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GARIS & HAHN

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Garis & Hahn presents:
Jason Alexander Byers



Jason Alexander Byers, *Magnetize*, 30" x 22", tar on paper, 2015

Love Birds

A Solo Exhibition

Exhibition Dates: November 19-December 19, 2015

Opening Reception: November 19th | 6-8 p.m.

October 30, 2015 (New York, NY) – Garis & Hahn is pleased to announce Jason Alexander Byers' first solo show in New York, *Love Birds*. This series was first inspired by the Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill off the Gulf of Mexico in 2010. Byers had been working with tar for years, first in sculpture and then on paper to depict skyscrapers and churches. In the wake of this tragedy, Byers started working with this unique medium to depict the most common victims of oil spills - birds. This series created in response to a tragedy explores themes of life, love and loss. The gallery will host an opening reception on November 19th, from 6 to 8 p.m. at 263 Bowery.

Jason Alexander Byers' signature tar-painting technique involves tracing the positive and negative space of birds in motion using tar on paper. This work conjures up all the implicit menace of a Rorschach inkblot. These paintings of birds remain open to the viewer's projections: they can resemble hybrid creatures and topographical maps. The birds' eyes are empty circles, echoing the centers of the target paintings that the artist has become well-known for.

Byers' fascination with birds stems in large part from their structural beauty, dynamism and fragility. His previous art projects include images of targets, multiples of tanks, bombers and fighter jets crafted with Sensodyne toothpaste, whose soft pinks and greens muted the destructive imagery into farce. By contrast, *Love Birds* depicts a beautiful subject - birds in flight - rendered with material that is deadly to them. It is the material itself that brings the destructive force beneath the beauty of the birds into full view.

Byers' new work is fraught with tension: It is unclear whether the birds depicted are mating or fighting, alive and in motion or sprawled dead, lifeless on the page. *Magnetize* depicts two birds entwined in such a way that they resemble one dynamic hybrid creature. There is a tension between the sludgy oil and the untouched paper beneath it; their wings rendered in black tar cut against the stark immaculate paper. Thus, these dynamic images convey a delicate interplay between conflict and affection, life and death. Ultimately, *Love Birds*, is a reminder to its audience of the impact they have on the environment, and the fragility and grace of life.

About Jason Alexander Byers

Jason Alexander Byers grew up in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, and studied sculpture at Kent State University. While there, he turned his attention to the absurd, indulgent and wildly inventive arts scene of Kent, Ohio. Since moving to Brooklyn, Byers has continued working on fine art, exploring his fascination with cityscapes and skylines by using tar to trace the positive and negative space of New York City's churches and skyscrapers. His most recent series, *Love Birds*, marries his trademark medium of black tar with his lifelong passion for birdwatching, resulting in dramatic silhouettes of birds in flight.

About Garis & Hahn

Garis & Hahn is a gallery-cum-Kunsthalle that mounts exhibitions focused on conceptual narratives and relevant conversations in contemporary art. By displaying an array of carefully

curated artists, the gallery endeavors to provide accessibility, education, awareness, and a market to the art while engaging both the arts community and a broader general audience.

Location

Garis & Hahn
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New York, NY 10002

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Gallery Hours

Tuesday – Saturday, 11-7

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A&O

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