

Wolfgang Tillmans

“ Photography always lies about what’s in front of the camera, but it never lies about what is behind , it always clearly reveals the intentions that are behind...allowing and being as prepared as possible for what might happen, while staying open for what chance may come into play, is my way of working”

Background and intentions

- German photographer, born 16 august 1968
- “Curious of the alchemy of the world and its vulnerability, Wolfgang transforms his extraordinary sensitivity and intuition into tangible objects for us to admire. Open hearted but attentive, he is unburdened by the corrosive breath of melancholy and **studies the world without judgment**. A beautiful mirror of our need to love, our battles, our gains and our frailty.”
- He chooses to challenge and questions social norms and beliefs through his photos
- He challenges the presumptions of contemporary life, the subterfuge of expected transparency.
- “His seemingly ordinary images of modern life always carry an undercurrent message. Freedom to live and love is never a given, it always involves vigilance and work.”

Style

- Influenced by Gerhard Richter, Sigmar Polke, Robert Rauschenburg and Andy Warhol
- ‘Diverse body of work is distinguished by observation of his surroundings and an ongoing investigation of the photographic medium’s foundations.’
- “Wolfgang enjoys experimenting with a palette of techniques and variety of subjects. His approach to photography, oscillating between the random and the specific, is sensuous and sensorial. His subjects vary from portraits, still lives and architecture, or can be abstract, such as Freischwimmer and Blushes or the earlier Silver series.”
- ‘Initially known for his **seemingly casual, sometimes snapshot-like portraits** of friends and other youth in his immediate surroundings and scene.’
- ‘It later progressed to a **wide array of genres** --- portraits, still life, sky photographs, astrophotography, aerial shots and landscapes are motivated equally by aesthetic and political interests, especially related to homosexuality and gender identity.’
- He also did **abstract and damaged pictures** – ‘unique works on color-negative photographic paper collected by the artist since he began colour printing in 1990, was a combination of true darkroom mistakes and years of darkroom experimentation that they inspired.’

His works - portraits



Akeem Smith, 2016



Yulan Grant, 2016



Me in the Shower, 1990

His works – still life and landscapes



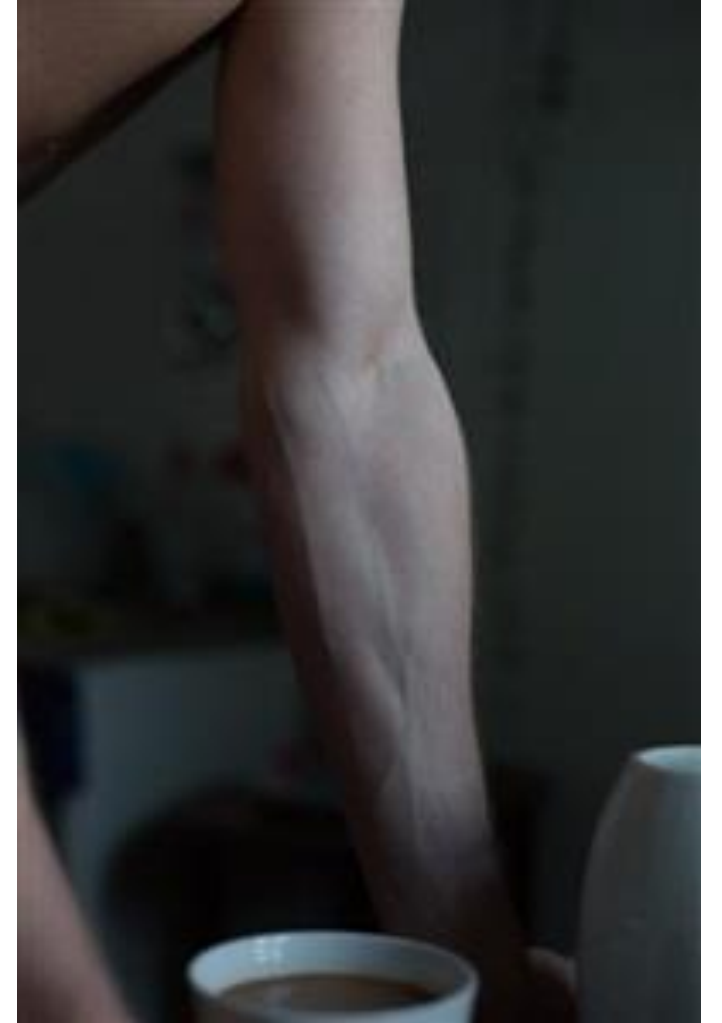
Far away inside (Echo beach), 2017



Space between two buildings II, 1998



Paper drop (London), 2008



Filament, 2014

His Works – homosexuality and gender identity



The Cock (kiss), 2002



Love (hands in the air), 1989

- Questioning gender stereotypes
- The Cock is a club name , and society associates the action two guys kissing as them being gay (which was not acceptable during that time)
- Capturing the moment of sheer pleasure
- *“beauty is of course always political, as it describes what is acceptable or desirable in society. That is never fixed, and always needs reaffirming and defending.”*

Bibliography

- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wolfgang_Tillmans
- <http://smbhmag.com/praise-wolfgang-tillmans/>
- https://www.google.com/url?sa=i&source=images&cd=&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=2ahUKEwj_ndz8k_HcAhUMOY8KHX4FB4gQjRx6BAgBEAU&url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.mutualart.com%2FArtwork%2FThe-Cock--kiss---2002%2FD6DD0451E3CB6FBF&psig=AQOVVaw2QhJ3QW-XrSmZM7tgZTvBo&ust=1534494579139660
- <https://www.google.com/url?sa=i&source=images&cd=&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=2ahUKEwiim9vOmfHcAhUlsI8KHIXAPMQjRx6BAgBEAU&url=%2Furl%3Fsa%3Di%26source%3Dimages%26cd%3D%26cad%3Drja%26uact%3D8%26ved%3D2ahUKEwiqvcvZlfHcAhULpo8KHRqwBjUQjRx6BAgBEAU%26url%3Dhttps%253A%252F%252Frxart.net%252Fartists%252Fwolfgang-tillmans%252F%26psig%3DAQOVVaw1V685V-b1AOWyXT0bnOMGg%26ust%3D1534495045414314&psig=AQOVVaw1V685V-b1AOWyXT0bnOMGg&ust=1534495045414314>
- <http://www.artnet.com/artists/wolfgang-tillmans/2>