

Carter Mull  
"Carter Mull: 'The Day's Specific Dreams'"  
The New York Times  
By Karen Rosenberg, May 12, 2011

# The New York Times

## CARTER MULL: 'The Day's Specific Dreams'

By **KAREN ROSENBERG**

*Taxter & Spengemann*

*459 West 18th Street, Chelsea*

*Through June 11*

Carter Mull's first solo show is part newsroom, part darkroom. His subject is the life of print, from birth to its current death throes, though like most artists he's not an objective biographer. In "Connection," Mr. Mull breaks a commercial for the iPhone 4 into 1,800 frames, each printed in black on silver metallic paper, and scatters them across the main gallery floor. As you cross the room, the stills are reanimated underfoot. It's a poetic device, underscoring the disposability of images and of the gadgets that produce them, though Mr. Mull has used it before.

On the walls, meanwhile, are works that slip from photography to drawing and back again: images muddied physically, with ink splotches, or digitally, in Photoshop. Blobs of prismatic color encroach on accounts of revolution in Egypt (from the Jan. 30 and 31, 2011, *The New York Times*) and illustrations of printing presses and writing tools from Diderot's *Encyclopedia*.

Downstairs, in the installation "Breath," a video projected on a tiny, tabletop screen cycles through the letters of the alphabet and cuts to a live fish wriggling around on a dinner plate. The sound, amplified through miniature speakers, is a spoken-word rendition of Bob Dylan's "It's Alright, Ma (I'm Only Bleeding)."

One senses, here, some clever metaphors for the death of print and the slippery quality of its replacement. Mr. Mull, like many photographers, has been caught in the middle. With his multiplatform approach to image-making, he is hedging his bets.

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