

Daniel Dewar & Grégory Gicquel

FRONT DESK APPARATUS

29 East 37th Street, 2B

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If the Internet has come to bolster geographically dispersed tendencies and social groupings in the world of contemporary art, the price it has levied for this connectivity and acceleration has been the triumph of the image as the dominant vessel of influence. In their New York debut, Daniel Dewar and Grégory Gicquel present a precise body of sculpture that lays siege to that dominance in the Beaux Arts townhouse where the gallery recently reopened. In this building—once owned by nineteenth-century merchant and art collector Cornelius Bliss and on the same walls where his daughter would hang works by Picasso and Modigliani—Dewar and Gicquel have installed two strangely proportioned, handmade wool tapestries. When we see the works, they appear as hugely oversized wool sweaters. Too large to be donned, the truth of the lush, richly woven works rests in the volume of space they inhabit with their pliable contours and organic texture. In this sense, they challenge us to subjugate vision to a material presence that refuses to be subsumed by it. What better material than wool, the fiber of both resilience and warmth, could be pitted against the indifference of imagistic conditioning that would reduce a six-foot-tall tapestry to a piece of clothing?

The other works in the exhibition stalk a similar vector of attack: Hand-carved earthenware sculptures approximate a toilet and a wash basin set with such exacting detail that they seem they could be functionally deployed given the right plumbing. Their organic patinas of muddied green dance away from ideas of the readymade with which a viewer might meet them. The pitcher accompanying the basin provides a more elusive movement: Standing on a large foot, it evokes some unspecified near past. Its empty form tempts a figurative reading, but the work's straight-faced rendering is an end only to itself. There are no molds or reproductions after all, but only a way for the artists to continue working.

— *Boško Blagojević*



View of “Daniel Dewar and Grégory Gicquel,” 2015.