

# Alexi Worth

## *Eye to Eye*

NOVEMBER 13, 2008 - JANUARY 3, 2009

OPENING RECEPTION: THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 13 6-8 PM



Half in Hand, 2008, Oil on Screen, 27 x 36 inches

In *Eye to Eye*, his third exhibition at DC Moore, Alexi Worth's paintings focus on the world of objects within our reach, including wineglasses, apples, bodies, and books. Virtually all foreground, Worth's paintings are increasingly simple, dominated by the kind of stark graphic shapes for which American painters have a congenital appetite. And yet, for all their "stop-sign simplicity," Worth's images are wry, suggestive, and ambiguous. Often they teasingly imply the presence of an offstage character: the viewer. In a painting of a hand holding a split apple, for instance, the shadow eclipsing the foreground is the beholders--yours. An image of a crumpled fashion advertisement, with its single eye staring out from a crevice, becomes a trompe l'oeil valentine--as well as the latest episode in Worth's ongoing lover's quarrel with photography. The most resonant ambiguities, these pictures suggest, are the ones right in front of our faces.

Both comical and somber, the new paintings embody Worth's preoccupations with narrative, cartooning, and the bright frontal lighting that we usually associate with flash photography. In an article published last year in *Art in America*, Worth wrote about the way that Edouard Manet introduced such lighting into painting. "Frontal light has peculiar effects," Worth pointed out. "Light areas bleach, surface texture is lost, backgrounds go dim or black..." More important still, this kind of forward lighting can sharpen our sense of intimacy with the subject. That is Worth's aim in these

paintings: to create fictions of nearness, of connection and reciprocity, of monogamous intensity.

About his previous exhibition, *Couples*, art historian Svetlana Alpers wrote, "Alexi Worth is a terrific image-maker. His paintings stick in the mind. What you remember, however, is not quite what you get. For all the smoothness of surface, clarity of outlines, and elegance of design, Worth doesn't make it easy to grasp what is going on. Much of the interest lies in the puzzling nature of what you are given to see."

On the other hand, a 2004 reviewer wrote that Worth "forfeits" his claim to "the attention reserved for activities inhabiting a moral and intellectual dimension. Either we can make adult demands on art or we cannot. This work tries to have it both ways." In his new paintings, Worth continues his misguided efforts to have it both ways: to be a storyteller and a formalist, a photographer and a cartoonist, an observer and a participant, a simplifier and a nuance-maven.

Also on view:

George Tooker: *Studies for Paintings*

Upcoming exhibitions:

Robert Kushner: <i>Silk Road</i>	January 7–February 7, 2009
Janet Fish	February 11–March 14, 2009
Charles Burchfield 1920: <i>The Architecture of Painting</i>	March 18–April 25, 2009

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DC Moore Gallery specializes in twentieth-century and contemporary art. The gallery is located on the eighth floor of 724 Fifth Avenue between 56th and 57th Streets and is open Tuesday through Saturday from 10 to 5:30. Press viewings can be arranged prior to the exhibition.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION, FOR PHOTOGRAPHS, OR TO ARRANGE A VIEWING,  
PLEASE CALL SANDRA PACI AT 212-247-2111**