

Statement

"Out, Out Damn Spot!" cries Shakespeare's Lady Macbeth in a tortured state of insomnia, while vainly trying to cleanse herself of her own bloody ambition. This is the state that is examined in my ongoing installation "Out, Out Damn Spot!", in which approximately 300 warmed hand towels are passed by a caterer to various viewers at openings. Served from a traditional chaffing dish, which keeps the towels at a tepid temperature, viewers afford the opportunity for an aesthetic as well as ecstatic questioning of ambition. Examined is the same ambition that clouds all circuits of mobility and immobility, artistic or otherwise. Where does the ego relinquish itself to the id, much less to the super ego of the self or the community? The refreshing act of self cleansing, juxtaposed to the repulsive thought of self promotion, further accentuates the relationship of the viewer to the art, as well as the artist to the idea of the group show and its viewing audience. By taking the towels, the viewers are at first lured by the displaced luxury and then left self-consciously acquiescent to cold wet object the towel has become. As they search to relieve themselves of their serviette, has ambition metaphorically absorbed or cleansed their literal being? What finally remains, are the towels - the agent of that ambition - discarded by the public to create a relic/sculpture. Assuming the form of a crippled heap that resembles the refuse of last night's dinner, this literal transformation of the towels fills the void where ambition and/or art is either lost or found, vanquished or relinquished, rejoiced or repelled.

Devon Dikeou

"Out, Out Damn Spot" 1992 ongoing

bodyguard
HOENTHAL UND BERGEN
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