon sculpture, yet unlike the opening credits in Welles's film these words are in lower case and the artist has deliberately painted the neon black to give a black on white effect. For Ligon, it is important not to mimic the context of his source materials, but to uniquely rework them with elements of popular culture, critique and humour.

GLENN LIGON (b. 1960 USA) is known for his resonant works in various media that explore issues surrounding race, sexuality, identity, representation and language. Ligon studied at the Rhode Island School of Design before receiving a B.A. from Wesleyan University in 1982. The recipient of numerous awards and fellowships, Ligon has exhibited internationally, and his work is included in the permanent collections of the Museum of Modern Art, New York, the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, the Hirshhorn Museum in Washington, D.C., the Philadelphia Museum of Art, and the Walker Art Center in Minneapolis.

The artist is represented by Thomas Dane Gallery, London and Regen Projects, Los Angeles.



Steve McQueen

Charlotte, 2005

16mm film still

5:42 min

Courtesy the artist; Thomas Dane,
London and Marian Goodman
Gallery, New York and Paris



Lee Miller

Portrait of Edward Matthews as
Saint Ignatius, Four Saints in
Three Acts, New York, 1933

434 x 435mm

© Lee Miller Archives,
England 2006

Steve McQueen McQueen's 16mm moving image installation Charlotte (2005) is a collaboration with the British screen and theatre actress Charlotte Rampling. The intimacy of the work – all we see is Charlotte Rampling's eye and the artist's finger trying to touch it – resonates with early experimental work by surrealist filmmaker Luis Buñuel, as well as the 1950s pioneering work by British filmmaker Michael Powell, especially in the use of the colour red within the work. More specifically, the film resonates with Welles's work in relation to the use of intimate and tightly framed compositional elements. In the 1936 stage production of Macbeth it is a white director (Orson Welles) who is staging a black subject within a theatre genre. In Charlotte it is a black director (Steve McQueen) who is framing a white theatre subject (Charlotte Rampling) for a moving image gallery installation. There are also parallels between the artistic narrative within Charlotte and Welles's work where one can see visual and aural motifs using lighting, staging and overlapping sound. McQueen incorporates these elements through the integral use of the sound of the projector, the luminous use of colour which is used to bathe the installation environment and the framed stillness of the interaction between the artist and the actress.

STEVE MCQUEEN (b. 1969 London) works predominantly with film and video. Born in London, he studied at the Chelsea School of Art and then at Goldsmiths College. He left Goldsmiths in 1993 and then studied briefly at the Tisch School in New York City. In 1996 he was awarded the first ICA Futures Award. In 1999 he received the Turner Prize following exhibitions at the Kunsthalle Zurich and the ICA in London. In 2002 McQueen was awarded an OBE and presented his acclaimed Artangel commission, 'Western Deep/Carib's Leap'.

McQueen lives and works in Amsterdam and London and is represented by Thomas Dane Gallery, London and Marian Goodman Gallery, New York & Paris.

Lee Miller Miller like Welles, was part of a pioneering international community of artists who experimented with visual culture. In the photographs by Lee Miller we see an intimate series of portraits of the black cast from the opera Four Saints in Three Acts composed by Virgil Thompson with a libretto by Gertrude Stein first staged on Broadway in 1934. This production was before Voodoo Macbeth and like Voodoo Macbeth it took on a European context (a story about 16th century Spanish saints) with an all black cast portraying the saints.

ELIZABETH 'LEE' MILLER (b. 1907 USA – d. 1977 England) was an American photographer. She was a successful fashion model and fashion photographer in Paris during the 1920s before becoming an acclaimed photographer. In 1929 Miller became the muse of the artist Man Ray in Paris. With the outbreak of the Second World War, Miller ignored pleas that she return to the US and started a new career working freelance for Vogue. She documented the Blitz and was accredited to the US Army as a war correspondent, becoming a combat photographer in Europe after the allied invasion. The estate of Lee Miller is represented by the Lee Miller Archives which is based in her old home Farley Farm House, East Sussex.



Mitra Tabrizian
 From the Series
 'Correct Distance', 1986
 12 black and white photographs
 (4 triptychs)
 20" x 24" each
 Courtesy the artist



Kara Walker
 8 Possible Beginnings or;
 The Creation of an African-America,
 Parts 1-8, A Moving Picture
 by the young, self-taught
 Genius of the South K.E. Walker, 2005
 Video still
 Duration 15:57 min
 Courtesy the artist and Sikkema
 Jenkins& Co, New York

Mitra Tabrizian Tabrizian's Correct Distance, (1986) is a series of four black and white triptychs accompanied by texts that reference psychologist Sigmund Freud's case studies of women who were deemed sensitive, difficult and considered a threat. Central to Tabrizian's work is the femme fatale character, which was played out in a number of key noir films by male directors such as Fritz Lang's 'Woman in the Window' (1945); Charles Vidor's 'Gilda' (1946); Robert Siodmak's 'Sudden Fear' (1952) and Michael Curtiz's 'Mildred Pearce' (1945). Here, the artist uses a photographic approach to highlight the ambivalence constructed around the femme fatale where the female sexual identity within the cinematic/ photographic narrative is one that evokes fear and desire. The images in the exhibition also evoke the film noir period of Welles's work for example the films 'Touch of Evil' (1958) and 'Lady from Shanghai' (1948). In these films the use of monochromatic tones, interior locations, lighting and special framing set the mood for the narrative of the film.

MITRA TABRIZIAN (b. 1959 Iran) studied film and photography at the Polytechnic of Central London (now University of Westminster). Her work has been concerned with a range of contemporary debates; from post-feminist and post-colonial theories to the effects of late capitalism in Great Britain, to the shifts and changes in post-Revolutionary Iran. She has exhibited widely and in major international institutions including the Victoria & Albert Museum, London, the ICA, London, the Museum of Photography, Tokyo and the New Museum of Modern Art, New York. Her most recent book, 'Beyond the Limits' is published by Steidl (2004). Her most recent film, 'The Predator' is funded by AHRB Innovation Awards (2004). The series Correct Distance (1986) on the femme fatale of Hollywood film noir, is published by Cornerhouse (1990). The artist lives and works in London.

Kara Walker Walker's video installation '8 Possible Beginnings...' (2005) charts the African-American experience during the slave trade period. The work employs puppetry animation, featuring contrasting black and white two-dimensional cut-out images, in the shape of human figures. The characters are taken through a series of journeys which the artist visually narrates in eight distinct sections. The explicit scenarios depicted range from sex, rape, incest and violence. The artist features in the piece and her hands are clearly shown manipulating the puppets. The sound is intriguing and evocative of pre- 'blues' music from the period.

Within the power/domination narrative of the work there is humour and beauty. In scene 6 'A Darkly Hymn: "All I Want"', there is a complex overlapping soundtrack of song and music, the voice-over of a child and woman, together with an image of a child in the form of a beautifully crafted and animated black paper silhouette. Collectively, these aesthetic qualities create an ambience of desired beauty within an environment that has at its centre, hostility and violence. '8 Possible Beginnings...' is an example of how artists, performers and filmmakers deal with folklore and storytelling as part of their process and exploration, reconsidering how these traditional tales are re-worked to have meaning within the machinery of popular culture.

KARA WALKER (b. 1969 USA) is a contemporary American artist who is best known for her exploration of race, gender, sexuality, and identity in her artworks. Walker's education includes an MFA at Rhode Island School of Design in Painting/ Printmaking, and a BFA in Painting/Printmaking at Atlanta College of Art. Kara Walker's work has been exhibited at the Museum of Modern Art, New York, the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum and the Whitney Museum of American Art. In 1997 she received a MacArthur Foundation award, and in 2002 she represented the US at the São Paulo Biennale in Brazil. Walker lives in New York and is on the faculty of the MFA program at Columbia University.

DE LA WARR PAVILION

7 October 2006 – 7 January 2007

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