

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
*Devon Costello, Untitled, Reading*  
Upstairs Gallery: Wayne Atkins  
May 20<sup>th</sup> to June 17<sup>th</sup> 2006  
Opening reception, Saturday, May 20<sup>th</sup>, 6-8 pm

**Devon Costello's** work is a negotiation between painting and sculpture, where both are associative elements that meet within the language of images. His pieces are clusters or pairs of paintings and sculptures that are placed and hung with a sensibility derived from the artist's interest in salon and natural history exhibitions, which have more to do with collage than discrete parcels of information. Costello's practice is as concerned with art and objecthood as it is with non-art modes of display, and is always focused on the communicative power of an accumulation of images.

*Swan* (2006) oscillates between Realism and Minimalism. A delicately rendered watercolor of a floating swan resides on the upper left while geometric blocks of wood painted in ever lighter shades of blue cascade down the wall to the floor. Costello places a large rectangular piece of particle board there, that serves as both anchor and foil to the wall arrangement. *Swan* playfully connects-the-dots from Leonardo da Vinci to Carl Andre, hinting at the artist's vast arsenal of art historical referents.

*Glacier* (2006) combines a large-scale painting of an arctic landscape (lifted from National Geographic magazine) with pigmented cast-plaster sculptural forms—one sitting atop a makeshift pedestal and the other on the floor. These seem to manifest the craggy glacial landscape via a rhymed call and response between two and three dimensions. Mediating the conversation is a white wooden block, hanging on the wall beneath the painting. The painterly sculptures emphasize the painting as pure imagery—it transcends its support and the picture plane obliterates.

**Wayne Atkins** focuses his attention on the art gallery and its contents. Working within the particular architecture of the exhibition space, Atkins' landscapes are more psychological than logical. Hanging on the white walls (which are often marred with the drips, drabs, scuffs, and scrapes that are the traces of making a painting in the studio) are familiar artworks from both past and present that the artist has revised using a large amount of artistic license. For instance, a yellow and ochre painting from Josef Albers' series *Homage to the Square*, has been accurately inserted into *The Removed Discerning Eye* (2006) except for the fact that it's about 4 times larger than the original. Coming off the surface of the "Albers" are several sticks that rest on the floor but also float incongruously above the floor and wall. Tucked into a corner is a Goyer-esque leg with a running shoe on its foot. Atkins' sophisticated references are slippery and his delineation of space disorienting. What he conjures in each piece could be an idealized or, just as easily, a satirized idea of what an exhibition could be. The works use the site and elements of exhibition, beginning in the artist's studio, including the tools of installation, and ending in the show, as a means to play with abstraction and representation.

This is the first solo exhibition of Devon Costello and Wayne Atkins.

Costello lives and works in New York. He received his BFA from the School of Visual Art, New York in 2004. His most recent group exhibitions include: *Trifecta* at Bellwether, *Sound Clash* at PH Gallery, *What is Conceptual Continuity?* at Rare, *Infinite Fill* at Foxy Productions, and *La Superette* at Deitch Projects and Participant Inc, all in New York. Atkins lives and works in Los Angeles, where he is currently completing his MFA at the California Institute for the Arts. He received his BFA in 2000 from the Ringling School of Art and Design in Sarasota, FL.