

# TOTAH

TR ERICSSON

*Pale Fires*

February 11th - May 1st, 2021

TOTAH presents *Pale Fires*, an exhibition of work by TR Ericsson, on view from February 11th through May 1st, 2021. This is the artist's first solo exhibition with the gallery.

The works of TR Ericsson are wildly personal and biographical. Almost archival in intent, he incorporates family snapshots, letters, and audio and visual recordings of his mother, in an effort to reconstruct her tragic life, which ended in suicide in 2003. The multimedia character of Ericsson's works take on a heightened significance in light of his chosen subject-matter. Nicotine stains the surface of a pristine panel; funerary ashes mingle with graphite to portray the silkscreen image of a haunting childhood memory. Every work implies dissolution by fire, whose remnants trace out a spiritual lineage.

Characterization and plot interweave with Ericsson's materials, like the incense and invocations of a séance. A despairing letter written by the artist's mother invokes her personal trauma, which was then inherited and re-framed by the artist. *Crackle & Drag* (2015), the film from which the letter derives, is a magic lantern that tries to recover time past even as it moves ineluctably forwards. Invoking Sylvia Plath, as much as the alt-rock group The Replacements, Ericsson's film shows how time both exalts itself and dies away in an accretion of synchronicities.

Across the different media Ericsson puts to use, lived history decompresses into the image of this same history. *California Sun* (1963), a work rendered in nicotine, recreates a photo taken of the artist's mother in 1963, alludes to the Kennedy assassination as much as to Marcel Duchamp sojourns in Pasadena, California. The personal and historical complexities of a moment come to a head in a memorializing image that feels equally mournful, haunted, and erotic.

Throughout the exhibition, Ericsson enacts a kind of deconstructed sorcery, resurrecting a deceased loved one only to make clear the impossibility of doing so. The sense of loss that fills his work telescopes history as much as it parallels it. The reliquary aspect of his archive disturbs and comforts simultaneously, radiating an ineffable aura where sadness is luminously transformed into its antidote.

*Crackle & Drag* (2015) will have its first New York screening on February 11th at 5:00PM, with subsequent screenings Saturdays at 5:00PM or by appointment during opening hours. Out of respect for social distancing guidelines, seating will be limited. Please email [info@davidtotah.com](mailto:info@davidtotah.com) if you plan to attend.

*TR Ericsson (born Cleveland, 1972) uses the story of his mother to present a searing, soft, and complex portrait of post-industrial life in America. His work has appeared in solo and group exhibitions in the United States and abroad including those with The Cleveland Museum of Art, OH; The Dallas Museum of Art, TX; SCAD Museum of Art, GA; and the Kunsthalle Marcel Duchamp, Switzerland. Ericsson's work is in the permanent collections of the Whitney Museum of American Art, MoMA Library, the Cleveland Museum of Art, the Dallas Museum of Art, the Yale University Library (Special Collections) and the Progressive Art Collection as well numerous private collections. He has lived and worked in Brooklyn, New York, for over 20 years.*

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