

ERIC WESLEY

Private view on June 6, 2002 at 6:30 pm.

From June 7 to July 31, 2002

Galleria Franco Noero

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'Ouchi' is a front, a made-up paint company constructed, in metaphorical terms, to provide lubrication to the distribution of an illegitimate commodity. On the surface this product appeals to the designers house paint and interior design market. The emblem, a shield, and the style-conscious font are tailor-made to slip in somewhere between Ferrari and Gucci, giving the viewer only a slight clue as to the nature of the can's true contents.

'Ouchi' was constructed by rearranging the letters in 'Fiocchi', an Italian ammunition company. As an art work the word play and attention to pop culture are made more clear as the viewer moves into the second room, the stock room. Here one finds a factory of sorts with a working shop and a stock of another kind, components for the construction and marketing of land mines. The 'factory' is designed to output maximum quantity at economic input; a simple four foot by eight foot plywood top work table serves as complete assembly line for production of 'Ouchi' s real product. Based on a do-it-yourself, anarchist cookbook-type device, the 'land mine' delivers a shotgun blast of assorted materials, rock-salt, buckshot, etc.

As this second, more brutish front wears off, the third front of the piece begins to unfold. This 'front' is more true to the nature of this project existing solely as art. The idea is that the stacks of cans in the store-front are empty and simply screwed together to form one sculpture: a kind of stack of cannon balls for someone to own. An even better description would be a casting of a stack of balls rendering an individual unit inert.

The idea becomes more about taking no sides and working more as a business to sell a product. Helping with the local revolution or getting dangerous weapons off the street becomes a second thought to formalist concerns . Arm yourself, make the streets safe. Doesn't matter the way you look at it. 'Ouchi' is the one. It is the only with the knowledge of the piece as a whole and the observations throughout the space that one can understand the latent humanity and entrepreneurship involved in what may appear to be a violent display or vice versa.

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Eric Wesley was born in 1973 in Los Angeles, California, where he lives and works. His work has previously appeared in a number of solo and group shows both in Europe and in United States. Among them his recent solo shows at Meyer Riegger Galerie, Karlsruhe, Germany, 2002; 'Two Story Clocktower', Cal Tech, Pasadena, CA, 2001; 'Kicking Ass', China Art Objects Galleries, Los Angeles, CA, 2000 e 'Camper', China Art Objects Galleries, 1999. The group exhibitions 'Drive By: Nine Artists From Los Angeles', Reynolds Gallery, Virginia, 2002; 'Freestyle', Studio Museum, Harlem, New York, e Santa Monica Museum of Art, 2001; 'Snapshots: New Art From Los Angeles', UCLA Hammer Museum, Los Angeles, e Museum of Contemporary Art, Miami, FL, 2001; 'Purloined', Artists Space, New York, 2001. This is the artist's first solo show in Italy.