

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Macrae Semans
Utica Reliefs, Nordica Couples
June 23 - August 5, 2011

Opening Reception: Thursday, June 23, 2011 from 6 to 8 pm

After July 1st, the gallery will be open Monday - Friday 11 - 6 pm

Taxter & Spengemann is very pleased to announce its third solo exhibition with New York, Berlin and Belize-based artist Macrae Semans. The exhibition will present new mixed-media wall-relief works and related floor-sculptures.

Informed by an ongoing engagement with found materials, and a process-oriented practice of accumulation, organization and reuse, Semans employs a subjective method of collecting cast-off forms and common materials to create works which engage strategies of formal sculpture as means of indexing and processing the vicissitudes of everyday experience. Drawing upon a range of art historical reference points--particularly minimal and post-minimal sculptural practice--as well as more quotidian or accidental types of object relations (urban debris, storage arrangements, etc.), the work represents an idea of abstraction as filtered through a personal, diaristic perceptual experience of the changing world.

With the wall-based 'Utica' series, the artist presents a suite of sculptural relief panels - minimal forms rendered in wood and mortar which act as fields of presentation or activity for arrangements of steel, plastic and assorted found materials. Conflating aspects of modernist design, thrift store abstraction, folk assemblage and hardware store display, the works are simultaneously lyrical and bluntly prosaic, specific yet are peculiarly iconic.

The exhibition's title serves to associate these relief works with a small scrap of found 'Nautica' brand fabric, torn so that it reads 'utica'. Embracing this chance-based discovery of consumer-culture detritus as a playful means of aligning the work with that city centrally located in New York State, the artist tweaks reception of its origins and intent. The found scrap of text and dry, vaguely underwhelming nature of the title serve as a means to cast glance upon classification systems, arbitrariness, and the air of cultural marginality present in an exhibition of regional wall-reliefs.

The floor-based 'Nordica' series finds the artist phonetically riffing upon the word 'Utica' to present a related group of sculptural pairings or "couples". The works stage a series of formal comparisons, playing upon dichotomies of similarity and difference, design and debris, permanence and ephemerality, elegance and crudeness. They negotiate between a discrete sculptural presence and as objects in a kind of inventory or "laying out" of accumulated studio materials, forms and stuff accrued over the past few years. The work seeks to emphasize a contextual, mutable condition of sculpture - the object and it's shifting social, temporal and associative frame. Formally, as the name 'Nordica' suggests, the sculptures are also gently evocative of ski equipment and winter sportswear design.

About the artist:

Macrae Semans lives and works in New York. He received a Master of Fine Arts from the University of California Los Angeles in 2005 and his Bachelor of Fine Arts from the School of Visual Arts, New York in 2001. Selected exhibitions include *Evading Customs*, Brown Gallery, London, *Shape of Things to Come: New Sculpture*, Saatchi Gallery, London, *Waste Not, Want Not*, Socrates Sculpture Park, Long Island City. Semans is the recipient of a 2009 Public Realm Development Grant from Public Art Fund, amongst other awards.