

# DIAZ CONTEMPORARY

February 14 2005  
Press Release

TONY ROMANO  
THREE TALES

FEBRUARY 16–MARCH 18, 2006  
OPENING THURSDAY FEBRUARY 16, 6–9PM

Diaz Contemporary presents Toronto-based artist Tony Romano's first solo exhibition with the gallery, *Three Tales*, comprised of a series of installation works—*The Lost Rose* (2004), *The Fisherman and his Soul* (2005), *The Last Act* (2006)—and an accompanying series of film stills and poster works.

In *Three Tales* Romano explores the world of adaptations and transcriptions, all the works in the show having been derived from pre-existing sources. *The Lost Rose* is a double-projection of a film piece drawn from the 1837 play *Woyzeck* by German writer Georg Buchner. Romano refers to the fairytale told within the play, about a girl who having lost her parents is left alone to wander the earth. Romano has shot only a beginning and end to this story: transferred to video, the film is presented so that it projects on either side of a wall, back to back. The viewer can cycle between the bookend points of the story, never finding the bulk of the tale.

In *The Fisherman and his Soul*, a paean to the Oscar Wilde story of the same name, Romano examines the Cartesian dualism of body and soul, reinforcing this bifurcation while simultaneously dissembling it. The artist has written a song that is a duet between the Fisherman in the tale and his Soul—the two voices alternately sing together, or switch their roles confusing the notion of identity and the distinction between the physical and the metaphysical. A sound and light work, the piece is subtly installed in the rear space of the gallery, its presence denoted by a classically filmic poster.

*The Last Act* is another adaptation, this time immersed in the dialogue between film and video; its script a reworked transcription of a found pornographic video from which Romano has removed all the sex scenes. Shot in 35mm film, the work projects a tension between the earnestness of a NFB film stumbled upon during a Sunday afternoon of channel flicking and a work made for viewing in the gallery. Stilted dialogue is enacted by acquaintances of Romano's, thus personalising and re-contextualising the words, and adding poignancy to the storyline.