

Mihai Nicodim Gallery

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Ed Fornieles

'DESPICABLE ME 2'

July 13, 2013 – August 10, 2013

Opening Reception: July 13, 2013, 6 – 9 pm



Mihai Nicodim Gallery is pleased to present 'DESPICABLE ME 2', the first US solo exhibition of British artist Ed Fornieles.

Fornieles utilizes the Internet and social media as platforms through which to perform contemporary aesthetics and their variable currencies. Trapped within the iteration of cultural feedback loops, the artist's subject matter presents a cipher through which the theatre of the popular is funneled and expelled into a mitigated version of reality.

With a plastic sculptural framework close to online platforms like Facebook, Fornieles postures his work on a rigorously democratized point-of-view, both abating the stereotypes of 'new media' whilst welcoming some of its pigeonholes as coups. To Fornieles there's no displeasure in accepting a neutral role, each new body of work presents a distinctive moral stance dictated by the subject matter instead of the artist. Using this approach, a new set of parameters are formed through which the role of the artist as intermediary provides its own contemporary encryption.

In his new show, Fornieles adopts a reality TV format to generate a new body of work following Britney Rivers as she navigates her way online: making friends, gaining likes and becoming the star of her own online reality. As the star of the show, Britney sets the tone and provides a guiding logic to the work, creating a feedback loop which informs the material, humor and sentiment. Britney in a sense is an allusive 'third person', the sculptures themselves inherently allowing Fornieles to act as both voyeur and participant. Rivers provides a visual lexicon whose influences, tastes and opinions are assumed by Fornieles to create a new orthodoxy.

-  **Marina Abramovic** 12:14am
What kind of woman are you online?
-  **Britney Rivers** 12:15am
Crazy sexy cool... except I think that's a TLC album. I don't know I'm a top, but I know how to play a bottom.
-  **Marina Abramovic** 12:15am
Do you see yourself as an artist? Performing a role?
-  **Britney Rivers** 12:15am
The activity does parallel with the role of the artist in some ways... there's content and an overbearing ego.

But I'm not really into art.
-  **Marina Abramovic** 12:16am
Would you say your online personality and your IRL personality are distinctly separate?
-  **Britney Rivers** 12:16am
Never. IRL I'm just Britney unedited. It's all about jokes, lolz and likes. Everything else is bullshit.
-  **Marina Abramovic** 12:16am
What's the most disturbing experience you've had with someone online?
-  **Britney Rivers** 12:16am
I can't think of an experience I've had with someone online that affected me negatively. I'm open 24/7, I love TMI and I always have.

Once I saw a sponsored ad for Walmart brand cream cheese on my Facebook profile and that really traumatized me. But I can only hold the media accountable for that... and maybe my recent search history. Oops!

The artist's installation within the gallery functions like a set wherein objecthood and value-systems are in flux. Deflecting the art-historicized tradition of a remnant performance set functioning as sculpture, Fornieles's objects inhabit a performative function in themselves; they are nodes pointing back to a rich and complex network of references, images and lived experiences.

Fornieles reciprocates an interest in the abject and ignominious culture of Los Angeles harbingers Paul McCarthy, Jim Shaw and Mike Kelly. However Fornieles abates the classicism and institutional critique of his predecessors in favor of something more passively consumptive.

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Ed Fornieles (b. 1986, UK). Previous exhibitions have included 'The Dreamy Awards', Park Nights, Serpentine Gallery, London, UK (2012), 'Happy Days in Basel', Theater Basel, Basel (2012) and 'The Hangover Part II', Carlos Ishikawa, London. Upcoming exhibitions include 'Rhizome', New Museum, New York (2013) along with presentations in the Lyon Biennale (2013) and Chisenhale Gallery, UK (2014)