

# MOVING UP

| June 4, 2013 | Post In LEAP 20

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## NICOLAS CECCALDI

A friend recently complained about Nicolas Ceccaldi's exhibition "Wearables" at Real Fine Arts in Brooklyn: "Yeah, you can tell he's from Berlin. No one who lives in New York would waste that opportunity." Though Ceccaldi's exhibition undoubtedly wasn't a missed opportunity in the opinion of yours truly, it precisely challenged the male-ego-driven sculpture increasingly common to Western art today. The Canadian-born, former

Berlin resident presented a series of creepily feminine, pop-goth glittery painted fairy wings on the Greenpoint gallery's wooden floor. The exhibition's press release is something to be admired, and starts, "Condemned and sunburnt under corroded skies, I found refuge at the bottom of a septic tank infested with snails. Spreading my carcass at ease, I drowse in deep oblivion, dreaming of an immense raven to tear me away from this vast sauna far above the high-rise towers..."

Ceccaldi's larger body of work includes less glittery but equally fantastical post-human-inspired sculpture. A recent series modifies cameras by festooning them with sinister-looking toy parts or sci-fi effects such as a plasma ball. Muffin (2011) replaces the nose of a crawling Winnie-the-Pooh toy with a nanny cam. In Ceccaldi's world, the morbid aesthetics of emo, science fiction, black metal, and post-humanism— oftentimes commodified for sub-mainstream countercultures with uncanny effect— are all equal parts fodder.

A graduate of Staatliche Hochschule für Bildende Künste, Städelschule in Frankfurt, Ceccaldi is represented by Johan Berggren, Malmö and Neue Alte Brücke, Frankfurt. In addition to solo exhibitions at his representative galleries and Real Fine Arts, he recently launched the two-person exhibition "Garbage World" with Morag Keil at Mark & Kyoko, Berlin; "Films & Windows" with Loretta Fahrenholz at Mathew Gallery, Berlin; as well as "Madina Warfare" with Dan Rees at Sandy Brown in Berlin.

Ceccaldi was included in the 2011 survey "Based in Berlin" and group shows including "Interiority Complex" at Cubitt Gallery, London; "Venus in a Shell," at Fluxia, Milan; and "Join the Black Mamba" at Karma International, Zurich.



## **NICOLAS DESHAYES**

"It's a lot closer to the body than you think," artist Nicolas Deshayes said to me in a recent studio visit. He was referring to *Soho Fats* (2012), a set of five oversized polystyrene panels mounted on aluminum rails recalling common support poles found on buses and subways. While these wire-cut compositions appear closer to underwater terrain than any bodily allusion, the material—polystyrene—is a synthetic polymer derived from petroleum, which, the artist reminded me, is made from the remains of dead organisms (including humans) buried deep underneath sedimentary rock. Deshayes's work continually refers to the human body in his sculptural installations.

His works combine wall-mounted, extremely durable elements such as anodized aluminum or polyurethane "public amenity board" (commonly found in urinals) that point to an interest in public spaces constructed to endure

and facilitate the wear and tear of constant human traffic. For example, Deshayes will place framed, vacuum-formed compositions of what appears to be rippling, wart-infested skin over a set of painterly custom-anodized aluminum sheets. Deshayes introduces the baseness of the human body to the otherwise sterile interior architecture endemic to public space.

Born in Nancy, France and raised in Dublin, Ireland, Deshayes lives and works in London. He recently mounted solo exhibitions at Jonathan Viner and Galleries Goldstein, London; Wysing Arts Centre, Cambridge, as well as a two-person show with George Henry Longly at Galerie Chez Valentin, Paris. Recent group shows include "Original/Copy 2" at Peles Empire, London; "Rain" at Cell Project Space, London; "Glaze" at Bischoff/Weiss, London; and "Changing States of Matter," Brand New Gallery, Milan. He is represented by Jonathan Viner, London.