

Thomas Erben Gallery

Press Release

What with What Rose Wylie

October 14 - November 13, 2010

Opening Reception: Thursday, October 14, 6 - 8:30 pm



Thomas Erben is pleased to present the first US solo exhibition by British painter Rose Wylie. Born in 1934, Wylie attended the Folkestone & Dover School of Art until 1956 and received her MA from the Royal College of Art, London, in 1981. This exhibition includes works from the past two decades, providing the audience with access to the evolution of an idiosyncratic, astutely created body of work on canvas and paper.

The images in Wylie's large-scale paintings, such as a cat, a skull, or seemingly inconsequential details of everyday life, are drawn from a variety of sources. Memory and emotional resonance guide her selections as in the movie scenes, which she paints, unchecked against the original references, in her *Film Notes*. Often a doll-like, female figure appears with objects or stands alone, assuming various rolls.

To give form to the everyday, personal and emotional, Wylie draws from a comprehensive knowledge of art historical references; including Dürer woodcuts, folk painting, Egyptian figures, medieval art, El Greco and early, hand-painted Pop. She first works out her ideas in drawings on paper, which she alters, crops, collages, layers and combines. Similar processes are then employed when she reworks these drawings in oil onto raw, unstretched canvas.

One senses Wylie's visceral delight in the physical process of putting down paint, reworking it over and over, sometimes hiding unsatisfactory results with a patch of fresh canvas, white paint or simply scratching it out. Everything is in a serendipitous flux until completion, when the lines feel as if generated by themselves and every blob is in its place. Text, as Wylie indicates, is included as much for pattern as for content. This amalgamation of image and text creates a maze of narrative possibilities where the process of combining produces a distinct interplay between meaning and representation. *What to express with What, What to paint with What, What to combine with What* lies at the core of Wylie's process.

Rose Wylie's work is currently garnering quite some attention: *Who is Britain's hottest new artist? A 76-year-old called Rose Wylie*, Germaine Greer commented in **The Guardian** in a full-page article, July 2010. And the **National Museum of Women in the Arts**, Washington DC, selected her to represent Great Britain in its 2010 exhibition *Women to Watch*. Over the years, she has had several solo shows in London with **UNION** (2010 and 2006), **Transition Gallery** (2008) and **Stephen Lacey** (1995 and 1999), and has appeared several times in the **Norwich Gallery's East International** under such selectors as Matthew Higgs, Camille Chaimowicz, Neo Rauch, Rudi Fuchs and Jan Dibbets. Wylie was selected twice for the *Jerwood Drawing Prize* (2000 & 2002) and short-listed for the *Jerwood Painting Prize* (1997). Her work is in several public as well as high profile private collections.

Gallery hours: Tue-Sat, 10-6. For further information and visuals, please visit www.thomaserben.com or contact the gallery at 212-645.8701.

Image: Rose Wylie, Christmas Fairy (2008), oil on canvas, 180 x 165 cm

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