

# rodolphe janssen

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## **Sam Samore Scenarios**

22.02 – 29.03.2008

Rodolphe Janssen is pleased to present the first solo exhibition in Europe of Sam Samore's new series of photographs entitled *Scenarios* – continuing his exploration of cinema and painting. All the black and white gelatin silver prints are the same size – 125 x 215 cm, an aspect ratio referencing widescreen films. The large film grain created for these images makes for fields of abstraction evoking an expressionist sensuality of the picture-plane. Slow-motion effects are evoked through the illusion of focus shifting and motion-blur, giving all of them an emotionally charged, uncanny and dream-like atmosphere.

In *Scenarios*, Samore stages and directs the actors as anti-heroes/heroines within fictional episodes suggesting such genres as film noir, spy thriller, urban western, contemporary tragedy – while referencing the painting of Caravaggio and Manet. Close-ups of the faces suggest psychological isolation. A feeling of spatial dislocation derives from unusual vantage points – there are times when the figure appears to be laying down or floating/hovering. In addition to concentrating on each individual as a character in a drama, Samore continues with his trope of the extreme close-up – images of an eye and lips. The exhibition as a whole can be viewed as a collection of jump-cuts, the story remaining incomplete and unfinished.

In addition to the group of pictures, Samore will introduce his most recent film *A Melancholy Encyclopedia*, 2008. In this work of thirty minutes in length, four dreams unfold by way of non-linear narrative, invoking love, death, debauchery, anomie – the stuff of fairy tales. This short feature film began as a component of an installation Samore created for the Istanbul Biennale 2007, but has since been re-edited for single channel presentation. While Samore has been making films since the 1970s, *A Melancholy Encyclopedia* marks a new departure point – suggesting the atmosphere of his large photographs and conjuring another way of storytelling, something additional to his literary works, such as *Sumptuous Fire of the Stars* (1997) or *Tangled Web of Erotic Savage Cunning* (1994).

Samore has exhibited internationally since 1990 at institutions such as the Kunsthalle Zurich, Switzerland; Fondation Cartier, Paris; Serpentine Gallery London; De Appel, Amsterdam; Casino Luxembourg; Centre National de la Photographie, Paris, the 46th Venice Biennale. In 2006 he had his first solo museum show in the United States at P.S.1/MOMA, New York (Curated by Bob Nickas), consisting of two series of photographs displayed together for the first time: *The Suicidist* produced in 1973 and *The Suicidist* (continued), 2003. In 2007 he had solo exhibitions at Galerie Gisela Capitain, Cologne and D'Amelio Terras, New York. Sam Samore lives and works in New York.