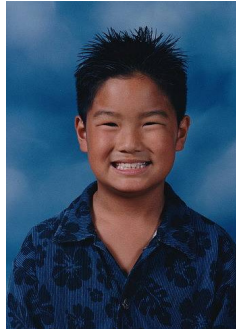


JOHANNES VOGT



Artist of the Week: Alex Ito

Alex Ito is an American artist living and working in Brooklyn, NY. Ito received his BFA from Pratt Institute with a double minor in Art History and Cultural Studies. Recent solo and two-person projects include Jardin N° 19 (with Erika Ceruzzi), Springsteen Gallery, Baltimore, MD (2014); Tales from a Sardine Run, Rod Barton Gallery, London, UK (2014), The Home of Tao Hsiao, Art in General, NY (2014); Think of Me Fondly, Water McBeer Gallery (2014); Single Image (with Brendan Lynch), Steve Turner Contemporary, Los Angeles, CA (2014) and Victory, The Still House Group, Redhook, NY (2013).

What are some recent, upcoming or current projects you are working on?

In September I had a solo exhibition, Tales From a Sardine Run, at Rod Barton, London. That was followed up by an exhibition in October that I had with Erika Ceruzzi at Springsteen in Baltimore titled Jardin N°19.

Im currently working towards two shows in February. One will be at Museum Dhondt-Dhaenens in Belgium with Brad Troemel and Haley Mellin. I will be showing a series of new sculptures that are influenced by pachinko parlors in Japan. The other will be at a new space in Los Angeles called SADE. I'm particularly excited for this project because it will be my first time exhibiting with my brother, Greg Ito Outside of preparing for shows I've been making some sculptures that are influenced by Ikebana flower arrangements and interior decorations from department stores. I've also been starting a new series of oil paintings that depict decanters in a kind of Kubrick-2001-alien vibe.



Tales From A Sardine Run at Rod Barton, London 2014.

What is one of the bigger challenges you and/or other artists are struggling with these days and how do you see it developing?

Young artists becoming seasonal handbags for superstar curators or gallerists. There are always promises for exposure, opportunities and \$\$\$ that entice young artists to move hastily into a commercial environment. I'm not trying to say that commercial = bad, but trust is a big concern when your work becomes a part of that conversation. One moment an artist can be on every "Top 10 Artists to Watch for 2015" and the next thing you know they are scraping for change because someone mishandled their work. I always believe that working with your friends is most important and keeping a firm grasp of what your long-term creative goals are.

JOHANNES VOGT

How did your interest in art begin?

I was really into graffiti when I was younger. I was sleeping mostly through school from staying up all night and taking trips to San Francisco to paint. Art was simple fun but didn't hold an social responsibility or conceptual weight at the time. I was just an angry teen and wanted to destroy things. I never really thought about "high art" until I started an internship at The Museum of Contemporary Art in Los Angeles when I was in high school. Some of the first shows I saw that blew my mind were Martin Kippenberger: The Problem Perspective, Dan Graham: Beyond, Lawrence Weiner: As Far As the Eye Can See and Gordon Matta-Clark: You Are the Measure. There weren't any challenging courses for art at my school except for one art history class, so I would read the books at the MOCA private library when I wasn't working. A lot of things I learned there, even though I was only 16 or 17, still influence my practice today.

If you had to explain your work to a stranger, what would you say?

That moment when you realize to can't afford "it" but you need to buy something so you can validate your parking ticket. You settle for something cheap. As you drive home all you think about is how much you want "it". You go back the next day and buy it. You're in love.

What materials do you use in your work and what is your process like?

The work is predominantly aluminum, digital prints, glass and basically anything shiny a bird would like. Lots of white, black and grey. Lots of Amazon.com. I'm attracted to a commercial department store aesthetic—a strange space of imitation, repetition and twisted intimacy. The work is mostly prefabricated, looks clean and references a culture where the individual is flattened into a subhuman category of the consumer. I enjoy working with the coldness of my objects—struggling to put some sort of life into materials that are absent of empathy. I want that life to become a generalized intimacy and brought into a common language like a shop window—somewhat like a tagline for experience. Through the approach of intimacy as artifice, the work can reveal a subtle thread of violence within commercially induced seduction.

What artists are you interested in right now?

One of my favorite painters is a Japanese artist named Shimon Minamikawa. His work has a quiet sense of emotion that I strive to achieve in my own work. The way his figures stare back at the viewer is incredibly magical in their odd state of vacancy.

I wish I could say more about everyone else but that would take forever. Here is a well thought out *+ LIST +* of artists that excite me: Amy Yao, Korakrit Arunonondchai, Mai-Thu Perret, Friedrich Kunath, Carson Fisk-Vittori, Isabelle New, Erin Jane Nelson, ODWALLA 88 (Chloe Maratta and Flannery Silva), Darja Bajagic, Elad Lassry and Kelley McNutt.

What is your snack/beverage of choice when working in your studio?

A lot of green tea, tortillas and hummus, overpriced nuts and berries and Zapp's Voodoo potato chips.

What do you do when you're not working on art?



What are you listening to right now?

I like anything that can give me the extremes of feelings. Super hopeful or super angry are usually good feelings. In the studio, I usually play Tonstartssbandht, Jun Togawa, Haroumi Hosono, The Locust, Dawn of Humans or Dystopia.

Can you share one of the best or worst reactions you have gotten as a result of your work?

"Are you related to Parker Ito?"

JOHANNES VOGT

NEWS. ARTS. CULTURE. EVENTS. MARKETPLACE. BALTIMORE

CITY PAPER

New show featuring Erika Ceruzzi and Alex Ito explores Springsteen's otherworldly space

Through Nov. 28 at Springsteen Gallery

By Rebekah Kirkman
City Paper

PUBLISHED: 4:34 p.m. EST, November 10, 2014



Erika Ceruzzi's aluminum armature touches down into (or blooms out of) one of Alex Ito's floor sculptures. (Courtesy of Springsteen Gallery / October 24, 2014)

Galleries hardly need to exist as physical locations anymore, now that everything is online, and documentation of an exhibit often looks better than the actual show. At least that's what some people say. But at the point where Erika Ceruzzi's aluminum armature touches down into (or blooms out of) one of Alex Ito's floor sculptures, and the structure winds and looms above you as you navigate the gallery, blending in with the white pipes in the ceiling, the lighting fixtures, and the Copycat's industrial-ghost feeling, these arguments feel false and empty. The effect of this large metal system is more elegant than oppressive, and its engagement with you and your physical space is way better than looking at a small photo on the internet.

The two artists, showing at Springsteen Gallery's "Jardin N° 19" through Nov. 28, explore and reflect the gallery's otherworldly, digital-feeling space, while hinting at ideas of consumerism, marketing, and tactile encounters with the world. Both artists are in their early 20s and have graduated within the last couple of years from schools in New York, though Ceruzzi has recently relocated to Baltimore. Her work in the show ties itself to Baltimore through some of the city's ubiquitous signs and symbols, such as its sports teams' logos, the wave in the National Aquarium's logo, and Mr. Boh's eye. Canvas pieces which are dyed soft, muddled pastel hues are stretched and hung on walls, or velcroed around parts of the aluminum pole/pipe armature overhead. Heat-pressed white vinyl logos sit atop the dyed fabric and, divorced from their usual environments on shirts and signs and in magazines, become interesting shapes within patterns. It takes a few seconds for me to be sure that the letters R and B are from the Baltimore Ravens' logo, but it registers when I notice the cursive Orioles' O, the Under Armour symbol, and "92" and "Q," which proliferate and scatter in the pieces 'City (four-ten)' and 'Denise.' Though these symbols bombard us everyday, Ceruzzi manages to wrest a calming effect from the normal chaos of advertising.

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Some of these scattered logo bits resemble hardware, like hooks and rings, which seem to reference the aluminum pipe structure, 'Try Me,' which utilizes two poles bolted to the ground, and a few shorter poles suspended from the ceiling. These supports hold up a large curving shape, kind of like a big 'S,' which seems to subconsciously guide you around Ito's floor sculptures. At the point where Ceruzzi's and Ito's work connects, one of the poles touches down in the middle of Ito's sculpture, 'In Denial of Falling (fair-weather friends),' into a pile of white plaster pebbles that resemble those found in fish tanks. An aluminum frame, with a digital print on vinyl of a nude tattooed woman, boxes in the pebbles. Vinyl text winds around the edges of the aluminum, recalling those tacky, sentimental picture frames with phrases like: "Pulling through hard times, Living with ease," "Best Frenemies," and "Caps and Gowns, Ups and Downs." Fabric leaves and a single flower (with digitally printed ad imagery on the "flora") also bloom from the pebbles. The whole thing looks like a futuristic, faux garden accent.

Ito also seems to incorporate ideas about advertising into the materiality of objects, the digital and the real, the handmade and the technological. Even the medium of UV curable ink plays into those notions, as it cures quickly compared to other types of screen-printing ink and it's most suitable for rigid surfaces (like metal). It's also used more for mass production and industry rather than for fine art. The vinyl, glass, and aluminum, all sexy and shiny materials (similar to ads, magazine pages, and LED billboards), reflect the gallery's light, and also reflect the viewer, as you look closely at the sculptures.

That light in Ito's work reminds us of our phone and computer screens—when something lights up, out of the corner of our eye, we follow our impulse to look at it. On the wall, three vinyl prints of women in staged shots for advertising are overlaid onto aluminum panels. In all of them, the image is mapped onto the surface like it was swiped on with a preset Photo-shop brush, leaving much of the bare metal surface. The images are all ridiculous on their own; 'There Is Always an Excuse' shows a woman blowing her nose using a roll of toilet paper strapped to her head, and 'Casual Fridays' uses a close-up of a woman whose necktie doubles as an umbrella. '100% (Either / Or)' looks more like a basic fashion magazine editorial shot, since all we can see is her face and her blonde, windblown hair.

These pieces hint at, perhaps, the ways women are used to sell products (to ridiculous extent—have you seen the "Women Laughing Alone with Salad" meme?), while also trying to cover bases in a larger scheme about capitalism and marketing, and screens, and catching only glimpses, and not recording or internalizing anything, our material reality versus screen-based reality, the tangible and the intangible. His intent comes across jumbled, which is not incongruous to how we experience reality. I can't even ride the bus without having to look at so many ads. I can't go see a movie, I can't visit a website, I can't listen to a radio station without someone trying to sell me something. We are inundated with this post-modern multiplicity.

The relief, though, can come through art, and as a whole, the exhibition is framed neatly and serenely, with elegant shapes, subtle tones, and diffused reflections. In the daytime at Springsteen Gallery, colors from the red brick building across the street filter in through the frosted glass windows, creating the most exquisite gradient against the almost-digitally-white walls of the gallery. At the right time of day, this meshes perfectly with the muddled-pastel colors in Ceruzzi's canvas works and the attractive sheen of Ito's aluminum sculptures. In Ceruzzi's 'Denise,' in the upper right corner, a small, embroidered patch beckons its viewer to "step back." I did, and the warm, yellow-fading-into-blue color field of the canvas stood out, while the Bs and Os and Rs settled back into their abstract pattern. It's only when I try to dissect it all that I get jumbled again.

JOHANNES VOGT

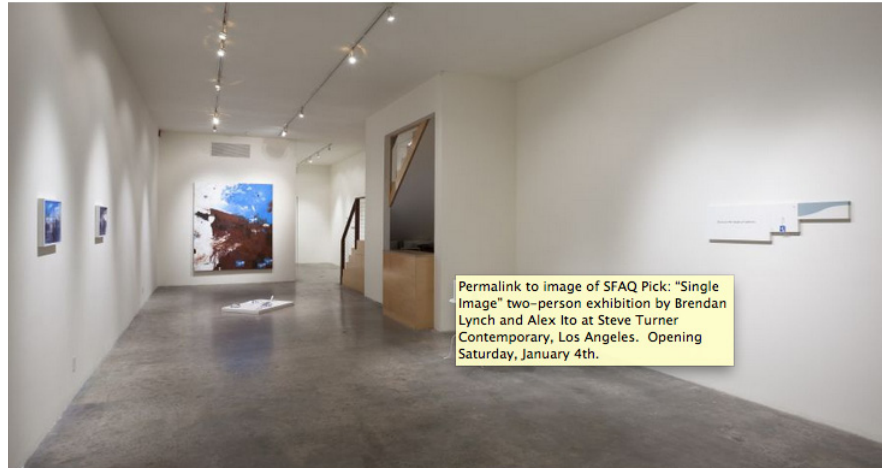
SFAQ

INTERNATIONAL ARTS AND CULTURE

SFAQ PICK: “SINGLE IMAGE” TWO-PERSON EXHIBITION BY BRENDAN LYNCH AND ALEX ITO AT STEVE TURNER CONTEMPORARY, LOS ANGELES. OPENING SATURDAY, JANUARY 4TH.

SFAQ PICKS — JANUARY 3, 2014

Opening Saturday, January 4th at Steve Turner Contemporary, Los Angeles is “Single Image,” a two-person exhibition by New York-based artists Brendan Lynch and Alex Ito. The works on view all stem from a pact between the two artists whereby each agreed to make work inspired by a found photographic image that depicts a white sheet billowing in the wind. They chose this innocuous image so that each would have to draw heavily upon his own imagination to create works—and viewers would have to do the same.



Permalink to image of SFAQ Pick: “Single Image” two-person exhibition by Brendan Lynch and Alex Ito at Steve Turner Contemporary, Los Angeles. Opening Saturday, January 4th.

Single Image, Installation view. Courtesy of Steve Turner Contemporary.

Lynch will present a group of paintings and a sculptural installation. His paintings incorporate multiple copies of the found photograph with a range of painterly effects over the image. Ito will present a mix of painting and sculpture. His paintings consist of three abutting panels, one with stream of consciousness text that he wrote in reaction to the source image; one with hooks holding keychain picture frames that house the source image; and one with an abstract wave painted in two colors. His sculpture consists of a group of installations comprised mostly of office materials (paper clips, office frames, binders) together with the found image, ink drawings and some plaster lumps that resemble moon rocks. He thinks of all these works as “open-scripts” with multiple meanings.



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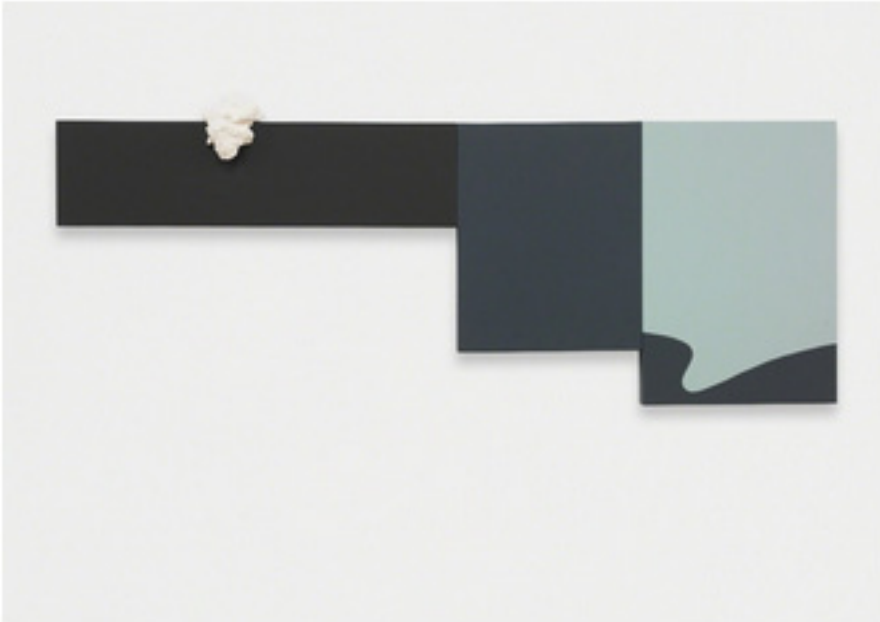
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JOHANNES VOGT

The Still House Group Identifies What Art Fairs Do Best

ARTSY EDITORIAL
DEC 5TH, 2013 3:46 PM



Alex Ito
Ocean Waves (121 Days of Sodom), 2013
The Still House Group

Today, at The Still House Group's booth at NADA Miami Beach, you'll come across a copy machine, and on impulse, you'll make a xerox copy of the flyer that lay on the scanner bed. This flyer will direct you from the fair to an off-site location—a 12,000 square-foot office building, with 25 small exhibitions in 25 different rooms. But why would Still House Group, an artist-run organization, known as a hub for new work and with a deep respect for NADA (well-known for presenting new and undiscovered work, and monikered the "artists' fair") make such a move?

"I want to be very careful in the way that I say this because I have a ton of respect for NADA," Isaac Brest, co-founder of the group, began. "I find fairs to be a fantastic promotional networking tool for galleries and a great way to connect collectors with gallerists and to introduce collectors to a broad range of artists' work. However, I do not find them to be an exceptional exhibition platform." For The Still House Group, the alternative meant setting up shop in an old Miami real estate building, where they've showed work in the past. "We're utilizing the fair for what we find it to be good for and then utilizing an outside space to exhibit the work, which we find more in line with our aesthetic and our concept to show the work."

In this space, you'll find work from artists including Peter Sutherland, Alex Ito, Haley Mellin, Jack Greer, Louis Eisner, Alex Perweiler, and Brest himself, among others, in a range of exhibitions one might normally find in a gallery—from solo shows to films to site specific installations—in 8-by-8 to 12-by-12 foot rooms. "I find that I've grown much more interested in seeing one or two works or three works at a time instead of seeing a large show with 30 or 40 works. So while this show will have 96 works in it, it's subdivided into 25 rooms so you're allowed your own quiet time to value the work and see it juxtaposed only amongst either itself or a few other pieces, therefore giving it the proper respect and time and void of outside distractions."

For The Still House Group, showing at the NADA fair required little forethought. "We find NADA's program to be exceptional, and their admissions process seems to select a group that we are honored to be exhibiting alongside," Brest says. "These younger galleries tend to take more risks, and therefore we feel a project like this would be more at home than it would be necessarily be at a more conservative, commerce-based fair such as Basel or others." And at NADA, where Black Leotard Front once performed on the lawn among an inflatable white limousine, cardboard tommy guns, and balloons, The Still House Group seems to be right at home.

The Still House Group, NADA Miami 2013, Main, Booth 702, Dec. 5th – 8th.

"Straight II DVD" is on view Dec. 5th – 8th.

Explore NADA Miami Beach on Artsy and Artsy's Editorial Highlights from the Miami Art Fairs.

JOHANNES VOGT



EAST HAMPTON – THE STILL HOUSE GROUP: “HONK IF YOU DON’T EXIST” AT THE FIREPLACE PROJECT, THROUGH SEPTEMBER 23RD 2013

September 19th, 2013

—E. Baker



Alex Ito, *Magic Mountain* (2013), via Fireplace Project

On view at The Fireplace Project in East Hampton, New York is a collection of works created this year by The Still House Group, an artist-run organization based in Red Hook, Brooklyn made up of eight permanent artists and a different resident artist each summer.

Bringing the summer of 2013 to a close, honk if you don’t exist” features works by artists Alex Perweiler, Louis Eisner, Isaac Brest, Dylan Lynch, Nick Darmstaedter, Brendan Lynch, Jack Greer, and resident artist Alex Ito. Still House aims to provide young artists with an environment to conceptualize, produce, and exhibit their work, emphasizing the power of collaboration through the evaluation and critique of each other’s work. Although each artist remains uniquely individual, the artists routinely assist and critique one another’s work in a way that they also formally represent one another and often present themselves as an artist team when exhibiting their work in the public realm.

Still House was founded in 2007 by Isaac Brest and Alex Perweiler as an online platform, and has since grown to exhibit around the U.S., predominantly in L.A., Miami, and New York. In 2010, the group took on an eight month residency in TriBeCa in the abandoned building that was once the Department of Transportation offices, and afterwards the collective built a permanent institution that is currently based in Red Hook, Brooklyn.

Working across many disciplines, the Still House artists produce sculptures, installations, paintings, drawings, prints, and multimedia art pieces. They are interested in providing a system for artists free from the constraints of the conventional path that is most widely considered necessary for gaining success as artists, and intend to form a foundation to empower artists, freeing them from the political and art world constraints. Freeing artists to produce the work they want without having to sacrifice their creativity in favor of the desires and limitations that gallerists, curators, and dealers often expect.

This current show compiles a series of pieces from the artist’s output this year, showcasing the unified themes and ideas that pervade their respective works. While working as a group body, each artist brings a unique hand to the group’s total output, standing out as a distinct voice while benefitting from the backing of his fellow artists.

The Still House Group’s new show “honk if you don’t exist” will continue at The Fireplace Project through September 23, 2013.

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INTERNATIONAL ARTS AND CULTURE

SFAQ PICK: “VICTORY” SOLO EXHIBITION BY ALEX ITO AT THE STILL HOUSE GROUP IN BROOKLYN, NY

SFAQ – AUGUST 27, 2013

Opening on August 28th in Brooklyn, NY is solo exhibition, “VICTORY” by Alex Ito, recent recipient of the summer residency at The Still House Group, a emerging arts organization run by artists. Still House supports a unit of young artists, providing them with an environment to conceptualize, produce and exhibit their work. Other Still House residents include: Peter Sutherland, Jogging, Alex Da Corte, Peter Linden, Haley Mellin, and more.

The strong emphasis on collaboration encourages members of the group to assist, critique and formally represent one another, ultimately creating a collective drive that balances the advancement of individual careers with the growth of Still House the entity. Still House’s location serves as a hub for new work, a satellite environment to the art center of Manhattan where young artists engage in a space of their own.

The only words in the press release are, “This is a show about winning”, an intriguing introduction to what will be on view at Still House.

This exhibition will be on view until September 22nd. For more information visit [here](#).