

**STANDARD (OSLO)
PRESS RELEASE**

EMILY WARDILL

“SICK SERENA AND DREGS AND WRECK AND WRECK” / “SECS”

03.04.-03.05.2008 / PREVIEW: THURSDAY 03.04.2008 / 19.00-21.00

STANDARD (OSLO) is pleased to announce its first solo exhibition with British artist Emily Wardill, featuring her two most recent films: “Sick Serena And Dregs And Wreck And Wreck” and “Secs”. In Wardill’s films any coherent reading of reality seems suspended in favour of recognizing a meshwork of different versions of the real – tensely weaved together.

Q: “What are you thinking about?”

A: “A giant bollock that could be used as a spacehopper.”

The documentary real, the theatrically unreal or hallucinogenic surreal repeatedly intertwine in Emily Wardill’s films, leaving logic restlessly fading in and out of sync. In the case of “Sick Serena And Dregs And Wreck And Wreck” this results in a layering of modes, meanings and historical moments, where the iconography of stained glass windows from medieval British churches is taken as the point of departure. Filmed footage of this imagery – initially serving as allegories and translating the liturgy into images to the illiterate visitor – is juxtaposed with several vignettes, staged by the artist and lit in correspondence to the bold palette of the stained glass. Wardill recomposes these tableaux in ways that invoke both a sense of unease and amusement. The frequent anachronisms verge on slapstick comedy, as in the case of the bearded Amira reappearing in a tracksuit while reading the Yellow pages rather than the Bible. This estrangement is further emphasized by the faltering delivery of the actors and the fragmentation of the dialogue. Wardill is not merely addressing the exaggeration and artifice of cinematic melodrama, but also the allegory’s continued ability to reveal hidden meaning, whether morally or politically.

Produced at the same time as “Sick Serena [...]” is the short film “Secs”. Throughout its length of two and a half minutes the camera stays with the same figure: a person sitting motionless in the dark, but whose silhouette is cut clear by light. From this darkness and empty portrait a story unfolds. The anonymous source takes us through a series of events that led to unemployment. The voice of this person is equally disguised, with the words of the confession being pronounced slowly and in an unnaturally low tone. Trivially being caught researching historical artefacts on the Internet through work hours, “Secs is an account of bad judgement, a sequence of errors that seem relatively innocent when compared to the crimes of passion described in Sick Serena ... or the narratives associated with anonymous appearances on television”, writes the curator Michelle Cotton. “The form exceeds the ideas it contains and Wardill draws out it’s own strange theatre. What occurs is an identification of style, a memory of something else that once inhabited that same form, a trace of affect.”

Emily Wardill lives and works in London. Recent solo exhibitions include the Institute of Contemporary Art (ICA), London and Jonathan Viner / Fortescue Avenue, London. Her works have also been included in group exhibitions such as "Lightbox" at Tate Britain and "Ballet Mecanique" at Timothy Taylor Gallery, and will also this spring feature in “Reykjavik Experiment Marathon” curated by Hans Ulrich Obrist, as well as “An Ambiguous Case”, curated by Emily Pethick at MUMOK, Vienna. Wardill was earlier this month announced as first laureate of the *Follow Fluxus-After Fluxus* grant, which will conclude with an exhibition at the NKV Nassauischer Kunstverein Wiesbaden.

For further information please visit our webpage: www.standardoslo.no or contact Eivind Furnesvik at eivind@standardoslo.no or +47 917 07 429 / +47 22 60 13 10. STANDARD (OSLO) is open Tuesday-Friday: 12.00-17.00 / Saturday: 12.00-16.00. Sunday and Monday: Closed

Upcoming exhibition projects:

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**STANDARD (OSLO) / Hegdehaugsveien 3 / +47 22 60 13 10 / info@standardoslo.no
/ N-0352 Oslo / +47 22 60 13 11 / www.standardoslo.no**