



Te Adam
Pātaka Art
Toi Gallery

1 May 2013

Plunged into the realm of the visual

Visually lush art works infused with the raw materials of pop, trash, queer and fashion culture, unite in the latest exhibition at the Adam Art Gallery, opening 3 May.

'Beautiful Creatures' brings together the work of three artists—American Jack Smith (1932-1989), Australian Bill Henson and New Zealander Jacqueline Fraser.

Working respectively in film, photography, collage and installation, each artist uses the technical tools of their media—staging, lighting, cutting, and framing—and the powerful pull of looks and poses, to draw the viewer in and produce a potent atmospheric.

"There is a visual intensity to this exhibition that defies easy interpretation," says Adam Art Gallery Director Christina Barton. "Each artist uses the human body as an object of attraction but also as a vehicle for thinking, in ways that seem to bypass words."

Curator Michelle Menzies says these artists hover between pop and high culture. Edgy, glamorous or camp, the scenarios they create lift us out of our ordinary or humdrum existence.

"The allure these artists produce is surprisingly affirming. These 'beautiful creatures' are not just marketing tools or sexual objects. They are granted an affecting and unexpected agency that overturns our expectations and makes us want to join them. Knowing we can't is part of their power" says Menzies.

This is the first time Jack Smith's classic underground film has been seen in an exhibition in New Zealand. "Bringing it together with Bill Henson's atmospheric photographs and Jacqueline Fraser's immersive installation is a rare opportunity to re-draw the recent history of the figure in art."

'Beautiful Creatures' will be accompanied by a film series titled *Evening Flix*, co-presented with the student magazine *Salient* and VBC 88.3fm.

What: Beautiful Creatures: Jack Smith / Bill Henson / Jacqueline Fraser

Where: Adam Art Gallery, Victoria University of Wellington, Gate 3, Kelburn Parade

When: 3 May–7 July

Tuesday–Sunday, 11am–5pm (closed on Monday)

Free entry

To make an appointment for a preview of the exhibition or to arrange interviews, please contact Michelle Menzies on michelle.menzies@vuw.ac.nz or phone (04) 463 5229.

www.adamartgallery.org.nz

Further information about artists Jack Smith, Bill Henson and Jacqueline Fraser and images of their work are available from the Adam Art Gallery. Please contact Michelle Menzies on michelle.menzies@vuw.ac.nz or phone (04) 463 5229

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