

# Elizabeth Dee

545 WEST 20TH STREET NEW YORK NY 10011

T 212 924 7545

F 212 924 7671

WWW.ELIZABETHDEEGALLERY.COM

## Doug Wada

Literalist sensibility is theatrical because, to begin with, it is concerned with the actual circumstances in which the beholder encounters literalist work&hellip;Whereas in previous art (what is to be had from the work is located strictly within [it]," the experience of literalist art is of an object in a *situation*-one that virtually by definition, *includes the beholder*."

-Michael Fried, *Art and Objecthood* (1967)

Elizabeth Dee is pleased to announce an exhibition of new paintings by Doug Wada in the gallery at 545 West 20th Street. There will be an opening reception for the artist on Friday, March 7th, from 6 to 8 pm.

Doug Wada's paintings of mass-produced objects-trash cans, dumpsters, washing machines, waiting-room seats-defy our expected perceptions of everyday items and spaces. The lucidly rendered yet buttery surfaces of the paintings partake of both a trompe l'oeil illusionism and a sensuous abstraction. Hung at the height of the actual objects depicted, they suggest real space by their installation and within the tightly framed isolation of each image. Perplexing distortions occur within each painting, however, articulating a space that the viewer cannot occupy; certain details are so pared down that the objects seem to read as artifice, architecture, or both. Hung in thematic groups, Wada's canvases create environments that are both familiar and uncanny.

For his most recent exhibition, the gallery is divided in three parts. Facing the viewer entering the gallery is a row of dumpsters, each teetering on a single wheel, their repetition mirroring minimalist sculpture. Facing off in the same space are other elements that invoke a construction site: a pair of paintings of port-o-potties, resting on the floor and represented in the lapidary glory of their prefabricated precision. The second room contains the features of an urban laundromat. A row of Eames like seats fills one of the walls, while a series of shiny aluminum washing machines progress across the opposite wall with a similar rhythm. The third gallery comprises vents and garbage cans in their steel mesh bins, as if seen on the façade of an apartment building in New York. The white gallery walls become the front of an implied architecture of unknown proportions.

Narrative without traditional figuration, still life without site, Wada's paintings heighten our awareness of the quotidian object while evoking states of transience, emptiness, or impenetrable emotion. What is abstracted from view (washing machines without coin slots, port-o-potties without door handles) takes on heightened importance, yet the paintings locate specific spaces, like stage sets or subtle forms of theater. Repetition, the grid, and the translation of the photographic image links Wada's work to Minimalism and Conceptual Art, while the banality of his chosen subjects harks back to the thematics of Pop.

This is the second one-man exhibition for the New York based artist. Doug Wada has most recently exhibited at Galerie Borgmann-Nathusius in Cologne and in *View Five: Westworld* at Mary Boone Gallery in New York. He was featured in Greater New York at P.S.1 in 2000 and the same year curated *Innuendo* at Dee/Glasoe.