

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Ara Dymond *Simon-Something*
and
Jason Nocito

January 14 - February 19, 2011
Opening Reception: Friday, January 14, 2011, 6 to 8 pm

Ara Dymond and Jason Nocito are presented for the first time at Taxter & Spengemann in two exhibitions utilizing both floors of the gallery. Each artist possesses a master focus, a severe sift and edit technique that is intuitive rather than calculated, thoughtful rather than systematic. Images and objects seemingly all harken back to the figure, which should be noted here as a touchstone for both artists, a symbol, a receptacle for thoughts and fluids, an actor, an historical icon and at some point- dead. Throughout these photographic and sculptural works are subtle, suggestive, almost lewd and certainly beautiful takes on nothing new-- captured and cast in their own discreet time to show us who we are, in ways we haven't seen before.

Ara Dymond *Simon -Something*
by Darren Bader

Art has meant a lot for a lot of us. Art becomes art both as art and as art—and we wrestle with this. What comes of this is up to us. The world is always simply ours. With that in/as gracious spirit, Dymond's work takes the grandest resources of the quotidian and the E of A [epic-ography of art-canonism] and affords us their kindest secrets.

Appearances reside in the tissue of secrets and secrets rest on the tissue of appearance. That is what art has always meant, and most artists seek to find the perfect communion between secret and appearance. Ara Dymond frankly, deliberately, insouciantly, and exactly chooses a boulevard of very vibrant acquisition: he takes the places of art and makes them act out the places they have come to occupy, aspires for them to reseat themselves in new and non-dissonant honesties. Incommensurate with any nod, homage, or pastiche, Dymond's play deftly orchestrates the array of languages that art has come to find as commonplaces, in which common places are the precise site of epiphany, not epigone.

He acutely knows that a time forgets times all the time. And therein lies the trained secret of the gene pool and thus the art pool: art isn't ours unless it's ours—that's the riddle and gift we face and embrace. In a land without genres, the genre ever restands and reasserts, even with its ghastly or winsome mutations: the moment that arrests or seduces or confirms or distresses is the still the moment that does just that. And so we revisit things ever (a) new.

In our world felt as that of information—and specifically its bounty/plethora of objects—there are signs and sentiments that not only mimic, but also assure, and also essay. They perform. The genre of performance finds its home everywhere—as does our art. Throughout the itinerant but resident visual idioms of Dymond's staid, ebullient theater lies both inherent and performed performance. A performance of art that is not like the epic/ epoch of Picasso. In its stead, the understanding, the vivid and agile understanding, of our place in time, our place in this world that seems too variegated to be condensed, contained, or convinced. Truth speaks/ performs in a million tongues, and Dymond's tongue harvest is a sight/site for tongues to convene upon.

A couple years ago, Ara had a piece that said and read, 'Ok Ok'. There's something cosmic in the word 'ok': it's a soft-and-firm friend, one of our best and most thoughtful messengers: a blithely resigned knowledge that all things aspire to change but ultimately never quite can. Therein lies the beauty of art regardless of epoch. Therein Ara Dymond's work acknowledges the great heights of what made great heights great. It aims not to copy or revisit them, but to know their stature in the imagination—the way we aren't but always almost kinda are. Truth *can* speak a million tongues and if we're lucky sometimes many of these tongues meet.

Jason Nocito:

The photographer Jason Nocito has an eye for sore sights, but some romantic ones too. His is a weird reverse-commute New York migration story: one that took him from an unhappy childhood in the suburbs of Long Island to the Lower East Side (with errant ventures around the world for commerce and Vancouver, B.C. for love). This is somehow important to the spirit of these photographs, even though New York City is almost never depicted and you rarely see him with a camera when he's home.

But when he's out on the road, Nocito's camera finds the cracks in the landscape and the dirty corners of an unsanitized life. We see the inertia of the car-less, and the poetry of the barely hanging on, piece of shit-car's-burning-oil, late for work variety. We see needle-exchange receptacles; boarded up houses (or worse-apparently lived-in suburban ranch houses with very few discernible windows); and, nestled casually among the clotheslines and garden sheds of a shared backyard, what appears to be a shallow grave.

But it's not all so bad. Great Recession America provides melancholy punch lines as well. Three cheapo cardboard ice cream cones coalescing into a perverse and clownish face, a nostalgic galaxy of smashed Fruit Loops in a parking lot, and an angry note from a neighbor threatening to "move your car to Tim Buck fuckin two Ass hole" all get the same attentive treatment as a majestic, snow-dusted evergreen forest. Nature, in fact, is paid only backhanded respect. Especially where the frontier vista of the great American West butts up against the party needs of suburban tract-house teens and the survival strategies of drifters and dropouts. Glorious rock formations are exposed as recently vacated homeless caves; a sweeping New Mexican mesa view with million-mile visibility and a miraculous rainbow is merely a set-up for Nocito's dwarfed human subject to smoke a bowl. It's Caspar David Friedrich's wanderer in a sea of his own smoky exhalations.

Indoors, things get weirder, but also oddly soothing. Images of the strange, prophylactic logic of a taped doorknob or a sharp corner ingeniously padded with a tennis ball act as a simple and dingy salve, a balm against life's struggle. Plus, there's sex! Or the lurking suggestion of it in a shapely body on a leather couch obscured by a towel and a slyly provocative slit in some smooth red-painted floorboards. Coming from a guy whose last book was entitled *Loads*, we are forced to assume that any prurient content, however veiled, is intended.

All of these images, whatever their subject, are so carefully composed, even calm, that they belie the restless energy of their creator. Nocito's Platinum Level peripateticism, his dogged work ethic and his inclination toward pervasive self-examination are all distilled here in these remarkable photographs.

About the artists:

Ara Dymond lives in New York and has exhibited previously in *Ma*, curated by Carter Mull at Taxter & Spengemann in February 2010. His work has been included in numerous group exhibitions: *The Coke Factory* at Ritter/Zamet, London 2010; *The Living and the Dead*, Gavin Brown's Enterprise, New York, *Time-Life Part II*, Taxter & Spengemann, New York, *Odeon* at Ritter/Zamet, London, and *On From Here*, Guild & Greyskul, New York, 2009; *Priusspress*, Rental, New York and *Sunshine*, Ritter/Zamet Gallery at Rental, New York, 2008; MoMA *presents: Dutch Elm Disease*, GBE@Passerby, New York, and *Wu tang/Googolplex show*, GBE@Passerby, New York, 2007.

Jason Nocito lives in New York and is a contributing photographer for such magazines as *The Fader*, *Dazed* and *Confused*, and *Nylon*. He was the house photographer for the Wrong Gallery (2002-2005) and his photos were used for advertisements for the 2006 Berlin Biennial. He has been included in numerous group exhibitions including *Day and Night* at the Copenhagen Photo Festival, Copenhagen, Denmark (2010), *Interlude*, Alice Austen House Museum, Staten Island, NY (2009), *It Ain't Fair*, OHWOW, Miami, FL (2008) and *Tiny Vices*, White Flag Projects, St. Louis, MO.(2007).