

VALLOIS

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PROJECT ROOM

Adam Janes «Hunter Gatherer»

The characters in Adam Janes' drawings have the faces and self-assurance of comic strip heroes - except that they're rarely finished, being caught in a escalating swirl of fragments and colours; in an intense magnetic whirlwind that scoops up everything in its path and gives the result an oblique, non-narrative coherency; in interacting accumulations that don't exclude separate harmonies defined by the edges of the paper.

Janes is a sculptor too, his work driven by the need for an occasional break from drawing. As if the latter - too intense, too immediate a medium - demands pauses for building things manually, for working like a craftsman and leaving ideas the time they need to take shape. The consequences include machines for cutting off hands (*The Unbeatable Handy Poor Los Manos*, Galerie Vallois, 2007), making waffles in the shape of Texas (*Delicate Balance Country Buffet*, Tim Van Laere Gallery, Antwerp), and illegally distilling alcohol (*De Stijl Life*, China Art Objects Galleries, Los Angeles). Each time his installations offer us not only the outcomes of his experiments, but also the production systems that made them possible. And Janes rarely shows his sculptures alone: as in the drawings, meaning emerges out of the accumulation of bits and pieces.

During the three-year lead-up to his exhibition *Candle Chantry* (*psycho killer qu'est-ce que c'est?*) here at Vallois in 2010, Janes turned out candles as a mass-production alternative to sculpture.

Then the candle workshop his studio had become gradually wound down, ultimately coming to a complete halt. This was when his "black drawings" appeared. Pure products of outer space, these drawings show the page up for what it is: a black hole, a strange attractor for the imprints and transcriptions of creative streaming, a channel straight to the artist's brain.

The new cycle initiated by Adam Janes' *Hunter Gatherer* exhibition focuses on drawing. In a deeply cerebral grappling with the unknown, his drawing looks like tangible proof of this psychic universe's existence. It appears to be a place where everything is possible, the beginning of an idea, a way to communicate what cannot be said. The point being a hunt that involves gathering only what you need. As said by the artist: "Everything, for me, starts with a question. Then I create an activity or a situation [...] to think the question through. (I usually do my best thinking while doing something else.) Sometimes I get an answer to the question, sometimes not. More importantly, I usually stumble upon another question-and that's when I know I'm done with the last one."*

* Alma Ruiz, "Interview with Adam Janes", in cat. exp. *From and About Places: Art from Los Angeles*, The Center of Contemporary Art, Tel Aviv, 2008, p. 72.



UPCOMING

BORIS ACHOUR

project room **DAVID CONROY**
14 April-15 May

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ART BRUSSELS

19-22 April

/

ART 43 BASEL

14-17 June

