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This Side of Paradise: Narrative, Cinema and Suburbia in the work of Miles Aldridge and Todd Hido

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Todd Hido, *#2154-a,* 1998

A new exhibition, *This Side of Paradise: Narrative, Cinema and Suburbia in the Work of Miles Aldridge and Todd Hido* will present twenty large-scale colour works, demonstrating how these two contemporary artists investigate the concept of suburbia.

Though works by Aldridge and Hido are visually dissimilar, both artists are recognisable for their distinctive cinematic colour palettes, lighting and compositions, and the suggestion of narrative possibilities beyond the edge of the frame. Whereas Hido presents a shadowy, empty, exterior suburban world, Aldridge presents the viewer with brightly lit, garish interiors, focusing on the imagined lives of the women who inhabit them.

Hido's works in the exhibition are from his ongoing *Houses at Night* series, depicting isolated suburban homes in America, photographed at night, replete with voyeuristic undertones and implied narrative. Hido's work is concerned with themes of urban isolation and interior lives, lived separately from outward appearances. His compositions are often bereft of human presence, although a singular lit window or an empty car become signifiers of stories left untold.

The depictions of isolated women in highly-stylised, constructed interiors in the work by Aldridge suggest intimate dramas in these stifling domestic settings. His fastidiously constructed tableaus are charged with psychological tension and narrative ambiguity. The often-surreal imagery is heightened by his use of vibrant, richly saturated, acid tones.

Both Miles Aldridge and Todd Hido look to subvert the traditional American suburban fantasy, with the unsettling undercurrents woven through their work. Their aesthetics draw on the influence of Hollywood cinema and directors Alfred Hitchcock and David Lynch. *This Side of Paradise* presents photographs by each artist that demonstrate their understanding of visual suspense with each work is carefully crafted to transform the everyday, and invert the familiar.

Miles Aldrige (born London, 1964) studied at Central Saint Martin's College, London. His work has been published in numerous international publications including American *Vogue, Vogue Italia*, *The New Yorker* and *The New York Times*. Aldridge has published several books including *Pictures for Photographs* (2009), *Other Pictures* (2012), and *I Only Want You to Love Me* (2013). A major retrospective of Aldridge's drawings and photographs was held in 2013 at Somerset House, London and his work is held in the collections of the National Portrait Gallery, London; the Victoria and Albert Museum, London and the International Center of Photography, New York.

Todd Hido (born Kent, Ohio, 1968) received his B.F.A. from the School of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, and Tufts University, and his M.F.A. from the California College of Arts and Crafts. His first monograph, *House Hunting* (2001), won the Photo-Eye Award for the Best First Monograph and he is the recipient of the Eureka Fellowship, Fleishhacker Foundation, Wallace Alexander Gerbode Foundation Visual Arts Award, and the Barclay Simpson Award. His photographs have been featured in *Artforum, The New York Times Magazine, Wired, Elephant* and *FOAM* amongst others. His work is held in the permanent collections of many collections including the Getty, the Whitney Museum of Art, the Guggenheim Museum, New York, and San Francisco Museum of Modern Art.



Miles Aldridge, *Chromo Thriller #3*, 2012

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