

Jonathan Viner is pleased to present The Glass Show, including works by five artists, each of which approach the materiality, context and history of glass in a different way.

The exhibition begins with *This is the easy part*, a sculpture by Elias Hansen consisting of two hand blown glass vessels placed on an unfinished wooden shelf. Developed from his work as a glass blower, Hansen's practice sources materials from his home in the Pacific Northwest and from his immediate work environment to emphasize and explore the histories of and relationships between objects. The sculptures' rough aesthetics are juxtapositioned with meticulous craftsmanship and skill, evoking the DIY qualities of a meth lab or an old apothecary. Referencing altered states and the notions of experimentation, Hansen challenges the notions of traditional glassmaking and draws attention to the personal narratives that can be found in the material itself.

Dan Rees' large glass vitrines in the center of the gallery hold suspended white canvases, each sealed into a vacuum sealed storage bag. The canvas surfaces are marked with traces of paint, the patterns of which have been determined by the suction that occurs when the air is removed from the bags. With these works, Rees abides to a process that forces him to relinquish control over the paintings' compositions, thus allowing them to exist symbolically. However, the categorization of these works as paintings is complicated by Rees' decision to place the canvases in glass vitrines. By implementing this method of presentation the objects shift to an ambiguous place between painting and sculpture, making a critical and humorous statement about these malleable terms.

Oscar Tuazon's *Untitled* is a collage of broken everyday objects, compounded in a slab of resin. The glass shards represent familiar glasses, bowls and ashtrays, emphasizing the fragility of the material and suggesting a brutality in its demise. The shards are rejoined into one solid and stable slab that rests confidently yet uncharacteristically against the wall. The destruction and reconfiguration of these parts in their various and finally single form, extend Tuazon's interest in pushing objects to their physical limits.

The title of Nicolas Deshayes' *Soleil Pourri*, refers to a Bataille text which looks at the Greek myth of Icarus, whose excitement and foolishness made him fly so close to the sun that his wax wings melted, causing him to drop into the ocean and drown. It is the danger and the appeal of extreme light and heat that is crucial in the process of glass production, an erotic liquidity Deshayes' antique stained glass bears resemblance to. The height and acid color of the work on the wall suggest a relationship to the viewer's body that draws parallels with a public toilet or urinal. The panel's amorphous-forms point insistently to human fluids while the yellow reflection it casts on the wall is reminiscent of the sun.

The exhibition concludes downstairs with John Smith's video *Slow Glass*. As A.L. Rees writes, "The film begins with a shout in the street and a smashed pane, and ends with a bricked-up window. Between these literal images of opening and closing, spins immaculately shot puns and paradoxes that play on reflection and speculation – words that refer both to acts of seeing and of mind. Glass is the key, as a narrator's running commentary sketches the glassmaker's art, splicing a history lesson with a quasi-autobiography. The authority of word, voice and picture is questioned through the film's gradual revelation of its own (highly pleasurable) artifice. The cutting of glass is matched to the editing of film, and the camera's lens to the surface, which it captures." (London Film-Makers' Co-op catalogue, 1993)

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