

76 GRAND STREET NEW YORK NY 10013



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# DASH SNOW DAN COLEN

## NEST

**JULY 28 – AUGUST 18, 2007**

**76 GRAND STREET**

Thirty volunteers spent three days shredding two-thousand New York City telephone books in preparation for one of the most unusual exhibitions ever presented by a New York gallery; Dash Snow and Dan Colen's *NEST*. Adapting their infamous "hamster nest" to 76 Grand Street, they reveal to the public a performance they have until now created only in private. The resulting pandemonium is on view, in addition to video and photographic documentation.

A "Hamster Nest" normally consists of their shredding enormous amounts of whatever paper material they can get their hands on and ransacking the interior of their selected space in an exuberant overnight fête. Over the years this has taken place in hotel rooms all over the world, existing only in occasional Polaroids, video, and the memories of exasperated hotel staff.

On July 3<sup>rd</sup>, Dan and Dash invited fifteen fellow artists including Aaron Bondaroff, Hanna Liden, Jack Walls, Nate Lowman, and Adam McEwan to Grand Street, and from midnight to 8am, rolled around together in the waist-deep shredded paper to create this piece. One night proved to be not enough to complete their creative destruction and Dash brought a group of compatriots four additional nights. With paint poles speared into the wall, bottles protruding from hacked-up sheetrock, and a pummeling of enormous wine, pee, and paint spit-balls stuck to the walls, it seems a great deal took place during these night-into-mornings. Dark and brutal slogans commingle with moments of love and

tenderness as both sentiments go into creating this ambiguous dwelling.

While their truly over-the-top performance recollects early Fluxus experiments, the result of the melee physically resembles a very strange earthwork. One visitor described the piece as "The New York Dirt Room". The room is exhibited just as the artists left it, trash and all, while the front room shows a video of a previous nest in Miami to give insight into this contemporary answer to a "happening".

These two artists live their art in a way that distinctions between the two become irrelevant when synthesized in a work of this nature. Dan Colen is a painter and sculptor known for his conceptually charged, realistic executions in paint of various objects in ruin. His recent bird-shit paintings bear an interesting resemblance to the spitball stuccoed back wall of the gallery and the shredded debris below. Dash Snow's photography, sculpture, and collage work all capture Dash's life as a radical dissenter living in dangerous times. But though their individual art projects are different, the sensibility and rebellious exuberance that runs through the work is exactly the spirit of this collaborative performance.

The artists themselves are not interested in the destruction that lies in their wake per-se, but seek rather a total freedom of expression, and an expression of their relationship with each other and members of their community.

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This exhibition was truly “activated” during the performance staged on July 24<sup>th</sup>, when Gang Gang Dance and Prurient had fifty of the artists’ friends ecstatically throwing paper and freaking out in the nest. The show is dedicated to Secret,

Dash and Jade’s daughter who was born the morning of July 23<sup>rd</sup>.

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