

SHARE



**Trouble is Comin, 2010 Acrylic medium on vinyl;
enamel spray paint and ink on canvas 117 x 60 inches**

We use cookies on this website to make your experience better. By continuing to browse you agree to our use of cookies. If you do not consent to the use of cookies, please alter your settings. To find out more please refer to our [privacy policy](#) and [cookie policy](#) pages.

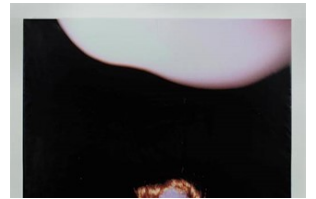
The controversial director and visual artist collaborate on an art show that seeks to find the glory in the shadows

6th January 2011

Text John-Paul Pryor

**Harmony
Korine & Rita
Ackermann:
Shadow Fux**

6 IMAGES



There are few artists to have courted controversy with as much verve as Rita Ackermann and Harmony Korine, both of whom are unparalleled in their respective fields when it comes to the creation of challenging, sometimes humorous and very often unsettling works. Given this provocative heritage, it's an exciting prospect for the two of them to engage in the creation of *Shadow Fux* at Swiss Institute Contemporary Art.

Shadow Fux is a call-and-response artistic project drawing on the characters from Korine's celluloid gross-out *Trash Humpers* – a film not unlike an endurance test for the senses, positing

the viewer in the line of fire of a ghoulish mid-western family whose time is chiefly devoted to 'humping trash'. *Shadow Fux* however is a somewhat different proposition from the movie, involving the coming together of two artistic sensibilities to create another – a third fractured psyche or split personality presented on canvases that are at once both playful and macabre.

Dazed Digital: Have you always been fans of each other's work? What do you enjoy about each others output as artists?

Harmony: We've been friends for a really long time. I just think Rita is great – she is an amazing painter and taps into something wild, I don't even know how to say it or articulate it... she sets the universe on fire, and I'm always attracted to that kind of thing.

Rita Ackermann: I always thought that Harmony was on to something from the beginning. He's someone who is really original and shows something completely new to the American people – a completely different kind of filmmaking. He takes things to the next level. He has an amazing way of approaching things visually.

DD: What was the conceptual genesis of the project?

Rita Ackermann: We just set out to do something out that hasn't been done before. We're not interested in doing things that are

mainstream, we're more interested in taking risks to create something new, and it's unusual when you bring two different art forms together – you can become one.

Harmony Korine: We have always collaborated in an informal way and we just had this idea to do something and put it out there. It was never supposed to seem like a two person collaboration, it was always meant to seem more unified, like it was its own thing. *(Laughs)* Rita and I are God's gangsters – God said stick up those motherfuckers, bring the pistols out and fire them into the audience. We just wanted to shoot up the place – we wanted to handcuff the milkyway and spin it on its axis!

DD: *(Laughs)* **It's interesting that notion of two becoming one because it's kind of like you are mirroring each other or presenting a split personality – is that something you intended to bring out in the work?**

Harmony Korine: It would be hard for us to say that to one another because we didn't really talk about what it was or what it needed to be. We both just had these codes – Rita would tap me on the shoulder or stick a pin in my back and I would know what she was talking about and we would just go in that direction.

DD: **What do the Trash Humpers represent to you both? They're quite freakish and macabre characters – why do you think we are drawn to those kinds of things as a**

species?

Rita Ackermann: I don't know why. We don't think those people are weird though – we think they're normal. They seem strange to you maybe, because you live in London, but if you live in the mid-west, it's not really that strange. I mean, you step out of Houston airport and you see these people immediately, and even more obscene people!

Harmony Korine: *(Laughs)* Yeah, I mean, I married a woman who can swallow fifteen live goldfish in a single gulp. It doesn't feel like that's anything strange to me, it feels like there is a poetry to it. All that my neighbour does is steal yard furniture, he just goes around stealing it. He's a very old man and that's his hobby.

Rita Ackermann: I think what we were trying to do is to find an aesthetic in the speciality of these people who are not from the everyday. You always have to show beauty in different ways – when you see a three-legged dog and you are able to show that dog in a certain way and change people's way of thinking of a three-legged dog, then they can stop thinking about it as a three-legged dog.

Harmony Korine: We were trying find the glory in the shadows. We were just trying to let the shapeshifters – those people that live under bridges – get out and dance, you know? We were just trying to give that beautiful energy some life; trying to let the arsonists be arsonists and let them vandalise in all their pageantry –

give it some light, give it some universe... let it
transcend.

ARTS+CULTURE

INCOMING

HARMONY KORINE

Read Next