

WU TSANG / 06.04.11 - 08.05.11

Clifton Benevento is proud to present the New York solo debut of Los Angeles based visual and performance artist Wu Tsang, featuring video, collage and site-specific installation.

Central to the exhibition is *DAMELO TODO (Give Me Everything)*, 2010, a hybrid narrative-documentary installation incorporating elements of Tsang's lived experience organizing WILDNESS, a party/performance night for two years at the Los Angeles bar Silver Platter. The film depicts a fictional protagonist, Teódulo Mejía, a 15 year-old Salvadorian civil war refugee arriving to Los Angeles in 1985, who discovers community support among trans women at the bar. Based on a short story written by Raquel Gutierrez, and adapted to screen by Tsang, *DAMELO TODO* fictionalizes a larger narrative about the collaboration and tenuous coalition between the Silver Platter and the young artists of WILDNESS.

Silver Platter not only provides narrative and aesthetic inspiration for *DAMELO TODO*, but also for the overall installation components and themes of the exhibition, which meditate on the formal, conceptual, and physical resonances of the bar as a 'safe space' for marginalized communities. A gold lamé curtain evokes an area for a stage; a neon metal structure based on the bar's exterior signage is also present, text altered from "Silver Platter" to "The Fist Is Still Up," pointing towards intersections of politics and pleasure.

Pushing further entanglements of performance, experimental documentary, narrative film and queer nightlife, Tsang's collages and alter piece – collaborations with artist R.J. Messineo – incorporate Silver Platter ephemera to raise issues of memorialization and still-life. Reorienting Tsang's medium as the social relationships and environments built through daily actions and inspired by nightlife, Tsang's practice opens a series of questions about ambiguities of being.

*WU TSANG is a performer and filmmaker in Los Angeles. His projects have been presented at X-Initiative (New York), Sala de Art Publico Siqueiros (Mexico City), Oberhausen (Germany), REDCAT (Los Angeles), and the California Biennial (2010). Tsang was an IFP Documentary Fellow for his first feature WILDNESS (in post-production). He is currently developing a performance project entitled FULL BODY QUOTATION in residence under commission by the New Museum, which will be presented as part of Performa 2011, with exhibition of a resulting short film in 2012.*