

CONNER CONTEMPORARY ART

SCOTT TRELEAVEN

WHO ARE YOU AN AGENT FOR?

January 15 - February 19, 2005.

Conner Contemporary Art is pleased to introduce the work of Toronto-based artist Scott Treleven in his first solo exhibition in Washington, DC. To date, Treleven is best known for his zine-cum-film *THE SALIVATION ARM*, listed by the Village Voice as one of the most notable underground films of 2002. In *Who Are You an Agent For?* the artist will feature new collage work and celebrate the release of the limited edition DVD of the *SALIVATION* video.

Cut-Up Method pioneer William Burroughs warily greeted visitors in Tangiers with the question, "who are you an agent for?" All of us, he decided, are agents for someone...often unwittingly. Scott Treleven's films and collages explore the idea that lurking beneath the surface of punk's iconoclasm is a stream of symbolist and occult influences that trace an unseen, secret lineage. Treleven's subjects turn from the mainstream religious and social systems that condemn them, choosing instead to create adjunct cultures they can truly call their own; a constructed world replete with its own set of social codes and guarded systems of exchange and belief.

Already an established name in indie and underground circles, Treleven's 22-minute cult film *THE SALIVATION ARMY* (2002) has been variously compared to Jarman, Anger, Dennis Cooper, and to Burroughs' seminal gay manifesto, *The Wild Boys*. The harrowingly Romantic story of the rise and fall of a gang of young queer radicals, *THE SALIVATION ARMY* film draws heavily on the artist's own experiences publishing a zine of the same name, bringing together his eye for potent imagery and interest in street-level mythologies.

Similarly, the scenes of orgiastic exotica that make up the artist's collages have conjured associations with Moreau, Géricault, and even CB DeMille, as King's Road punks and comely young Paris Commune rioters revolt against backdrops of 17th century witches' sabbats and Victorian Hellfire Club rallies. Key to the potency of the work is Treleven's inclusion of his own personal photographs of the modern progeny of these traditions. Using mechanical reproduction as a leveling medium, the meticulously layered black and white photocopies evoke a stark *noir* sensibility, alluding to zine culture, anarchist broadsheets and underground missives. Eruptions of origami paper flowers heighten the Baroque compositions and Rorschach-esque monuments that celebrate the violent clash between high and low, lyrical and political, tragic and heroic.

Recently, Treleven's work has been exhibited at Deitch Projects (NYC), D'Amelio Terras (NYC), Galerie du jour agnes b (Paris), Marc Selwyn Fine Art (Los Angeles) and Kavi Gupta Gallery (Chicago).

This exhibition is curated by Simon Watson | -scenic, New York.

Opening reception: Saturday, January 15th, 6-8pm.

Additional information and images may be found @ www.connercontemporary.com

Conner Contemporary Art is located: 1730 Connecticut Avenue, Nw - 2nd Floor, Washington, DC 20009
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