

Wolfgang Tillmans

TRUTH STUDY CENTER

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Wolfgang Tillmans creates his photographs by carefully selecting, arranging, and manipulating the motif in order to express a consistent concept. This concept is the violation and transformation of the border between public and private.

Even when antiwar or anti-Nazi demonstrations appear as subject matter, Tillmans's concern is not the obvious, symbolic political events but the politics that are an unobtrusive part of everyday life. This sort of politics has an inherent tendency to self-concealment. A situation that people regard as natural without thinking deeply about it is actually produced by politics. If a person is gay, what does it mean to "come out" (or be made to "come out")? Isn't it just a kind of confession? Whether you like men or women is a private matter. Why make it public? Such a response may be considered natural, but it is a form of discrimination. Discrimination is always hidden in what seems natural. Coming out is not just a confession. It challenges a boundary, the line that is generally drawn between the public and the private, the things that one calls private and must be changed if one is to live as a gay person. Privacy is fundamentally a political concept. Etymologically, it is derived from the Latin word "privare," meaning "to deprive." There is no privacy that is not taken forcibly from the public realm. When we use the word "private," it is always based on the premise of public power.