

## PRESS RELEASE

William E. Jones

**ALTERNATIVE VERSION**

Contraband, 2010, sequence of digital files, color, silent, 3' 59", looped

**Opening:** Friday September 17th 2010 18.00 – 22.00 hrs  
**Venue:** Galleria Raffaella Cortese Via Stradella 7 20129 Milano  
**On show:** September 17th – November 13th 2010  
**orario:** Tuesday to Saturday 15.00-19.30 hrs and by appointment

**Conversation with the artist and Luigi Fassi on Saturday September 18th, 19.00hrs**

**the Gallery will follow Start opening hours: Friday September 17th 11.00-22.00 hrs; Saturday 18th September 11.00-21.00 hrs; Sunday 19th September 11.00-19.00 hrs**

Raffaella Cortese is delighted to announce the first solo show in Milan of the American artist William E. Jones (Canton, Ohio, 1962), whose videos and photographs –the latter commissioned for the Italian show – of 2010 will be displayed.

Jones' work, which has always been characterized by the study of archive material, offers an interpretation of some cross-sections of American society and episodes in recent history that have either slipped into oblivion or been purposefully forgotten. In particular, the artist wants to make us think about the control strategies implemented by those who are in political-social power.

The exhibition will present an emblematic work from his previous film production. *Tearoom* (1962/2007), screened at the Whitney Biennial in 2008, is a video made by a local police force during an investigation in Mansfield, Ohio in 1962 to monitor homosexuals, who met in public restrooms and were accused of sodomy. The voyeuristic manhunt using hidden cameras is a particularly poignant subject today in light of the use of technology as an instrument for control.

In the videos (*The National Anthem*, *No Product #2 (Shower)*, *Aggressive Child and Contraband*), all produced this year, the artist accomplishes an analysis and deconstruction of the image. Thanks to a laborious technique, the films end up as unique visual creations. In fact, Jones photographs every image of the 16mm film

found in the archives; once he has modified and distorted them, he reassembles the individual frames in a series of moving images. The effect is visually jarring and provocative. In *No Product #2*, the images of an old soap advertisement from the 70s are reworked in order to desecrate the fascination they once had and allow their hidden power to emerge. In *Contraband*, using stroboscopic colors like red and cyan, he shifts the moment when young marines are enlisted into the background, turning attention to the surprising list of banned objects considered contraband.

The images in the *National Photo* series, taken from two archives at the U.S Library of Congress (*National Photo Company Collection* and *The Photochrom Print Collection*), are skillfully overlapped and re-elaborated, bringing to life landscapes and surreal situations that give a nod to the paintings of Sigmar Polke and the California collage artist Jess Collins.

William E. Jones is a Los Angeles based filmmaker and photographer. His work has been exhibited in museums, galleries, and at festivals including Tate Modern, London; Museum of Modern Art, New York; the Whitney Biennial; Wexner Center for the Arts; The Getty Center; Sundance Film Festival; Rotterdam International Film Festival; Filmforum; Artists Space. William E. Jones's work was included in the Nordic Pavilion of the 53rd Venice Biennale, curated by Elmgreen & Dragset. In 2009 he had, for the first time in Italy, a solo show curated by Luigi Fassi at Ar/ge kunst, Bolzano.

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