

DEAN PROJECT

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PRESS RELEASE

DEAN PROJECT
511 West 25th Street, 2nd floor
New York, NY 10001

Tel. 212.229.2017
Email. info@deanproject.com
Gallery hours: Tues - Sat noon-6pm

portraits

Bryan Drury

Exhibition dates: January 12th – February 25th 2012

Opening reception: Thursday January 12th - 6 to 8pm

DEAN PROJECT is thrilled to present an exhibition of Bryan Drury's recent paintings. This is the artist's second solo exhibition with the gallery.

Stemming from a desire to challenge the conventions of traditional portraiture, Drury has recently created this body of six oil paintings. He carefully selected affluent members of society to sit for him, and rather than acquiescing to expectations of flattery, he exploits the power of oil paint to describe their corporeal flaws as precisely as possible. Finding liberation in this reversal of patronage roles, Drury focuses on the organic quality of the flesh and shows the animalistic side of humans that we so commonly attempt to conceal.

The six works feature a single subject, executed with a painstaking degree of realism. The small-scale portraits capture the condescending and supercilious attitudes of the sitters, who gaze at the viewer with an air of disdain. Set against solid backgrounds, the sitters seem separated from the outside world, and their lifeless artificiality imbues the works with a sense of isolation.

In an attempt to expose their vanity and the disconnect that exists between the corporeality of the body and the abstraction of identity, Drury meticulously renders facial details, paying special attention to imperfections and blemishes. His skillful use of light and shadow in portraits highlights the contours of the sitters' faces, while the subtle glossy backgrounds further accentuate the tactile nature of the skin and hair. *Jan* (2011) capitalizes on the oil paint medium to convey the fleshiness of her wrinkles with a photographic precision, and *Tracey* (2012) depicts strands of hair and follicles with a similar exactitude. Overtly descriptive, the portraits unmask the suppressed animal qualities of humans and challenge the noble and aggrandizing aspects associated with traditional portraiture.

Bryan Drury was born in 1980 in Salt Lake City, Utah and relocated to New York in 2001. He received his MFA Cum Laude from the New York Academy of Art in 2007 and BFA from The Cooper Union School of Art in 2005. He has exhibited and received awards throughout the US and Europe. Select recent highlights include: The American Academy of Arts and Letters selected Drury for their highly prestigious annual *Invitational Exhibition 2011*; the artist was profiled and reviewed in the April 2011 issue of *The Art Economist* magazine as part of their "Artist To Watch" section. Drury's painting "*Ali*" was included in the exhibition "*Now WHAT?*" at the Norton Museum of Art, Palm Beach FL, the curators from the Norton Museum selected "*Ali*" as one of the twenty most engaging works exhibited during Art Basel Miami in December 2010.

For further information please contact DEAN PROJECT at 212.229.2017 or info@deanproject.com