

CITY LIMITS

Suncakes

Amy Garofano, Ross Simonini

July 9-August 6, 2016

Opening reception: July 9, 2016, 6-9pm

Suncakes, an exhibition by Ross Simonini and Amy Garofano, features both artists adapting their materials for a site-specific installation at VACANCY. By stripping down process to sheer materiality, new bodies of work have emerged, yielding to elastic, modular works still nascent in their potential. Everything seems as though it should already exist, taxonomically speaking, but does not. They are like strangers you think you've already met.

Simonini, an artist who paints on surfaces such as cutting boards, with materials such as algae, and with digits such as his toes, has now used napkins as a painting substrate for several years. Calling them "anxiety napkins," the project began as thefts from restaurants, the theft itself a catalyst for the anxious marks and stains which accumulate as emotional landscapes. They are unmistakable as both paintings and as napkins- pocket-sized Frankenthalers. The artist, recently relocated from New York to California, has begun sewing paintings to napkins and tablecloths into large sculptural configurations, stringing them up by electrical cord and installing in very different environments between

residencies and temporary, ad hoc studios in Northern California. They are sculptures made of paintings, elusive objects which are heavy with mass but variable in form. They are conceived of as markers of health -- blockage, convalescence, balance and hormesis. Additionally, there are corresponding napkin paintings on the wall which reference flags.

Converse to these colorful, expressive works are Amy Garofano's illusory velvet on velvet works. Garofano's recent *Outside Dream House* works involve upholstering ornate wooden designs in velvet to emulate the design of house gates in and around Los Angeles. Although the black velvet is flat and homogeneous throughout, the directional weave of the velvet appears brighter or darker in value as light hits the surface. This effect has been utilized by the artist for a new series of 70 works made of rectangular velvet with circular inlays, pinned flat to the wall and installed throughout the gallery space, disorienting space and perspective with the aid of but one material. These too, are puzzling works. They resemble portals, but are they entrances or exits? This formal delineation of positive and negative space relates back to the artist's own interest in gates as a marker between public and private space, entrance or barrier.

Suncakes was organized by City Limits and hosted by VACANCY. It is part of a summer curatorial exchange between City Limits and VACANCY.

Amy Garofano studies perception by focusing on the relationship between material objects and their shifting contexts. Her forms are borrowed from design and architecture as a way to examine how those fields encode cultural attitudes. She received her MFA from Cranbrook Academy of Art in 2012. In 2013, she attended the MacDowell Colony Residency. Her work has recently been included in exhibitions in New York, Los Angeles, and Geneva.

Ross Simonini is an artist, writer and musician living in California and New York. His artwork has shown with Martos Gallery, 247365, Andrew Edlin Gallery, Human Resources, Jack Hanley Gallery, Agnes B's Gallerie Du Jour, and Shoot the Lobster in Luxembourg. He holds degrees in music and writing from the University of California and Bennington Colleges, and teaches experimental process seminars at Columbia University. As a visual artist, he is self-taught.

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