

# Elvis Richardson's real estate

'All the world's a stage, and all the people on it merely players ...'

Elvis Richardson has, for some years now, built a body of work based on the found archives and stock images of a personal nature that people (apparently willingly, and sometimes for profit) present to the world. Whether it be the collections of slides found on eBay that contributed to *Slide show land* (2004-08) or the stacks of discarded home-video VHS tapes in *Bastard love child* from 2006 (more revealing than a bookshelf, you might say), there is a wealth of material out there that reinforces the need for self-projection and self-realisation through audio-visual documentation.

You don't need to be a contestant for Ms Burlesque Victoria (another cultural event that I attended this week) or the producer of a home-school version of such an out-there display posted on YouTube to realise that we live in an age where the public-private boundaries seem to exist only to be transgressed. The domestic sphere has replaced the studio as the scene for many a documented gesture. The use of photography has never been more ubiquitous in this world of commercial and/or social media.

With this canvas in mind, and motivated by her own requirement for a place in the sun in the form of available real estate, Richardson has been undertaking online research into the regional and outer suburban property market to come up with an expanding gallery of images. Posting the results on Facebook, Richardson's selection reads like the scenic backdrop to a familiar and much-loved soap opera that is real life.

Carefully presented and primed for the camera (with suitably soft lighting, selective angles, close-ups and focal points), many of these interior views of furnished domestic spaces have attracted comments that draw on their resemblance to *Brides of Christ*, *Absolutely fabulous* et. al. Like the catwalk models that 'sell' the clothes off their elegant, thin backs, these bedroom scenes, with their soft toys and colour schemes, 'add value' to the bare bones of the simple domestic interior and reveal a sense of personal pleasure and pride in their creation. So, too, in other images there is a strong sense of absence and loss—much like what we might associate with the sense of entering a crime

scene. Either way, and with many shades of *lifestylism* in between, we become complicit in the spectacle as voyeurs and critics.

In this project, as in her many challenging and customised intrusions into the secret life of objects, Richardson has revealed a sense of the uncanny in their representation for an audience. What makes this collection of images all the more elusive is their sense of suspended animation: in Low-Resland there is no download on a down-payment.

[The bedroom](#) is a work-in-progress by Elvis Richardson. Images below viewed March 2012.



