

A L E X A N D E R J A M E S

P H O T O G R A P H E R

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VANITAS

In his most recent series, 'Vanitas', Alexander James re-visits the works of the 17th century Dutch Masters. Using period props, food and real insects, he captures carefully staged underwater scenes 'in-camera' without the use of post production, either traditional or digital. Working with subtle distortions of light & movement from the waters own wave energy to create a unique and painterly effect. The subjects appear as if to be floating in a black space that neither interferes nor disrupts the subject matter, the collaboration within this void offering a serene and dreamlike sensation.

Vanitas had its renaissance in the 17th century, when Dutch artists became focused on the theme of mortality using natural specimens such as flowers cut from the root and starting to wither, or pieces of decaying fruit to express a memento mori – a reminder of the inevitability of death in all things living. Moreover, "precious" metals, and objets d'art were used to remind the audience of the meaninglessness of a superficial existence.

James further explores these themes through the introduction of water; acting as both nurturer and destroyer, it has the power to cleanse and reinvent, or to drown and disappear. Believing that drawing on water's transient and destructive nature exposes the fragility of life, and the temporary nature of our existence.

Ultimately, by playing upon and transforming the genre's inherent symbolic themes Alexander James's 'Vanitas' series act as a reflection on the artist's own life and mortality, questioning it's meaning in a society dominated by materialism.

The quality and purity of the process are at the core of his work, attempting to engage his art with the most personal of realisations - brutal yet divine.

ALEXANDER JAMES

PHOTOGRAPHER

WWW.DISTILENNUI.COM



Underwater Dutch Masters, Vanitas Series, Terracotta Vase, Tulips & Butterfly. 2011

Title - Grace

R-Type hand print mounted to Aluminum.

Edition III - 47.25 x 35.5 inches (120 x 90 cms) Edition of 10

Price £3,000 plus framing & VAT



Underwater Dutch Masters, Vanitas Series, Peaches, Pears & Beetle. 2010

Title - Emperors Truth

R-Type hand print mounted to Aluminum.

Edition III - 47.25 x 35.5 inches (120 x 90 cms) Edition of 10

Price £3,000 plus framing & VAT

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PHOTOGRAPHER

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Underwater Dutch Masters, Vanitas Series, Lemons & Pomegranate. 2011

Title - Bitter Sweet Table

R-Type hand print mounted to Aluminum.

Edition III - 47.25 x 35.5 inches (120 x 90 cms) Edition of 10

Price £3,000 plus framing & VAT



Underwater Dutch Masters, Vanitas Series, Pears & Beetles. 2010

Title - Love & Chaucer

R-Type hand print mounted to Aluminum.

Edition III - 47.25 x 35.5 inches (120 x 90 cms) Edition of 10

Price £3,000 plus framing & VAT

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PHOTOGRAPHER

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Underwater Dutch Masters, Vanitas Series, Roses & Butterfly, 2010

Title - Isis Bound

R-Type hand print mounted to Aluminum.

Edition III - 47.25 x 35.5 inches (120 x 90 cms) Edition of 10

Price £3,000 plus framing & VAT



Underwater Dutch Masters, Vanitas Series, Pewter Jug & Rabbits, 2011

Title - Multiply

R-Type hand print mounted to Aluminum.

Edition III - 47.25 x 35.5 inches (120 x 90 cms) Edition of 10

Price £3,000 plus framing & VAT

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Solo Exhibitions:

April 2011 - 'Talk to me' accepted into Davis Lisboa Museum Collection
May 2010 - Ann330 Gallery, Los Angeles 'Taxi'
April 2010 - Conningsby Gallery, London, 'Tokyo Green'
Jan 2008 - RCP Sydney, 'Working Water'
Sep 2006 - Boiler House, Shanghai, 'Flight'
Aug 2003 - Paris, 'No Logo'
Aug 2002 - London, 'The Colour Candy'
Feb 1998 - London, 'Flight'

Group Exhibitions:

May 2011 - 'Still Even', Pertwee Anderson & Gold, London
May 2011 - The Affordable Art Fair, New York
Mar 2011 - The Affordable Art Fair, London
Feb 2011 - The International Art Fair, London
Feb 2011 - The Watercolors Fair, London
Jan 2011 - Artmosh, Munich
Dec 2010 - Artmosh, London
Oct 2010 - Flaere Gallery, London, 'You Are Here'
Aug 2009 - Rathbone Gallery, London, 'Space & Time'
July 2009 - Artmosh, Paris

Statement:

My photographs are always presented 'as-shot' with no post-production either traditional or digital; seeing the process as cathartic rather than a critical one, dedication to 'in camera' purity establishes a predominant focal point for my practice.

I aim to be a genuine exemplar of authentic artistic expression, untrained, unsullied by academicism, searching for my own powerful and uncorrupted vision. Now working as a mid-career artist, attempting to present the beguiling beauty of our everyday confinements, the essence of my images is derived from the ordinary, displaced and the overlooked.

Recent bodies of work have been charged with environmental and social issues that bring to question the longevity of consumerism and the meaning of life in a society dominated by materialism; the transience of secular objects acting as a reminder of the meaninglessness of a superficial existence.

The quality of the works and the purity of the process are at the core of my practice, through which I seek to keep photography relevant by engaging my art with key political and intellectual issues of our time.

Education: Not formally trained

Editions Edition II of 10, R-Type Hand Prints (42 x 60cms)
Edition III of 10, R-Type Hand Prints (up to 185cms x 90cms) - with 3 artists proofs
