

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Nancy de Holl

upstairs: David Chieppo

October 20th to November 24th, 2007

Opening reception on Saturday, October 20th from 6-8pm

Nancy de Holl:

From *Two Serious Ladies* by Jane Bowles:

At this moment Mrs. Copperfield was strongly reminded of a dream that had recurred often during her life. She was being chased up a short hill by a dog. At the top of the hill there stood a few pine trees and a mannequin about eight feet high. She approached the mannequin and discovered her to be fashioned out of flesh, but without life. Her dress was of black velvet, and tapered to a very narrow width at the hem. Mrs. Copperfield wrapped one of the mannequin's arms tightly around her own waist. She was startled by the thickness of the arm and very pleased. The mannequin's other arm she bent upward from the elbow with her free hand. Then the mannequin began to sway backwards and forwards. Mrs. Copperfield clung all the more tightly to the mannequin and together they fell off the top of the hill and continued rolling for quite a distance until they landed on a little walk, where they remained locked in each other's arms. Mrs. Copperfield loved this part of the dream best; and the fact that all the way down the hill the mannequin acted as a buffer between herself and the broken bottles and little stones over which they fell gave her particular satisfaction.

Taxter & Spengemann is pleased to present Nancy de Holl's second solo exhibition at the gallery. She exhibits two intertwined bodies of photographic works on the first floor and in the upstairs office, which demonstrate a playfully perverse alternation between figure and object. De Holl's episodic employment in the fashion photography industry insidiously influenced these two bodies of work, which reflect an attention to the sculptural, performative, and virtual operations present within the formulation of commercial imagery.

For the most recent work, de Holl hired a contortionist who came to the studio and posed for a series of elaborately styled shoots. In other photographs, subjects are embodied from a highly curated selection of found and sometimes mundane materials.

Nancy de Holl lives and works in New York. Her previous exhibition at Taxter & Spengemann was in March 2005. Since that time she has been included in group exhibitions such as: *Bunch Alliance and Dissolve*, curated by Public Holiday Projects, at the Contemporary Arts Center, Cincinnati, OH; *Cataract*, Wallspace, NY; *Put It In Your Mouth/I'll See You on the Dark Side of the Prune*, curated by Darren Bader, Rivington Arms, New York. She received her BFA from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago and her MFA from the University of California Los Angeles.

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upstairs gallery:

David Chieppo

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David Chieppo presents a series of small-scale paintings in the upstairs gallery for his first exhibition at Taxter & Spengemann. Chieppo was born and raised on the East Coast but has been living in Zurich, Switzerland for 10 years.

Chieppo's paintings transmit an air of distanced nonchalance, though this is not to be mistaken for indifference. Largely inspired by film stills and popular media photographs and headlines, the works emit a strangeness *and* familiarity that is not quite legible but nevertheless strongly felt. Peculiar scenes conjure precise emotional states and much less specific places, as if the artist has devised a method of crafting a purely psychological environment. This is not to say the paintings aren't funny. The viewer is quickly disarmed by the awkwardness of the subjects, their blankness and the absurdity of their situation, and the artist's often joking or punning titles, leave the solemnity of the proceedings in question.

The paintings are not overworked, suggesting that the artist has a well-tuned sense of "just enough", and a healthy suspicion of losing psychological atmosphere through undue agonizing over surfaces. Chieppo paints in a calculatedly crude manner that manages a contradictory level of grace and directness without leaning too heavily on conventions of "bad painting." In his panels, abstraction and figuration are interwoven and easily exchanged, conventions of portraiture dissolve into repeated floating marks swarming about a subject's head, and landscape is called into romantic service with just a few spasmodic brush strokes.

David Chieppo lives and works in Zurich. This is his first solo exhibition in the United States. Chieppo is the recipient of the 2008 Manor Kunstpreis, Kantor Zurich which also awards him a solo exhibition next year at the Kunstmuseum Winthertur. In 2007 he had a solo exhibition at the Centre Culturel Suisse, in Paris., and was included in *A Fantasy for the Moment* at the Kunsthalle, Bern. In 2005 he had a solo exhibition at Galerie Brigitte Weiss, in Zurich.