

Artinfo.com : 'Adam Helms on Adam Helms (kinda)', by Tyler Green, October 18th, 2007

Adam Helms on Adam Helms (kinda)



*After a week of watching the dead-tree NYC media consider art as part of a scene loved by upper-income Americans and not much else, I decided to join in. Sort of. I decided to ask a couple artists what they thought about how *The Money* is treating their work — in particular their work as prepared for photographers from the *New York Times Style Magazine*. The first artist I decided to email was Adam Helms, whose work is here, above the sofa. That seemed like a good idea until I realized that the *NYT* spread/feature was at the home of his dealer, *Marianne Boesky*. 'Good start, writer,' I thought. But I emailed Helms anyway and he replied. Over the course of two posts today I'll share his thoughts. My intent was to ask him what he thought of the installation, but what follows was his reply to a less scripted back-and-forth.*

Adam Helms: Marianne actually is moving my piece at my request. It wasn't until recently that I actually went up to her house to see the work. I thought initially that my piece should be moved elsewhere, down where a viewer can see the pieces more directly. In my mylar work, it's important to be able to see the abstractions within the ink. That's an important part of the tension of those pieces. I thought that at the height they were, no one would be able to see this. What I did like was how they seemed to lord over the space at that height. In terms of a feeling of the work being 'neutered' in the space, the way they are, it's just where that particular piece is going to function within Marianne's house. Which is what her space is, her home. My 'insurgents' existing above a couch is perhaps not ultimately where I would like to think of them, but any guest in her house who will see them – and look past them as objects that match a sense of interior design – and think about the implications of the work in their minds, is as much as I can ask for in this case. I do agree that the piece in the Times, as slick as it looks, makes all the work appear de-contextualized to a degree. But this is ultimately where the context lies for much of contemporary art. Hopefully the artist can feel some comfort in the reasons why collectors decide to 'live' with the work the way they do and understand the practice, intention and relevance of the work to the continuing dialogue of art history. When these reasons are giving credence to issues within work, I try not let myself be bothered by what piece of furniture is near the work, or even if it's being contextualized near other pieces that don't at all fit with what my work deals with. In this specific case with Marianne's place and the Times' mag, I'm glad to be involved with someone like her, who understands what I am trying to do and wants to support my practice for the long term. I know it all sounds a bit [dramatic], but it's honest. I just try and focus on the studio and deal with the rest.