

DOLBY CHADWICK GALLERY

Dan Jackson

Natura Morta

November 3, 2011 – December 3, 2011

Rendered in a strikingly illusionistic manner, Dan Jackson's witty, vibrant paintings feature objects of everyday life, such as ceramic figurines, toys, advertisements, candy, fruit, and flowers. Though still life painters have traditionally idealized their subjects or imbued them with extra-compositional meaning – as exemplified by 16th century Dutch and Flemish still life and vanitas painting – Jackson instead renders his subjects exactly as they appear. The effect of this rigorous mimesis is such that, although the viewer's initial impression of a Jackson painting might prove unproblematic, a closer reading reveals a disconnect between expectation and reality. Jackson's use of stages, sets, and dioramas is integral to achieving this cognitive dissonance.

Harvest (2011), for example, initially appears to be a simple homage to the American breadbasket. Upon closer inspection, the vegetables and fruits clustered in the painting's foreground are not the plump, three-dimensional objects one might expect but rather flattened cutouts. The space this false cornucopia occupies is itself no more than a shallow diorama made to simulate farm fields. Rolling hills are painted serially in progressively lighter shades of green on the cube's rear wall while the floor is coated with soil pilfered perhaps from somebody's backyard or the local hardware store. Acting as a proxy for the farmland's bounty, a plastic plant in the mid-ground casts a shadow on the rear wall, further accentuating the farce Jackson has staged. The coup d'état is a two-dimensional glass of milk: despite failing to fit the perspective of its environment, the milk nevertheless appears cold and refreshing. Seemingly culled from advertising signage, the duality of the milk as both real and counterfeit – desirable and unsatisfying – echoes Jackson's attempt to create art that treads the line in its mimicry of other art.

Jackson explains "I am very interested in the change that can happen when viewers invest themselves in a work of art. To that end, I like to present one image and then undermine what appears to be its goal in order to create another." For Jackson, a painting is compelling if it excites a flickering between one understanding or interpretation and another. *Nocturne* (2011), for instance, brings together motifs associated with tales of mystery – such as hastily discarded flashlights, an eerily-hued sky, and dark, sharply silhouetted foliage – to elicit what looks like a camping trip gone awry. Such narrative elements provoke a stirring visceral response that morphs into an entirely different experience when, according to Jackson, the joke starts to unfold and the viewer realizes the humor of the staged scene. The complex intellectual and emotional impact that Jackson elicits through his art is ostensibly rooted in his approach to making art. Although he champions canonical art forms through his use of the still life format, his particular engagement with the style destabilizes hierarchies and conventions

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of spectatorship that have long underpinned the Western art tradition. In Jackson's paintings, expectation must contend with reality, the ideal with the real, and reason with imagination.

Dan Jackson received his BFA in Painting and Printmaking from the Virginia Commonwealth University and MFA from the University of Delaware. A 2011 recipient of a Joan Mitchell award, Jackson has exhibited across the United States. This is Jackson's third exhibition at the Dolby Chadwick Gallery.

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Daniel Jackson

b. Camden, SC 1970

EDUCATION

1993 Virginia Commonwealth University, BFA, Painting and Printmaking
2011 University of Delaware, MFA

SOLO EXHIBITIONS

2011 *Natura Morta*, Dolby Chadwick Gallery, San Francisco, CA
2008 *New Still Life Paintings*, Dolby Chadwick Gallery, San Francisco, CA
2005 *On Reflection: Still Lifes of Daniel Jackson*, Handwerker Gallery, Ithaca College, Ithaca, NY
2004 *Brothers: Daniel & Ned Jackson, Recent Paintings & Photographs*, Carspecken-Scott Gallery, Wilmington, DE
2003 *Still Lifes*, Carspecken-Scott Gallery, Wilmington, DE
2002 *Fresh Paint*, Carspecken-Scott Gallery, Wilmington, DE
1997 *New Work*, Delaware Division of the Arts, Wilmington, DE
1996 *Portraits*, Lewis County Building, Wilmington, DE
1992 *Virtue*, Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond, VA

GROUP SHOWS

2011 Seven Masters Thesis Exhibit, University of Delaware at the Crane, Philadelphia, PA
2009 Art of Play, Dolby Chadwick Gallery, San Francisco, CA
2006 Floral Interpretations, Anne Loucks Gallery, Glencoe, IL
13th Annual Realism Invitational, Klaudia Marr Gallery, Santa Fe, NM
2005 Art LA, Dolby Chadwick Gallery, San Francisco, CA
2004 Award-Winners 3, Biggs Museum of American Art, Dover, DE
New Blood, Finer Things Gallery, Nashville, TN
The Jackson Four, Delaware Art Museum Sales & Rental Gallery, Wilmington, DE
2002 60th Annual Painting Exhibition, Cheltenham Center for the Arts, Cheltenham, PA
Northern Light, Carspecken-Scott Gallery, Wilmington, DE
2001 Invitational:12, Carspecken-Scott Gallery, Wilmington, DE
Summer Group Exhibition, Carspecken-Scott Gallery, Wilmington, DE
1991 Juried Exhibition, Anderson Gallery, Richmond, VA
1990 Juried Exhibition, Anderson Gallery, Richmond, VA

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1989 Juried Exhibition, Anderson Gallery, Richmond, VA

PUBLICATIONS

2007 *Gastronomica*, a Journal of Food and Culture, University of California Press, Summer 2007, Cover Image

2006 "Open Studios Press, New American Paintings, Volume 63"

2005 Catalog, "On Reflection: Still Lifes of Daniel Jackson", Handwerker Gallery, Ithaca College, Ithaca, NY

2004 Megan E. Everhart, "Noted: Dan and Ned Jackson", *The Hunt Magazine*, Fall 2004

2004 "Open Studios Press, New American Paintings, Volume 51"

2001 "Open Studios Press, New American Paintings, Volume 39"

AWARDS

2011 Joan Mitchell Award

2004 Delaware Division of the Arts, Individual Artist Fellowship for Established Professional in Painting