

**IMAGE FILES 010:
KEITH WILSON**



This image is from the front of a postcard I bought six years ago at the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center in Austin, Texas. The description on the back reads, “Lady Bird Johnson enjoys a field of wildflowers in the Texas Hill Country in the spring of 1990.”

I visited the Center with my parents and maternal grandmother, Meemaw, who were visiting from Georgia. We were all suckers for a good garden and Meemaw in particular loved nature things that were colorful or unusual or garish. At what seemed like every plant, she would stop to smell, touch, take pictures and exclaim in her thick southern accent, “ohhh how purrty!” She died a few years ago, but throughout my life she was one of the few people who taught me – allowed me – to stop and smell and look at the roses. That could be her enjoying that field of wildflowers.

But I’m also drawn to this image for less sentimental reasons.

Lady Bird Johnson was the gentle and dutiful other half to her less lovable presidential husband, Lyndon Johnson. She’s a legend in Central Texas and is revered across the state for her push to promote and protect Texas wildflowers. Her image and her name are a trusted brand. She is pure, wise, white, eco-friendly and apolitical. Who doesn’t support wildflowers? Assholes, that’s who.

I’m interested in the ways in which iconic personalities and ideas around the pastoral are expressed in consumer, residential and built spaces. In some of the images that follow, you could say I’ve created Lady Bird Inc. and prepared a PowerPoint presentation for investors eager to capitalize on a name that tests well with focus groups. In others, I’ve displayed flat-footed images of nature growing beyond the margins of advertising agency briefs. The following responses attempt to convey the mix of cynicism, hope, nostalgia, humor and gratitude that I experience when gazing out on that field of Texas wildflowers, a perfectly placed and grandmotherly Lady Bird Johnson smiling her happy-sad smile back at me.



Bird of Paradise
In sending this picture just
to show you all the flowers
never been fertilized



Great River from the series *Subdivisions*, digital pigment print on paper, 2014



Fennel #12 from the series Bayview Flora , digital image, 2014

*Live **Claritin** Clear.
Every day.*



Use as directed when symptoms first appear, then daily while your allergy triggers remain.



Lady Bird Notepad, digital image, 2014



Lady Bird Estates, digital image, 2014

moist

Keith Wilson is a filmmaker, photographer and performance artist based in San Francisco. His films have been exhibited at Sundance, the Berlinale and South by Southwest as well as the United States National Gallery of Art. In addition to recent solo shows at the Martina Johnston Gallery in Berkeley and the SOFA Gallery in Austin, his artist book EVERY BUILDING ON BURNET [burn-it] ROAD was exhibited at the Gagosian Gallery and the Brandhorst Museum as part of the exhibit Ed Ruscha & Co. In addition to co-editing and self-publishing (with Shannon O'Malley) the forthcoming GAY MEN DRAW VAGINAS, his book of photographs, SEE I SAW, will be published by Publication Studio in the Fall of 2014. In 2009, he began the ongoing interactive performance THE CAVE & MOUNTAIN TOUR, which was recently featured at the 2013 Fusebox Festival in Austin, Texas. In 2015, his books, films and performances will be presented at the University of Georgia where he will be a Visiting Artist. Keith has an MFA in film production from the Radio-TV-Film Department at UT-Austin and grew up on a cul-de-sac in suburban Atlanta.

<http://www.wall-eye.com/>

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