

# JOHANNES VOGT

## Flash Art

Item Idem *Johannes Vogt / New York*

December 16, 2014

Unease will creep in when one is openly confronted with guilty pleasures and private vices. Such is the case with French artist Cyril Duval's sculptures, those installations and mantelpieces composed of neatly arranged, easily recognizable commercial products propped up by concrete cinder blocks and industrial shelving, McDonald's; Hostess Twinkies; Muscle Milk; Superman; Mickey Mouse; Quaker Oats; Kellogg's cereal; Justin Bieber, his likeness unfortunately reappropriated for an off-brand "love doll" — they are all here, stacked tidily and presented without discernment, in "Voir Dire" at Johannes Vogt Gallery, Duval's first exhibition in New York.

Sculptures such as *Baby, baby, baby oooh Like baby, baby, baby, nooo* (all works 2014) and *Portrait of Mussolini as Prometheus* nestle the brightly colored cardboard boxes of snacks and canned foods among fake flowers and fruit, while *Halved (Moby-Dick)*, an inflated whale with a vacant smile, is beached nearby. The film *JOSS*, made with Chinese artist Cheng Ran, screens in an adjoining room, documenting joss paper objects — traditional funeral offerings in various Asian cultures — being consumed by fire.



*Item Idem, "Baby, baby, baby oooh. Like baby, baby, baby nooo" (2014) Courtesy of the Artist and Johannes Vogt*

This multivalent artist has already manipulated the readymade contextualization and precise designation that the name brand and logo can provide across various platforms and media: As one-third of the geographically fabled Shanzhai Biennial, the ongoing exhibition series and marketing machine of unclear motive that he presents with fellow artist Babak Radboy and stylist Avena Gallagher (and named not after the next art-world destination but rather the Chinese shanzhai, the practice of manufacturing and selling knockoff designer goods on the black market); as collaborator with the exclusive Parisian boutique Colette and Commes des Garçons and architect for avant-garde fashion designer Bernhard Willhelm's boutique in Tokyo; in addition to numerous branding and communication projects for DIS magazine and New York's Neuhouse, among others.

Given that the artist's moniker, *Item Idem*, translates to "the same" from Latin, "Voir Dire" suggests that whether we are in the market for tokens of luxury and style or aspire to wholesome virtue through the purchasing of cornflakes and Aim toothpaste, the satisfaction we desire through consumption is flamed out quickly, and all item idem.

by Jennifer Piejko

# JOHANNES VOGT

## STARTER // DIE NEUEN KÜNSTLER

**Geburtsort/ Jahr:** Paris, 1977

**Whonort:** Chinatown, New York

**Ausbildung:** Beschäftigt bei Comme des Garçons, Tokyo

**Galerie:** Johannes Vogt, (New York) und Project Native Informant (London)

**Initialzündung:** Als Kind starrte ich gerne auf diese kleine Zeichnung eines Clowns von Picasso, die meine Großtante während des Zweiten Weltkriegs für 500 Franc gekauft hat. Sie war auch meine erste Mentorin

**Höhepunkt:** Als Cheng Ran und ich zur Pariser Messe FIAC 2014 die Fassade vom Palais de Tokyo in Brand setzten, indem wir unser Video »JOSS« in gigantischem Maßstab darauf projizierten.

**Tiefpunkt:** Weiter geht's!

**Helden:** General Idea, Sturtevant, Billy Apple®

**Credo:** Ich bin Item Idem. Wie willst du damit umgehen?

**Ein Rat, den Sie gerne erhalten hätten:** Scheißegal! Das sollte man möglichst früh lernen!

**Warum Künstler, Nicht Banker? Im Ansammeln von kulturellem Kapital bin ich einfach besser.**

## Guerilla-Taktik

Kritik mit Tiki Pop – der Franzose **Cyril Duval** kommentiert mit camäleonartigen Aktionen unser Konsumverhalten. Wer oder bitte was ist »Item Idem«? Hinter dem doppelbödigen englisch-lateinischen Pseudonym steckt der Konzeptkünstler Cyril Duval. Der gebürtige Franzose gehört in der New Yorker Kunstszene zu jenen Phantasmen, in der sich eigene Autorenschaft und kollektive Auftritte bis zur vollkommenen Verwirrung überblenden. Bisweilen arbeitet Duval auch unter dem Decknamen Shanzhai Bienial mit Kollegen an gesamt-künstlerischen Entwürfen, die durchaus aggressiv vom Corporate bis zum Interior Design reichen. Dass Duval auch schon für Modelabels wie Comme des Garçons tätig war, ist je nach Performance und Anlass seiner von Kopf bis Fuß rigoros durchstilisierten Chamäleon-Erscheinung anzusehen. In jüngerer Zeit tendiert er zum Solistendasein. In der Galerie Johannes Vogt fächerte Duval eine collagenartige Produktpalette und damit eine konsumironische Kritik am Spätkapitalismus auf: Plastikschwimmtiere, Bodenstatuen aus Kellogg's-Schachteln, archaische Köpfe – das Setting blühte in seinen trashigen Elementen zu einer exotischen Landschaft im pervertierten Nachklang der Tiki-Pop-Culture auf. Duval erklärt: »In den sechziger Jahren hatten viele Amerikaner die träumerische Vorstellung, nach Hawaii oder auf die kleinen Inseln im Pazifik auszuwandern. Tiki ist von dieser teils kitschigen Fiktion geprägt, bezieht sich aber auch auf Pop und TV.« Zugleich sah man das pathetische Video Joss, in dem Item Idem/Duval zusammen mit dem chinesischen Künstler Cheng Ran aus Papier nachgebaute Luxusartikel wie etwa Chanel-Täschchen explosiv in Rauch und Schall aufgehen ließ. So hebt er mit süffisanter Guerilla-Taktik unsere ewige Sucht nach Fetischen aus. // -Birgit Sonna



**JOHANNES VOGT**

**PURPLE.FR**  
**purple DIARY**

ITEM IDEM “VOIR DIRE” OPENING at Johannes Vogt, New York

SEPTEMBER 24 2014 : ART



*Cyril Duval*

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**superfuture™**  
**new york: voir dire**



12 september 2014 by andreas

New York-based conceptual artist cyril duval a.k.a. item idem has landed his first solo exhibition in his adopted hometown since relocating there from tokyo. known for works and collabs that straddle art, fashion and media, duval continuously delves into today's visual culture, or rather the blatant side of consumerism, finding gems he regularly literally incorporates in his often flamboyant works. opening sat - sep 13 at johannes vogt gallery in chelsea is voir dire, an exhibition of new works which is centered is a presentation of new works centered around duval's fascination with the visual tropes of late capitalism, and his quirky embrace of their inherent promises and failures. on display are a series of wall works created from détourned cross-stitch patterns of popular disney princesses in dyed bamboo artist frames. in another body of work, the artist created support structures of heavily branded cereal boxes and acrylic panels, and which hold a motley collection of altered and found objects. the gallery's back room is dedicated to the premiere large-scale screening of joss, a video that duval has made in collab with chinese artist cheng ran. location: 526 west 26th street, suite 205 [chelsea].

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032c

Posted September 12,  
2014

CYRIL DUVAL—also known under the name of his semi-fictional brand ITEM IDEM—is a creative virtuoso and a 21st century master of disguise. Driven by his eye for the mythological wonder of consumer culture, Duval engages in an interdisciplinary practice that sprawls across the boundaries of genre and context. For his first solo exhibition in the United States at JOHANNES VOGT in Chelsea, Duval presents “Voir Dire,” an iconographic collision of pop narratives—from McDonald’s to Disney to Tiki—that simultaneously augments and subverts the mechanisms of consumer fantasy.



032c spoke with Duval in anticipation of the opening of his exhibition “Voir Dire” in New York City.

**This is your first US solo exhibition. How has being in this new context—being in the United States and Chelsea, in particular—inspired the work?**

Chelsea is the epicenter of the New York market. I am surrounded by art for all tastes, which was actually mildly terrifying to me, as I am not so used to such a “competitive” industry context. But the challenge of producing a gallery show was definitely entertaining, as was the notion of what an artwork is or should be. It’s actually quite different—limitation in sizes for example, or the way it is perceived, or the “white box” setting. All of those parameters influenced the look and the feel of the works I created specifically for this show.

**What are the challenges and surprises that come with your habit of traversing the borders between fashion and art? What does that metaphorical customs house look like?**

I have never really been specifically stimulated by the dynamics between fashion and art solely, but I am definitely keen on appreciating the cultural and political powers inherent to all sorts of brands. The idea of infiltrating the mental space of such huge corporations is fascinating to me! I deeply enjoy figuring out the clues of their communicational endeavors, how they have evolved through the years, and what or who they are aiming at. It sometimes feels as though I were—on my own—the entire advertising department of a global firm! “Voir Dire” is all about that. There are a couple mental “red threads” framing the narration of the exhibition—cultural and political ideologies from the 1940s, or the 60–70s—fascist statuary memes and their constant recurrence over the years. There’s also the construction of political images within the Hollywood factory—especially at Disney—and the evolution of brand slogans from heavyweight propaganda messages towards subtle and more insidious consumer manipulation processes.

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**What do you see as the promises and failures of mass-produced images and products? How do they excite us? How do they let us down?**

Those brand contents are built on the narration of modern day ideologies, where consumer culture provides us all with solutions and remedies. The evolution of graphic design in posters and advertisements is probably the best witness to how brands have been addressing consumers over the years and it is fascinating to see how radical and sophisticated this form of communication has become nowadays. The seminal “Voir Dire” piece actually emphasizes that aspect by featuring an original score by Ray Kroc—the legendary founder of McDonald’s—teaching the brand’s philosophy in a direct message to his employees punctuated by brand jingles of the era. I find this form of indoctrination fascinating, but frozen in the past. Brands like Google, Apple, or Monsanto, for example, have come a long way from such a communication process. But within modernity, I believe their methods are direct heirs to the strategies developed by geniuses like Walt Disney or Ray Kroc.

**You have been quoted saying that this exhibition is about “Tiki Pop.” What draws you to Tiki aesthetics? It seems as though people normally associate Tiki with Americans in the Midwest who wished they were in Tahiti. It’s almost a type of deferred exoticism.**

I concur with the fact that Tiki Pop is sort of redneck fantasy, and the kitsch symbolism associated with it inspires me. Its mass appeal functions as a soothing ideology that evokes the “far away” and the peaceful evasion of the mind during the search for a lost paradise. Somehow I understand this pastoral cliché as a 1960s interpretation of previous cultural genres such French Romantic writings by Chateaubriand, or Primitivism such as the paintings of Gauguin. The golden era of the 60s encompassed this search for a new ideal, and the consumer culture of that time provided mental postcards of that dreamt aesthetic. I am interested by the seminal influence of those cultural contents—we call them ‘Images d’Epinal’ in French—as a naive and simplified depiction of something.

For more information on Duval’s projects, visit [itemidem.com](http://itemidem.com).



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## VF CULTURE

### You Haven't Seen Tiki Sculptures Like This

SEPTEMBER 2014

BY RACHEL TASHJIAN

Every week in the Culture List, Vanity Fair editors present a ruthlessly curated selection of parties, art openings, exhibits, and mustn't-miss events. This week's list includes your coolest art teacher's jewelry, food photos too sophisticated to double-tap, and a moonlit safari—all of which are closing in the next few weeks.

NeueHouse Presents "Tiki Dazzle"/ "Voir Dire"

\*NeueHouse / Johannes Vogt Gallery, New York City

Through September 18 / September 13 through October 11\*

French artist and designer Cyril Duval is making his New York debut with a tiki-pop double-header: his first U.S. solo exhibition, at Johannes Vogt Gallery, that adds tiki motifs to structures made of big-brand products (a tropical scene atop a base of cereal boxes, for example); and a façade for ultra-hip communal workspace NeueHouse that contrasts the "razzle dazzle," a type of camouflage used on naval ships during World War I to disorient the enemy's line of fire, with a groovy collage of hibiscus flowers and palm trees.

Duval has made a name for himself by cheerfully blurring the line between commercial and art work, designing stores, creating opera sets, and collaborating with Comme des Garçons with a refreshing "surf's up" insouciance. He celebrated his NeueHouse collaboration last week in a red composition-notebook-print suit and crakow shoes, and a haircut not dissimilar to that of the LEGO men he has used in his past work.

"My show is really about tiki pop culture," Duval told VF Daily, "which is, you know, the moment in the 60s, when America starts looking at the Pacific, at Hawaii, Southeast Asia, Eastern Islands . . . I [find it] very poetic and laid back."

If his NeueHouse façade is playful pop, his work at Johannes Vogt is something more gruesome: mounted on a podium of popcorn and Kellogg's cereal boxes is a tiki head slathered in latex and topped with a hamburger from which a hibiscus vine sprouts. Is Duval's cinderblock-and-Kellogg's-cereal foundation, topped with a tiny theme park of toy castles, a monument to branding or a sendup?

The ease and frequency with which he aligns himself with brands suggests something in between.

"I see, for me, the commercial bridge between fine art and commercial work as very shallow—it's quite invisible," he says of his willingness to work with brands. "So for me, as an artist, I decided to embrace that rather than feeling guilty about it."



"Portrait of Prometheus as Ray Kroc", 2014., Courtesy of Vogt Gallery.

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## whitewall TIKI DAZZLE AND THE LAST NIGHT OF FOLLY AT NEUEHOUSE

EMORY LOPICCOLO

September 5, 2014



This week, NeueHouse hosted two separate events leading up to the start of New York Fashion Week for the artists Cyril Duval and Rachel Feinstein.

On September 2, the fashion and art world crowd gathered to celebrate the conceptual artist and designer Cyril Duval who had created a site-specific work for the space's 25th Street façade. The party had a tropical theme and was dubbed "Tiki Dazzle," featuring Hawaiian and pop music from Eric Lyle Lodwick.

Cyril's design for NeueHouse extends from the first to the second floor windows and features a cheekily modernized "tiki-pop" take on "razzle dazzle"—the camouflage technique used on battleships during WWI. The graphics for the design are in dialog with Duval's work in his upcoming show "Voir Dire," opening September 13 at Johannes Vogt Gallery.

The following night, on September 3, Rachel Feinstein toasted to the final day of her Madison Square Park installation, "The Last Days of Folly." Hosted by Marianne Boesky Gallery and the Madison Square Park Conservancy, Feinstein's summer-long project (large-scale sculptural installations of three architectural follies executed in decorative styles popular in the 18th- and 19th-centuries) culminated with a one-day art and fashion event combining Folly-inspired looks from Cynthia Rowley, Zac Posen, Proenza Schouler, and Narcisco Rodriguez, with performances by contemporary musicians, artists, opera singers, dancers, and puppets.

Guests for the after-party at NeueHouse included Ellen Barkin, Derek Blasberg, Francesca DiMattio, Stacy Engman, Yvonne Force Villareal, Rupert Friend and Aimee Mullins, Katie Grand, Dorian Grinspan, Gary Hume, Kalup Linzy, Ryan McNamara, Andrea Rosen, Salman Rushdie, Ingrid Sischy, and Sandy Brant.

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# BLOUINARTINFO BLOGS



## NeueHouse Gets Tiki Pop Treatment From Cyril Duval

AUGUST 28, 2014

Ahead of his first show at Johannes Vogt Gallery, artist-designer-Shanzai Biennial co-founder Cyril Duval (aka ITEM IDEM) has designed a “Tiki Pop” façade for swanky workspace NeueHouse. Filling the windows at NeueHouse’s East 25th Street location, the design is inspired by the Razzle Dazzle ships of WWI. Check out more of Duval’s work when “VOIR DIRE” opens at Johannes Vogt on September 13.

— Ashton Cooper

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PLEX

## Cyril Duval to Open First US Solo Exhibition at Johannes Vogt Gallery

BY ANDREW LASANE

© JUN 9, 2014

Johannes Vogt Gallery announced recently that they now represent Cyril Duval (aka Item Idem) of Shanzhai Biennial and that the artist will open his first United States solo exhibition at the gallery this coming September.

The exhibition will be called “VOIR DIRE,” and while there are no details yet, we expect good things from this one. Shanzhai Biennial recently provided the art direction for one of the best album covers of 2014 so far, and they are also working with Project Native Informant on SHANZHAI BIENNIAL No 3 to be shown at Frieze Art Fair in London and also at the gallery.

We will update this post as more information is made available. For now, check out Duval’s Item Idem website for more of his work.



# JOHANNES VOGT

## VISIONAIRE



Item Idem, Grocery Storm, Halved, 2007

When stumbling upon a group of mutilated, inflatable animals next to a hybrid between a Chanel and a McDonalds logo there's only one thing to do: stop and find out who's behind the ludicrousness. French artist Cyril Duval aka Item Idem (latin for 'the same') creates colorful art pieces as a way of commenting on outsiders' view on Western pop-culture and logo-mania. As his first US solo-exhibition is approaching, the artist is taking us on a tour through his archive and his creative evolution.

Having grown up with a mother working at Hermès and a Father who was an interior decorator, Duval is no stranger to the quirks of the luxury industry, which he often comments on through his work. "My mom has always had an anti consumerist point of view. She's almost 70 now, but in the 80s when everyone started wearing black, she was like 'oh, I can't take that I'm dressing in white,'" he laughs.

## ITEM IDEM'S VOIR DIRE

By Lars Byrresen Petersen

After six years at École Nationale Supérieure d'Arts de Paris-Cergy, Duval left the French capital for Tokyo. "I was gravitating there for a couple of months just to see what was happening to me. I had just graduated from my art school so I was like you know..." he smiles, taking a drag of his cigarette before continuing. "I got discovered by Sarah Andelman, the creative director of Colette, who was looking for someone to work inside the Comme des Garçons company to operate a project they were doing together called Colette meets Comme des Garçons, which was sort of like the beginning of pop ups," he explains, adding a "ugh, when you hear that word now?"

His breakthrough came in 2005 when he designed a concept store for the eccentric German designer Bernhard Willhelm. "Bernard wanted a scene about garbage, and there was an architectural studio hired, who started making renderings with fake garbage, and I was like 'no, no that's not possible.' So I visited homeless communities in Japan, who are extremely sophisticated in their resourceful use of cardboard and layers of plastic and their use of ropes to tie it all together—it's almost like bondage. It's architecture," he explains, excitedly. The store won him the Great Indoors Award in 2007 and his career was launched.

"It's going to be a big jubilee," Duval says, describing 'Voir Dire,' his exhibition, which is scheduled for sometime in the fall at Johannes Vogt Gallery in NYC. "Initially, I thought 70-80% new, but now I think it's closer to 90%. So brand new," he explains, including that there will be a few archival pieces like one of his repurposed Louis Vuitton coats as well as a coat made entirely from Comme des Garçons care labels.

"Well my eye and my emotions are very much directed everywhere I go, all around the world. I have this amazing African fabric that says "Jesus Christ my Lord my Savior" embossed with a superman looking logo. So a lot of those cultural bridges give a sense that the show is new, but some of the materials or ideas I sourced eight or ten years ago. I'm sort of a cultural hoarder," he says, explaining the inspiration behind the upcoming show. "I'll have a living octopus in the show."

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## PATTERNEONIPLASTICOAT 8002

for Miss General Idea  
by item idem aka Cyril Duval

“Sublime”: Probably the poetry & symbolism embedded in every little aspect of quotidian life, especially that tiny invisible gap that sits quietly in between reason & madness, beauty and ugliness.” This is how Cyril Duval aka Item Idem describes what it is that he aims for in his work, which ranges modestly speaking, between art, fashion and design.

A native of Paris with a background in fine art, he has lived in Tokyo for the past four years, where he landed by chance when selected as Project Manager for the ‘colette meets Commes des Garçons’ temporary store. Once described as a prolific wizzkid, he has been wizzing around the globe collaborating with the likes of Michael Gaubert, Terrence Koh, André Saraiva, Bruce LaBruce, Colette, AA Bronson and Bernhard Willhelm. He has created store interiors for his own guerilla project ‘The Wrong Store,’ done installations and design for the Celine and Bernhard Willhelm flagship stores in Tokyo; and won ‘The Great Indoors Award 2007.’

His work is about codes of popular cultures, from retail to artistic, sociological or behavioral; relocating and interpreting these codes, images, concepts and events in his own way by proposing alternative meanings and values for them.

Moving into arenas of sculpture, one of his latest interpretations is the “Testpatternconiplasticot 8002 (for Miss General Idea)” the alternation process of one product into another whereby very expensive luxury products (Louis Vuitton bags) are turned into useless sculptural experimentation. *“Like that alchemis myth of the Philosopher’s Stone turning stones into gold. Except that here I am an anti-chemist!”* Duval explains that the piece gains added value and in turn becomes potentially more expensive than the original Louis Vuitton product, by someone deciding that it is.

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## VMAGAZINE.COM

### Peer Pressure: item idem + DIS

by Mr. V  
March, 2011



Counterfeited CHANEL quilted bag, Egypt. Syrian Military Uniform for Children (4 years), Lebanon.

If “the freedoms associated with modern living are the source of our status woes,” ponder Victoria Camblin, “then are objects produced under dictatorship, communism or simply in areas of political conflict anxiety free?” Such is the question posted by Shangzai Anxiety, the latest collaboration between DIS Magazine and Artist Cyril Duval, aka item idem. In Camblin’s essay paired with the still lifes by photographer Marco Roso, our psychologically inborn anxieties provoked by status and expressed through materialism come into focus. The images themselves, highlighting counterfeit items from Duval’s personal archive, provide an indulgent lense into the products that come out from the other side of the global fashion coin, and will be on display between March 4th and April 2nd at Colette Paris.



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Now Showing | “Dysfashional”

by Horacio Silva  
November 5, 2009



Image courtesy of Dysfashional Paris, 2009

© Johannes Vogt Gallery, New York



Image courtesy of Dysfashional Paris, 2009

The world needs another fashion exhibition like Valentino needs another pug. But “Dysfashional,” which opened this week at the Passage du Désir in Paris, gives hope that despite the surfeit of recent shows, the subject matter may still have some bite. Although the show’s curators, Luca Marchetti and Emanuele Quinz, have tapped designers like Raf Simons, Hussein Chalayan and Gaspard Yurkievich to contribute, the pair has chosen not to exhibit clothing, preferring instead to focus on the ideas and spectacle that surround fashion. Explains Marchetti, “Dysfashional tackles the seemingly frivolous yet vital realm of fashion by examining the approach of designers and artists from various backgrounds, bringing us closer to a world in which the protagonists are not the objects but the creative process itself.”

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Standouts of the show include Maison Martin Margiela's solipsistic installation, featuring life-size photos pasted on wooden panels of the maison itself; the French artist Marc Turlan's series of cutout magazines; and Item Idem's "Mt. Blushmore," an L.E.D. installation featuring Karl Lagerfeld, Donatella Versace, Anna Wintour and John Galliano in place of Presidents Washington, Jefferson, Roosevelt and Lincoln. Idem says that the work suggested itself on a recent trip to the Optics Valley in Wuhan, China. "Pop culture and tourist gimmickry are two of my personal obsessions and have pushed me to explore new mediums like laser crystal engraving," he says. "Mt. Blushmore' is conceived as a three-dimensional postcard, a souvenir blown up to monumental size." The better to showcase monumental egos.



"Dysfashional" runs through Nov. 29. It will then travel to the Haus der Kulturen der Welt in Berlin next year.

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## The Wrong Store

October, 2009

Imagine a tiny store that entices you with branded merchandise, but then puts it all unobtainably out of reach. As shop where you can only look and not buy. Maverick Parisian artist/designer and Tokyo resident Cyril Duval - who operates under the brand 'Item Idem' creates installations and interventions using the world of retail as a playground. Nowhere is this more successfully expressed than in the Wrong Store.

Lovingly mocking the language of store design, the Wrong Store presented itself as a 22m x 3m of retail excitement where, on weekends, there was 50% more sale. However this little window on retail existed for just one month, during 2006. It was, in fact, created as part of an exhibition for the Galerie Frédéric Giroux in Paris, and takes the 'guerilla store' concept pioneered by Commes des Garçons to its very limit.

Duval formerly describes the Wrong Store as follows: 'A play on the modern fascination for retail culture, the desirable window image of a shop where no one can really enter and buy unless the purchase becomes the entire shop; a finalized retail Gesamtkunstwerk (total work of art) arising from adding



248-249

TINY

**THE WRONG STORE**

Paris, France

Item Idem

c.1.5m<sup>2</sup>/16ft<sup>2</sup>

together the concept, the architecture, and all associated artworks and products.

It was inspired by conceptual artist Maurizio Cattelan's Wrong Gallery, a tiny exhibition space that moved around the world without ever really opening. This, says Duval, is its 'unauthorized and derivative souvenir shop.' It was also the first in an ongoing series of collaborations with Tobias Wong, who opened a similar Wrong Store of unbuyable objects in New York.

But, while playfully taking on the tropes of retail, Duval's Wrong Store is also a beautiful demonstration in itself of how engaging small shops can be. Having collaborated with Commes des Garçons and Collette, Duval's work is as much a celebration as a critique of the stances and spaces of small shops.

**'A DESIRABLE WINDOW IMAGE OF A SHOP  
WHERE NO ONE CAN REALLY ENTER.'**

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# JOHANNES VOGT

We Make It Good  
WMIG

May, 2009

## Item Idem



We don't fully know how to describe artist, designer, born vivrant - **Item Idem**, but we definitely have plus size bones for the art he makes. He self-describes him as: "Muscle Fibers pretending to be Philippe Starck, art directed by Marcel Duchamp and scripted by Oscar Wilde". There's really an endless amount of things to go through on his website and by the time you reach the end you'll feel slightly cheapened and a little made-for-TV. But overall, if we had to describe a theme it would be: Item-Idem subtly says fuck you, everywhere. But that's just our take away.

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# JOHANNES VOGT



## A SHORT CONVERSATION WITH ITEM IDEM AND HIS PROJECT

May 14, 2009



**FilepMotwary: Item Idem, I saw some interesting photographs of identical men plus your portrait as Rei Kawakubo, what was this all about?**

Item Idem: The pictures you are referring too are documents for the presentation entitled ENACTORS STUDIO, In Moskow a few weeks ago, as part of the Cycles & Seasons festival. It was enhancing a retrospective of some of my projects, especially the ones relating to imagery relocation. The New York Times just called the presentation “Celine-Dion-at-the-Oscars channeling Renee Magritte.”



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The “REI of Light” piece is a more singular image produced with an unique idea: Communicating. It mimicks whereabouts of a notorious portrait whose means are simply to communicate values & a state of control on branding. My mirrored image is both an homage, and an explanation of this image, why it exists, what it is intending to communicate.

**FilepMotwary: If I would ask you to give me your professional outline, how would you describe your profession and what you do exactly?**

Item Idem: Well I’m probably a playful multitasker in the sense that I react to a brief, a problematic, with various answer fields. Work for me is more something ethereal, slightly intellectual, then I focus on which aesthetical answer to propose. That is why the range of my projects is often quite wide. In & out the art topic, pre or post the branding question, with or without the style issue. Every question can provide multiple answers. It is something I am curious about.

**FilepMotwary: I wanted to ask you, you earlier said that you are coming to Athens. What for? How are you linked with Athens Biennial?**

Item Idem: Well I initially wanted to transplant myself over there, I’m very pushy sometimes, I find it cute actually to be undesired. It’s a challenging plus. So I had a project with my friend Dimitris Papadopoulos, whos has been running several guerilla stores in Athens. Unfortunately, the timing was too short to be able to realize something with the ambition we had in mind. So I am just happy to be a simple attendee of the Biennale. It will probably be extremely fun, and look well curated actually,

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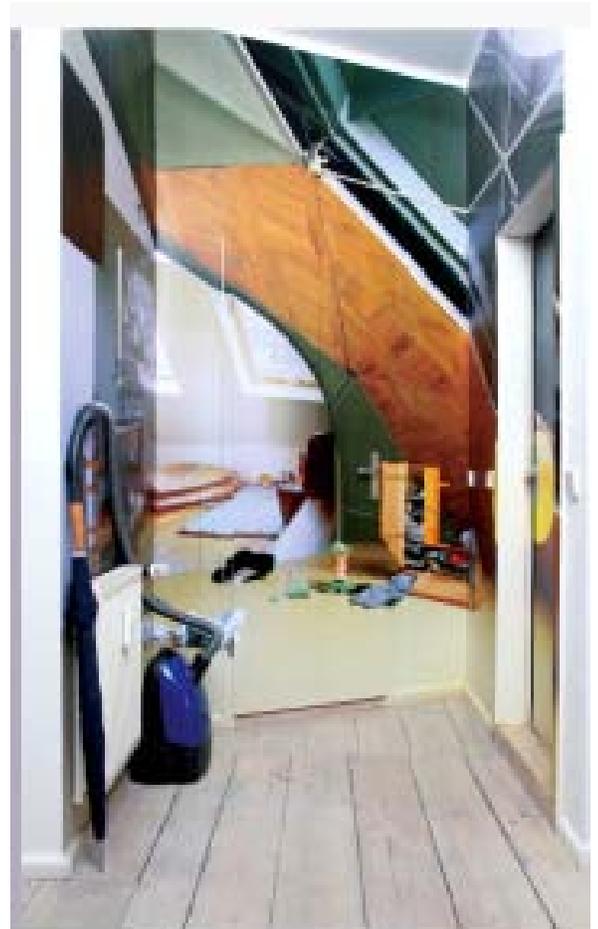
THINK  
SILLY

## BLESS SHOP BERLIN A HIDDEN WONDERLAND

May, 2009

It is hard to pin down a singular definition for Bless Berlin, especially when one sets foot in their new space in Oderbergerstrasse. Is it a home, store or gallery? The 'resident'-cum-representative Cyril Duval came to open the door for us, and then we walk through 'curtains' made with showpieces and items from the current collection. Cyril's spacious desk and fur-lined hanging bed is an edgy take on 21st century modern living. The room on the left is his bedroom, completed with a king size bed covered with BLESS photoprint bedding set. Most of the items on show are available for sale, from accessories hung with outfits to limited editions on display. such as BLESS x Longchamp doughnut-shape tote bag and BLESS x JOYCE stone like iPhone case. Don't miss out on the double sided plant also.

The study is not filled with books, but current and previous collections showcasing BLESS signature hairbrush circa 1999, shirt with see-through jacket hung on top of the window, white knitted leather boots on the bookshelf, towel with pockets and other incredible items made in quirky BLESS spirit. After saying 'please enjoy as your home!' Cyril went back to his own desk. BLESS claims this new store to be a private island, three floors up and hidden away in a remote Berlin residential area. It leaves one with a magical after taste.



# JOHANNES VOGT

## THEORY&PRACTICE One Talk Show with item idem

April, 2009

### One Talk Show with item idem

11 August 2009



ENACTORS STUDIO

'Reactivating, Remodeling, Shapeshifting, or the flamboyant staging artifice of mimesis phases & mimicry faces, as kernel arguments in the monstration process.'

One Talk Show with item idem.

Теории и Практики выступают инициатором и организатором лекции-шоу французского художника-концептуалиста Сирила Дюваля Item Idem, проходящей в рамках «альтернативной недели моды» Cycles And Seasons при поддержке клуба Солянка и TwinsShopp.

В связи с ограниченными возможностями площадки, а также большим количеством гостей и журналистов, вход на событие возможен только по приглашительным.

Следите за новостями, видеозапись события можно будет увидеть на нашем сайте в самое ближайшее время.



Mother of All Dolls by Item Idem

<http://blogs.colella.fr/itemidem/page/4/>



Cyril Duval et Sarah Colette @ TwinsShop

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## Interview

### As Told To, by item idem

by Alex Gartenfeld  
December, 2008



Item Idem (nee Cyril Duval) is an artist and a frequent collaborator with luxury brands including Comme Des Garçons, 3.1 Philip Lim, and Colette, but he is also a brand himself. For instance, he has called for international participation in Item Idem. He designed Bernhard Willhelm's Tokyo boutique, which he filled with trash, and won the Great Indoors Award. In Miami, as part of Fredric Snitzer Gallery's "Death By Basel," Item Idem constructed an oversized Chanel logo outside the gallery, elevated and on the scale of the McDonald's arch. The exhibition opens tonight from 7–9 PM, and at 18 feet the artist says it will "shine like hell."

In the artist's own words, he introduces his work for Basel, and the melancholy of the McDonald's Arch:

"Well, there are similarities between the shapes of the two logos, but it is probably their binary color code (black and white for Chanel; red and yellow for McDonald's) that gives them most of their identity. Inverting these codes and comparing their markets raises a playful pitch on modern mass consumerism appeal, although I don't intend it as an ironic comparison of the brands.

"I would like for the piece to function like a beacon, or a lighthouse, for communication between brands. But it's of course a fantasy, because that's not how brands work: One would love to see more of that type of style encounter, as the fashion world's means of communication are sometimes much more aggressive than those of the food chain industry. This type of lightbox is, for me, one of the most radically intrusive forms of advertising, yet their lonely glowing gives them an almost mystical aspect. I am very sensible to such a 'Mammon' type of imagery, especially displayed here in Miami, right before Christmas, in the time of the 'credit crunch.'

"It is about playing with environmental codes and providing an alternative. And Miami is a place notorious for its abundance of similar light signs. It enhance the absurdity, the melancholy of the work itself, perhaps like the pictures of Elmgreen & Dragset's 'Prada Marfa' alone in the desert."

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“I would like for the piece to function like a beacon, or a lighthouse, for communication between brands. But it’s of course a fantasy, because that’s not how brands work: One would love to see more of that type of style encounter, as the fashion world’s means of communication are sometimes much more aggressive than those of the food chain industry. This type of lightbox is, for me, one of the most radically intrusive forms of advertising, yet their lonely glowing gives them an almost mystical aspect. I am very sensible to such a “Mammon” type of imagery, especially displaying here in Miami, right before Christmas, in the time of the “credit Church.”

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# JOHANNES VOGT

## Ponystep

### Art Smart Name Game

by Dean Mayo Davies  
October, 2008

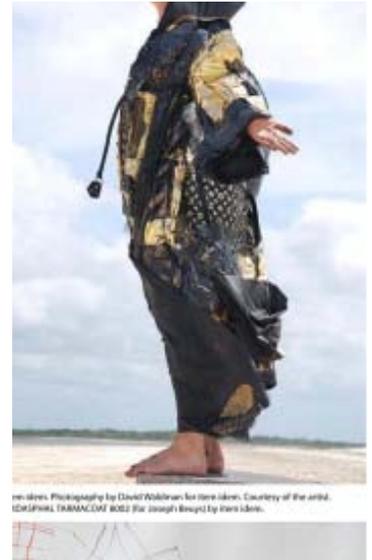
**Ponystep meets Cyril Duval to get to the crux of his practice, his philosophy and his ideology, The one-man army (and then more) behind whirlwind art collective item idem is nothing to be scared of.**

Dean Mayo Davies: It seems that you cause fear amongst the establishment because what you do cannot be categorized easily, would you agree? You're a rebel and a kind-hearted one at that, which makes you all the more threatening...

item idem: I have noticed here and there, that there is a level of perturbation induced by my practice. Online, there is genuine enthusiasm whilst the "establishment" seems to be more cautious about how to handle properly this type of involvement they believe I'm into. I wouldn't say fear though, but more incomprehension... Probably this is my teenage peak! My work is starting to be recognized, but at the same time it is still mutating into something new and unexpected. And as a proper teenager, my attitude seems to compel and induce people to exaggerated, exalted feelings, both positive or negative... It is like a mutually shared form of acne! Though, if you ask me, it is more of a misunderstanding, as I am really trying to put work out that is more intriguing than absolute: it is much more interesting to me to present images and ideas that challenge the intellect with their own determination, than forcing reason into squared ways of apprehending reality. It would be unfortunate to be seen as an extremist, I am not really in this business for any useless battle, though as you mentioned, the heart is a good one and I am really motivated to potentially become an honest representative of the cause:

DMD: Can you explain your background for people that may not be familiar with you? I think it really helps understand your philosophy to learn about your personal history... Do you think your unique path is what has built your practice more than anything else?

ii: I'm a typical Parisian kid, I grew up surrounded by arts and design from my parents and I was very influenced by my great aunt who was a wise modern art collector and a socialite friend of Jean Cocteau. I studied art for too many years probably, then left for Tokyo, which was at that time the only city that seemed to challenge my interest in terms of architectural and communicational forms. I ended up being extremely influenced by fashion, marketing, interior design, visual codes of all kinds, which seems to be the core of my work, for now at least. Tokyo's influence on my Parisian roots has helped create a special blend: the aesthetics I play with are multiple, and hopefully (I tend to believe!) slightly out of the trends movement. The concepts I am interested in are sometimes outdated. I feel like I am still studying in the past and reactivating it to give flesh and consistency to my projects. It's a bit like climbing the art history ladder little-by-little; I am still digesting Duchamp while Hirst is at the core of my preoccupations!



item idem. Photography by David Whelan for item idem. Courtesy of the artist.  
ITEMS (PINK, TRANSPARENT BOB) (in rough's group) by item idem.



item idem. Photography by Sebastian Meyer. Courtesy of the artist.  
Duchamp's Wheel of Fortune: Resemblance Le Corbusier by assistant item idem & Louis Grouard.  
Mori Art Museum, Tokyo (2007).

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DMD: And now more names. You've collaborated with - and continue to work with - some unique personalities. Like Sarah (of colette), Bernhard (Willhelm) and Terrence (Koh)...

ii: Sarah is definitely one of my wonders, she was the first one to give me a job (when I helped *Commes des Garçons* to open *collete meets Commes des Garçons* in spring 2004 in Tokyo). We're intensifying our work relationship these days too. Recently she even gave me a *meia!* The confidence and appreciation she seems to put in my work is an honouring retribution as I strongly believe too in her own pioneering instinct. Bernhard is another of my lucky wonders as he happily picked me to create his first shop, and this association considerably helped to establish the branding of our house name. Especially when you consider the amount of mass media we gathered for such a little project! I am very aware of Bernhard's interest in my practice, so far all our collaboration works have been so fruitful in so many directions, it is really a credible creative working relationship. With both Sarah and Bernhard, my experience has been very stimulating: friendship, trust and mutual artistic appreciations. My relationship with Terrence is much more recent, but has been very productive too. We probably have some common source of focus? I am thrilled by this strong ability to challenge time. His work and his function. He is probably intensely full of self derision. (Which I am not sure people are really realising by the way) and plays really well his trickster role, it is somehow a rejuvenating behavior. I'm sensitized to his disguised integrity, he's really not as bad as he pretends! So yes, probably our collaborative efforts have been mostly oriented toward commonly shared media and status obsessions, it is *ver discreet* work, but very steady. I guess we have both come from the same conceptual family- same influences, similar directions, even if it shaped differently.

DMD: To your friends you remain Cyril, so why the moniker *item idem*? Is it important to assume an alias as part of the veil of mythology you are creating? Is Cyril a very different person from *item idem*?

ii: Well, Cyril Duval is probably a much more self oriented person than *item idem*, which probably helps me to lower away from me the weight of that ego-charge... As it has been written (in *Viewpoint*) recently, *item idem* is more of an umbrella, a way to create collective dynamics, in which we tend to work on the ablation of copyright or identities, though it is never easy as everyone always wants to be credited! (Laughs) Originally I would sign Cyril Duval for commercial direction projects while *item idem* would ultimately enhance my art. But now that does not have any more meaning, as my art has happily become so commercial, at least conceptually and in its understanding, and I like it much better like that, it brings truth. I still aim to develop *item idem* as some kind of 'gesamt-kunstwerk'; ideally as a modern media, a company and a gallery. It should be resolutely modern and omniscient, independent and omnipotent, and an elevating tool for all its participants. Recently I published a worldwide call for contribution under the form of viral advertisement, for my washing tag databank project. It is a really interesting process, I don't know where it is all bringing me but I found it fascinating. The internet seems so perfect for viral communication, but nothing new here (!)

DMD: Your work is a very modern preoccupation, utilizing and dissecting fashion iconography in the arena of fine art, but becoming something else completely. Do you ever wonder, if you were born in another era, what your work would be like?



*item idem*, Photography by Sebastian Mayer / ADOU.  
An Election & Party painting by Megumi Matsuzaki, Assistant.  
International Blue Jeans (collaboratively revised) by *item idem* & Lee Cooper.  
Edition of 5 photographs.



*item idem*, Photography by Bert Janssen.  
*item idem*, a workshop & a con shop by *item idem*, The Great Indes Award, Maastricht.



*item idem*, Photography by Bert Janssen.  
*item idem*, a workshop & a con shop by *item idem*, The Great Indes Award, Maastricht.

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ii: I would paint vanities probably, but isn't that what Damien Hirst is doing already? Vanities are one of my favorite genres, even if I've not touched them yet. I think I would be interested in the same kind of globalizing attitude that I have now, happily mixing all media and collaborating. Certainly, I would be trying to extend in arts, sciences, literature like Leonardo da Vinci was doing, even if obviously I certainly do not stand the comparison... (Laughs). Oh well, it is still important to mention the masters, no? I think perfection sometimes comes out of genuine amateurism, more than intensely hard labour. Duchamp's work was about completing genres, one piece was enough. Like when he tried to be a cubist painter, he applied it to movement. That was shocking at the time, even for moderns. Back to my practice, probably it finds an echo nowadays because of the gratuity of our world, where all is accessible, distinguishable, destructible where everything can be forever, and forever modifiable. In that sense, yes probably the things I do, match their times. The induced questions inside my work may find an audience who is looking for answers, afraid of the world as it is. I am both happy and unhappy about it, as once again I sincerely do not intend to become a preacher; I believe that's where the problems all start. As is a process towards education, it used to be used as an emancipation tool toward oppressive forms of extremisms and it should certainly not be used as a modern way to recruit and persuade people. Madonna is here for that...

DMD: I really want to hear how you talk of the common meaning or philosophy behind your diverse projects. What are you trying to explore or provoke?

ii: Multilayering, we are the photoshop generation. We know more than what the "establishment" thinks we do and we are much more optimistic than they think we are. What we are made of is a very consistent and abundant collage of ideas; information, cultures, ect. We have never been so aware and independent and at the same time controllable. That is actually the main paradox, knowing too much and knowing nothing, being able to discuss all and none. Truth also as I feel intoxicated by lies, especially in my own artistic surroundings. If I use marketing in my work, it is because I believe it should not be left to the people who make a certain use and abuse of it, which leaves me very uncomfortable and preoccupied. Once again, I would hate to pretend to be that kind of "white knight" and I really want to push my art toward a 'blank positioning,' a 'nest-as-nexus' for ideas, a place to develop solutions, or not. For this reason, I will not here raise a charge against forms of communications that I find biased and oriented towards consumer manipulation. No inverse name dropping in this interview. But I will mention again a truism from Jenny Holzer, one of the artists that has maybe influenced me the strongest: **USE WHAT IS DOMINANT IN A CULTURE TO CHANGE IT QUICKLY.**

DMD: You know Holzer is one of my absolute favorite artists... But back to you! Instead of creating pop culture with your art, you take explicitly from pre-existing culture (and its template) < remix and re-edit and sell it back to us. I think if Warhol was around today, this is what he would be focussed on...

ii: Do you know Elaine Sturtevant? She is about 85 now, and has conceptually reworked major artists works for decades. She represents them again; the same but different,



Ivan Albright. Photography by Sebastian Mayer. Courtesy of the artist. *Toujours plus jamais*. Remembrance as Collector by assistant. Ivan Albright & Lucie Greased. Mori Art Museum, Tokyo (2007).



Ivan Albright. *Artificial Fallwell* by Ivan Albright. Edition of 5. Courtesy of the artist.



Ivan Albright. Photography by Phyllis Lerman. *The Wrong Store* by Ivan Albright. Galerie Frederik Ginoux, Paris.

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unique but transposed. Warhol, when asked about his artistic production process, notoriously replied "Ask Elaine", to which she commented: "Warhol was very Warhol". Who is the original and who is the copycat? The question on authoring and ownership have always been eternal but actual, and biased properly since the invention of commerce. How original and unique is my work compared to hers? Probably none, and that is what I believe makes it relevant nowadays. This assumed positioning that all matters are results of predictable cycles and that honesty and education should be the only starting points of all creations. Packaging and designs based on shapes can be dangerous as they distract viewers away from the core informational truth of the work itself.

I'm curious about what Warhol would say about practical actuality. I am not sure he would actually endorse it, but maybe would find it slightly exotic, as the range of crossed influences I try to gather are, I believe, quite wide. Warhol had maybe more common obsessions in his work such as money, death, fame, sex. That said, I think that he is still pretty much alive in some artists works (Hirst, Koons, ect) but not Murakami, who is, to me, simply a good merchant but not a good artist. You see, now I am starting to speak! (Laughs) Though his voice is pretty much missing nowadays, no one has, for me, brought the same level of integrity and humor to the world we are living in. It is regrettable...

DMD: The media too is an element of your methodology - you have a guest blog on colette's new website, write pieces for 032c and have been profiled in heavyweight design and art magazines. Now the next step, it seems, is even further towards 'fashion' magazines...

ii: Medias are wonderful and they are delightfully one of my most important medium. I am not a media artist, though, I don't 'compute' so well, apart from email addiction probably, my blog you mentioned (which is my newest hobby), and my Facebook 'propoganda' group. I love to advertise and contribute to magazines, printed or online, sometimes as an artist, sometimes as a reporter. It is very important to me to leave art practice temporarily and come back to it. It is highly hygienic. But yes, medias are an extremely important part of the strategic commission as part of the group show Death by Basel featuring hot Japanese artists like Chim Pom, or item idem! (Laughs). To finish 2008, in a desperate attempt to represent the notion of evil itself, I'm doing a giant snow globe in the smoggy mountains of Kyoto, for my show the Eye of the Beyonder at my new gallery Super Window Project on the evening of december 24th. I'm also working on opening anytime soon the first non-ephemeral item idem project space in Berlin, but cannot talk too much about it. Then there is the extension of all the sculptural garments I've previously mentioned, with a new piece made entirely of washing tags that I am happily (and freely) collecting through advertisements in the media or on my website, as well as word-of-mouth. Viral communication again, it all comes from that General Idea art group mentioned. Without unveiling all subtitles of this project, I can say that I am intending to build a database of the brand itself, as every tag is like a memory chip (with name & ID reference) of a product. That is the first point, in which I extend into several conceptual marketing plays, while relocating the value of a product on another one, when the transmutation of value and identity into something else implies the magnification of emotions. I am happy to declare that this project is entirely and only realized by the item idem collective (I am not speaking only about me!) and is absolutely not done in collaboration with the designer itself. Every participant will become part of our group and will be credited as such. Once again, it is project oriented towards collaborative efforts and gathering, not towards obscurity and personal motivation.

DMD: You recently gave a lecture in Amsterdam as part of the design festival. How was it? It is the most direct work - certainly the most interactive- you've ever done. Just you and an audience...

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ii: It was fantastic. I felt addicted to stage and had a thought for all those TV speakers whose career is bailing... When they leave the stage for good, they must be so depressed! I was invited as a guest lecturer in a panel (including architecture and design juggernauts Rem Koolhaas or Ron Arad) for the latest Experimental design bienalle in Amsterdam, and decided to exploit this opportunity as a format itself. I then organized a Beauty (For Duty) Pageant for toy poodles - beautifully named Bombay, Margot, Rambo, Rosa, Snowy and Tootsy - where every poodle would introduce chapters of my lecture, such as media and mediums, marketing and economy, relational aesthetics... The last chapter showcased the work of my beloved friend and collaborator, the late Nagi Noda, as an homage. It was a beautiful moment. I was wearing a Yukata on stage (by Eley Kishimoto), Margiela shades and the TV cameraman spent more time filming my gold Lanvin shoes than my lecture itself! (Laughs). Such a bad thing to happen but really it's so perfect at the same time! I loved being confronted by my own little reality, and even more by the audience itself. It was a very hard and challenging process, and it asked me to reach deep inside to get the right skills to work on that new fascinating medium. It shows too. I tried to put my friend Terrence Koh in a similar show last time he came for his Boy By The Sea Yokohama triennale performance but it was a little tight timing-wise. He would have been perfect for Japanese TV.

DMD: I'd love to have seen that happen. Do you think anyone will ever write a definitive piece about you? You have so many projects - across all medias - in your archive. Is there beauty in not being able to summarize you?

ii: Well, I think you are probably making a very good one right now! Because your way of apprehending my work is multiple, through different angles, you allow various parts of yourself to express opinions... I am getting very scared about biased medias, you know - the art-type-kind-of-review, it can end up being so linear sometimes. I think what I do shines in various directions, so it should be considered with the same generosity, hopefully. Anyways, I can't wait to have bad press actually, it's probably even better than good press itself! (Laughs). Recently a wrighter in Frieze magazine felt my work was "over-theatrical." I kinda liked it! Probably a complete review could not be done because you can't judge a human being simply for his ork skills. But then again, I am interested by the non-professional point of view, so maybe, yes, this format can exist? It is so beautiful to not be able to fit any box though, we are all unique and we should be proud of it. We don't come boxed by the dozen...

DMD



item item. (Photography by Sebastian Mayer for item item. Courtesy of the artists.  
TEXTURE.COM/PLACEMAT BOX? For Miss General item by item item.

# JOHANNES VOGT

## VIEWPOINT

### Cyril Duval, 27, France and Japan Designer/retailer/artist

May, 2008

Parisian talent Cyril Duval has combined all his creative urges into creation of item idem, an umbrella for himself and a diverse collective of contributors. Item idem's range covers artworks, gallery and retail installations, fashion lines, media reports, visual merchandising and design.

Duval says that item idem moves in a 'multi-field conceptual direction' that responds to 'the old world's aesthetical and ideological modernists' ambitions collapsing.' Asked if item idem could or would ever focus on one creative output, Duval says 'item idem was, is, and will always be a single-headed but multi-branched communication tool. Poetically unraveling and redefining dusty notions of substance and embodiments.'

A true representation of the transient nature of the Slash/Slash generation, Duval constantly moves around the world 'from Maastricht to Sao Paulo, from Macao to Las Vegas.' He started out in Paris and his current base is Tokyo.

Asked to define the unifying ethos that ties together item idem's output, Duval says: 'All our projects are converging pieces of a greater plan; every little involvement contributes to a global and everyday-more-precise definition of our identity as creators and human beings.'

Despite the avant-garde and experimental nature of much of item's work, Duval, like all Slash/Slashers, aims at worldwide recognition and success. His plan for the future is 'becoming a global viral media and platform of expression for all our enthusiasts and copycats,' The key strategies that allow him to juggle all the various facets of his working life are 'fasting, networking, and never ending naps.'

From top:  
"TESTPATTERNNEONPLASTI-  
COAT8002"  
for Miss General Idea; Cyril Duval  
"The Wrong Motel, Tokyo 2006



# JOHANNES VOGT



I'm a bit of a copycat

April, 2008

## " I'm a bit of a copycat."

**Tokyo is, before he takes on the rest of world, the personal playground of Japans newest design-wonderboy item idem. Pulp asked him about his five favorite objects.**

Whether it is with the establishment of the design of Bernard Wilhelm's flagship store in Tokyo, a noticeable intervention in the Céline store, a coat made out of golden Louis Vuitton bags, melted car tires and tar, Mickey Mouse meat steaks, or a cut in half Bart Simpson "alla Damien Hirst"... item idem's medium is consumption.

Item idem is the artist name of Cyril Duval, creative japanese centipede, and well on the way to single-handedly improve the, already quite exciting, Tokyo shopping landscape, & make it much more interesting.

He designed the lay-out of Bernard Wilhelm's shop in Tokyo, a remarkable space composed of found and filled objects, readymades & flea market junk aesthetics. The step after Dover Street Market.

Warhol himself already predicted that all concept stores would become museums, and it appears as item idem's mission. "I'm involved in contextual relocations of all kinds of structures, providing new means and interpretations", he answered our question before we asked them. Second on his list of favorite items is this Japanese, vintage medical doll that he spotted and used for the edgy design of the flagship boutique of Bernard Wilhelm.

"I'm a bit of a copycat, and my copy is always badly made," he throws in an interview. A quote for which he has clearly no regret, as he puts it up centrally on the homepage of his website. Asked again to describe himself in 5 words, his answer goes as smoothly: 'New.Kid.On.The.Block... yep, that makes five!'

Item idem is a Warhol overdrive, with – temporarily yet, before he takes on the rest of the world - the heating Japanese fashion capital as its personal factory, and with a boulimic fascination for how we consume.

"Can consumption become the Medium itself? Does the purchase of a product compare to an adrenaline shot of spirituality? Is a LV handbag the modern artefact for opium religiosity? Well, you tell me!" Laughs Duval, smart teeth all exposed.

His latest work and also number 3 on his list is this Midasphalarmacol jacket he made out of golden Louis Vuitton bags, melted car tires, tar and Comme Des Garçons's TAR synthetic perfume. 'Made for Joseph Beuys', he explains.

His intervention inside & for the Celine Tokyo flagship store, a bastion of luxury in the area of Omotesando, resulted in stylish raised eyebrows from the yet very posh target, when he displayed many everyday objects in the space, and allow completely different dynamics to emerge. A mini nightclub invading a luxurious retail store space, a gallery that mutates in an ethnical gastronomical restaurant, or an usual apartment that suddenly becomes a photography studio... these are all the potentials cards in item idem's game.

In 2007, he won 'The Great Indoors Award 2007', and his work includes collaborations with people such as Michel Gaubert, Terence Koh, Bruce LaBruce, Karl Lagerfeld, Nagi Noda, Kevin Spacey, Tobias Wong, and

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now Bernard Wilhelm.

Pulp, always looking for the good stuff, requested a selection of five of his favorite objects and this Pop Metal readymade, a handy Box of a kilo of the purest Pop metal product, was certainly a must-be in his list.

We actually have no idea what that Pop Metal item is, but that is certainly something we want for our home interior ! Somehow though, it does sounds familiar, as its exotic denomination appeals to our high-tech or cosmetics desire glossary: Alarmingly simple and therefore just an amazing visual stunner.

Item idem's fascination for consumption, is, of course, reflected in all "Mickey" things, so a portion of Mickey meat could obviously not be absent of his selection.

The idea that our favorite Disney's mouse, will be available for sale in lovely slices of the purest kind... simply appears as the most normal and evident thing in the world in item idem. We like.

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**Published in PULP Magazine, antwerp, march 2008.**



# JOHANNES VOGT



## A.A. BRONSON'S SCHOOL FOR YOUNG SHAMANS

January 18 2008

A. A. BRONSON'S SCHOOL FOR YOUNG SHAMANS Some group shows, like this one organized by A. A. Bronson, feel atmospherically of a piece. Mr. Bronson is the surviving member of General Idea, a group of three artists and lovers who were together from 1969 to 1994. Since his partners, Jorge Zontal and Felix Partz, died of AIDS in the 1990s, Mr. Bronson has worked alone, but not really alone. As an artist, mentor of artists, healer and gay role model, he remains, in one way or another, a collaborator. That's what this rich show is about.

Photographs in the front room form a recap of Mr. Bronson's creative life so far, from nude self-portraits made in 1969, to a General Idea poster, to a 2001 portrait of his current partner, the architect Mark Jan Krayenhoff de Leur. (Above, "Self Portrait, August 2, 2007.")

And there's a recent collaboration with his former student Terence Koh, in the form of a double toilet, a kind of Porto-San for anonymous sex that is both sculptural and functional. Performance has been Mr. Bronson's primary medium since the 1990s, specifically as a self-described healer, a role that involves both playacting -- he's fully attuned to the "sham" in shaman -- and real laying on of hands.

The installation in Connelly's project room, the heart of the show, catches the ambiguous zaniness of the concept. In the center is a tent-shaped sorcerer's throne, assembled by Mr. Bronson and Scott Treleaven. Work by an earlier self-styled doctor-priest, Joseph Beuys, hangs on a wall, as does a homage to the American artist Robert Morris, whose role-playing with sexual identity influenced General Idea.

Then there are the younger artists who appear as Mr. Bronson's acolytes. The designer Item Idem contributes a shaman's cape made of gold Louis Vuitton bags and melted car tires, dedicated to Beuys. What look like tantric mandalas come from Michael Dudeck, and ritual instruments in the form of hammers and brooms are by the pseudonymous J. X. Williams. There are also several ritualistic videos, by the Guatemalan-born Naufus Ram?z-Figueroa, the anti-masculinist Danish artist Peter Brandt and the feminist queer performer Sands Murray-Was-sink, formerly of Topeka, Kan., now of Amsterdam.

Christophe Chemin from Berlin levitates on film and draws attractively in ink. Desi Santiago's fluorescent pentagram adds to the necromantic flavor, as do Andrew Zealley's soundtrack and the layer of aromatic sage scattered across the floor of a show that is about mourning, magic and moving on. (Through Feb. 16, at John Connelly Presents, 625 West 27th Street, Chelsea, 212-337-9563; johnconnellypresents.com. HOLLAND COTTER

### SIMPSONS×colette

## トガったアートは コレットの十八番!

日本でも大人気の米アニメ「シン普森ズ」。トガったトークとトガったアタマが売りのシン普森一家の長男バートが、世界一トガったセレクトショップ、コレットとコラボした。アーティストが制作したバート人形は、どれもちょっぴり皮肉がきいている。あなた好みはどのバート?

#### Ich&Kar

アタマの上で氣勢を上げる兵士たち。そこ、アタマですけど? タイトルは「アメリカン・パラドックス」となかなか硬派

#### colette

コレットのトレードマーク、水玉のバートは正統派のカワイイ仕上げ。ただの水玉もオシャレになっちゃコレットバナー。恐るべし!



#### item idem (Cyril Duval)

バートがスパッと真っ二つ! ホルマリン漬けみたいだが、意外とキレイなこの作品は、東京で活動するフランス人アーティストのもの



#### André

お子様には刺激が強すぎるので、斜めのアングルで掲載します。バートは10歳のはずだが、なかなかスゴイ

#### Eiko Maekawa

バートの目玉でゆうゆうとタバコをふかす女の子は、バリを拠点にする日本人女性アーティストの作品。これまでもコレットと何度かコラボしている

