

INTIMATE DISTANCE

In *Triples* Montreal artist Kim Waldron adopts photography's divided nature (factual vs fictional) to enact the distance essential to the theme of intimate space. This group of nineteen photographs documents individual domestic environments in which different man/woman couples are accompanied by a woman whose role remains ambiguous. Waldron has employed the two opposed dimensions of photography's truth status (the image as imprint of reality, but also constructed through convention). She locates this in the context of an almost anthropological yet personal questioning of the conventions around co-habitation in "middle-class" culture.

Waldron deployed these characteristics of photography when she engaged with repetition as a strategy in the construction of *Triples*. The repetition in this case: appearances of the same woman in different examples of domestic-at-home life. Contributing to the functioning of repetition, the woman wears exactly the same ubiquitous black dress, while her companions are more casually attired, conforming to the conventions of their youthful middle-class environment. It can be easily surmised that the woman in black occupies the authorial position.

Repetition empties, distances by rendering rhetorical. Each image staged, becoming an arranged mise-en-scene. This effect relativizes the truth status of the image, positioning each viewer as an active participant in making sense of the images. This is the point at which Waldron has intertwined her two perspectives (photo critique and "anthropological" investigation). "Critique" in this case means leaving behind any concern with aesthetic terms in favour of invitations to the viewer to "play a part." And in this case viewers are invited to "try on" or put themselves into a viewpoint whose multiplicity questions the conventions involved in photographic meaning, or for that matter, social arrangements such as monogamy. Waldron's theatricalization of her subject creates that distance, by way of fiction, that allows a gap into which any viewer can step, a space made available by the "absence" of the woman in the black dress.

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