

## RICH AND FABULOUS

Deej Fabyc & Elvis Richardson

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Developed independently, but with an overflow of synergies, two artists' projects were presented together as *Rich & Fabulous* (the show's title a play on the artists' names). In the darkened gallery space, Australian artists Deej Fabyc and Elvis Richardson each allowed their works to seep through to the other, unavoidably creating a shared soundtrack.

In Richardson's installation *Slide Show Land*, the temporal, performative aspect of the chunky click and whirr of three slide carousels in constant automated rotation gave the project a power of its own. These mechanical sounds were set against an incessantly forlorn karaoke version of REM's 'Everybody Hurts' in Fabyc's *KJ's Story*, and a child's voice reciting over and over "I am me, you are you" in a second work from Deej Fabyc.

*Slide Show Land* pooled over 30,000 slides, creating a vast library of anonymous family portraits and travel destinations. It introduced the generic, the familiar every-place of travel that's nowhere and in-between. A trio of loaded slide projectors flicked image after image onto second hand screens, while boxes of indexed carousels beckoned gallery visitors to pick and choose from this collection of collections. If *Slide Show Land* provided some kind of collective history with over fifty years of family snaps spanning the globe on display, the overlapping works by Fabyc were focused on a more intimate level of biography and family relationships.

Like *Slide Show Land*, *KJ's Story* also uses a collection of projected images, but in this case all documenting the history of one family – 'KJ' and her two daughters. Apart from a name, little was given away about these women, but personal images from the family album and the tragi-drama mood of the accompanying REM song (performed by KJ),

conveyed the intensity of mother-daughter relationships and created a funereal impression of loss. While the biographical narrative remained vague, the images contained enough detail to evoke more, as did Richardson's slides. Both artists provided an access into the lives and pasts of other people, moments and occasions captured translated now to satiate the voyeuristic needs of gallery-goers. In *Slide Show Land* a passive surveillance is at play with slide collections systematically purchased and archived after the fact, in contrast to the 'Now' of real-time banality we are accustomed to in current entertainment genres.

A second collaboration is found within *Rich and Fabulous*, that of Deej Fabyc and her daughter Beata in the work *I Am Me, You Are You*. The video piece plays on a monitor on the floor surrounded by a scatter of makeshift doll's beds. With Beata's contribution to and participation in the project, Fabyc extends her exploration of motherhood, and particularly the mother-child bond. We witness Beata at a time she is beginning to understand herself as an individual, a person distinct from her mother. Fabyc has documented a crucial process in a child's development of identity and subjectivity on camera, just as other families have documented holidays and birthdays in *Slide Show Land*.

Each of the components put together by *Rich and Fabulous* seemed to create a timelessness through repetition and familiarity. Exploring family dynamics and our experiences of family at different times in our lives or histories, the works became a poignant reminder of abandonment and time's passing, while at the same time, a celebration of a culture that is trigger happy with the camera.

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