

291 GRAND ST, 2ND FLOOR
NEW YORK, NY 10002
OFFICE@47CANAL.US
(646) 415-7712

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Stewart Uoo

Handmade Paper

on view from November 3, 2017

About a decade ago, I saw a couple of glamorous women stumbling out of a taxi-cab carrying a caboodle of large, empty paper shopping bags with high end luxury brands emblazoned on the sides. It was really late at night – they were nightlife people entering the club in some sort of drag. I became particularly interested in fashion brands that I knew growing up in the suburbs, brands that defined an American middle-class fantasy with their iconic, subversive advertising often depicting carefree, sexualized white bodies. I started to collect shopping bags, buying them online and finding them in garbage piles off the streets in Soho. These empty objects were perfect accessories – huge and superficial – a campy admittance to an ‘I-shop-therefore-I-am’ lifestyle of thriving in luxury. This was branding maybe at its simplest and most distilled: the art of packaging.

Stewart Uoo (b. 1985) lives and works in New York City. He received his BFA from the California College of Arts in 2007, and his Meisterschule from Städelschule HFBK in 2012. In 2013 he had two person exhibition *Outside Inside Sensibility*, curated by Jay Sanders at the Whitney Museum of American Art. Recently his work has been exhibited at the K11 Art Museum, Shanghai; David Roberts Art Foundation, London; the Aïshti Foundation, Jal el Dib, Lebanon; MoMA PS1, New York; ICA London; the Fridericianum, Kassel; the 10th Gwangju Biennale; the 14th Venice Architecture Biennale; and the Kunsthalle Oslo. His work is included in several public collections including the Aïshti Foundation, Jal el Dib, Lebanon; the Whitney Museum of American Art; and the Rubell Family Collection. In 2015, he received the Louis Comfort Tiffany Foundation Award; in 2013 the Fun Fellowship Grant from the Museum of Arts and Design, New York; and in 2011 the CGV Pre Real Estate Prize.