

# t r a n s f o r m e r

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
Reis/Marissa Long  
April 28, 2009

CONTACT: Victoria

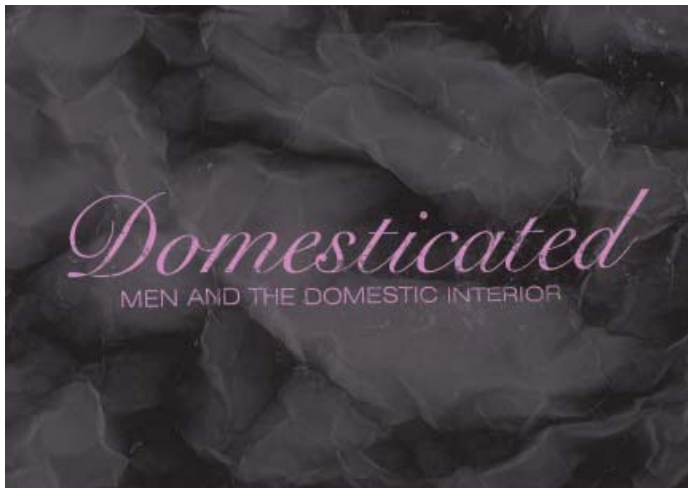
202-483-1102

Transformer is very pleased to present:  
**DOMESTICATED: MEN AND  
THE DOMESTIC INTERIOR**  
curated by Al Miner

OPENING DAY: May 16, 2009 –  
Curator & Artist Talk 4pm; Reception 5 – 8pm

CLOSING DAY CURATOR & ARTIST TALK:  
June 20, 2009, 2pm

Men have historically been posited as providers for and not integrated inhabitants of the home. Notions such as the Victorian period's focus on the matriarch as the "angel of the hearth" and the 1950s ideal of the nuclear family have shaped this perception. While a man's home may still be his castle, his relationship to it has changed. Despite this progress, many photographers today choose to portray women alone in domestic interiors, often with a sexualizing gaze. The photographers of *Domesticated* - **Yolanda del Amo, Amy Elkins, Dru Donovan, and Jamil Hellu** - challenge such notions by depicting men in domestic interiors, capturing moments of complex masculinity that can only occur behind the closed doors of the home.



For Brooklyn-based, Spanish artist **Yolanda del Amo** (b. 1967, Madrid, Spain), the domestic setting is a microcosm and a stage upon which her male and female characters act out the changing role of men in society. Forced into a "Mr. Mom" role or demeaned by willful women, del Amo's men illustrate this shift in power. Her vibrantly colored, large, mounted prints feel more like windows than photographs. We become voyeurs as we witness the moments these men hide from the outside world. Yolanda del Amo received an M.F.A in Photography from the Rhode Island School of Design (RISD) in 2004. She has had solo exhibitions at Hudson Franklin Gallery in New York, NY (2007) and at the Barbara Walters Gallery at Sarah Lawrence College, Bronxville, NY (2006). Group exhibitions include *Artist in the Marketplace (AIM 26)* at the Bronx Museum of Art, New York (2006). She is an assistant professor at Southern Connecticut State University and is represented by Hudson Franklin Gallery, New York, NY.

**Dru Donovan's** (b. 1981, St. Paul, MN) portraits of family combat the traditional image of the father as the stoic leader of his home and brood. Using her father and youngest brother as models, her soft, pastel palette mimics their tenderness. The close relationship she has with her subjects allows her to catch contemplative moments. Donovan's bedroom images reveal the tentative touch between a father and his adolescent son who fearfully hovers on the precipice of manhood. Dru Donovan lives in New Haven, Connecticut. She

# t r a n s f o r m e r

received her B.F.A. in photography from the California College of the Arts (2004) and this spring she will receive an M.F.A. in photography from Yale University. Group exhibitions featuring her work include *31 Under 31—Young Women in Art Photography* at the Humble Arts Foundation New York, NY (2008) and *The Serenade is Dead* at Onsix Gallery in San Francisco, CA (2006). This summer, Donovan photographed student researchers on the Alaskan ice fields for the *New York Times Magazine*, and recently *Wallpaper\** magazine selected her as a "photographer to watch."

In her "Wallflower" series, Brooklyn artist **Amy Elkins** (b. 1979, Venice Beach, CA) reverses the gaze, turning her post-feminist lens toward male subjects positioned in front of graphic, floral backdrops. Young and shirtless, these men conjure the homoerotic portraits of David Armstrong and Mark Morrisoe, but unexpectedly reveal the subjects' subtle, bodily flaws. Pale and thin, Elkins' men appear angelic, and stripped of their armor, their vulnerability is obvious. Elkins received her B.F.A. in photography from the School of Visual Arts, New York (2007). In 2008, she had a solo show at Yancey Richardson Gallery and she co-founded wipnyc.org, a platform for showcasing both established and emerging women in photography. Her group exhibitions include *The House Was Quiet and the World Was Calm* at Tina Kim Gallery, New York (January) and *The Portrait—Photography as a Stage: From Robert Mapplethorpe to Nan Goldin*, which will open at the KUNSTHALLE wien, Vienna, Austria in July. Elkins' photographs have also been featured in *American Photo*, *Newsweek*, and *The New York Times Magazine*. Amy Elkins is represented by Yancey Richardson Gallery, New York, NY.

**Jamil Hellu** (b. 1979, Curitiba, Brazil), a San Francisco-based artist, shoots intimate portraits of his masculine muse and partner, Darrin, capturing moments of male solitude and vulnerability that can only be expressed in the comfort of one's home. Instead of indulging in gay stereotypes by shooting fashionable, effeminate twinks in lavish environments, Hellu's "Darrin" series reveals the tenderness behind one gruff bear's exterior as displayed in moments of banal domesticity. Whether doing dishes in a cramped kitchen or in repose on worn, floral sofa, Darrin appears comfortable and integrated in environments where conventional wisdom would say he should feel awkward. Hellu received his B.F.A. in photography from the San Francisco Art Institute (2003) and is currently working towards an M.F.A. in art practice at Stanford University. His group exhibitions include *Sweet and Matchless* at PLAYSPACE Gallery, California College of the Arts, San Francisco (February). In 2007, he was selected for a six-month artist's residency at the Cité Internationale des Arts in Paris and he was granted a Markowski-Leach scholarship in 2008.

Washington, DC-based **Al Miner** (b. 1977, New York) is an artist and curatorial assistant at the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Smithsonian Institution. At the Hirshhorn, his projects have included a sculpture garden commission with artist Dan Graham. Independent curatorial pursuits include a 2007 writing residency at Maryland Art Place where he co-wrote an exhibition catalogue with critics Eleanor Heartney and Irving Sandler, and the 2008 exhibition *The Elusive Surrounding* at C. Grimaldis Gallery, both in Baltimore, MD. He recently received the American Association for Museums (AAM) Diversity Fellowship. As an artist, Miner has exhibited extensively and received awards

# t r a n s f o r m e r

including the D.C. Commission on the Arts and Humanities Young Artist Program Grant and two Artist's Fellowship Awards. He is represented by Washington's G Fine Art gallery where his next solo exhibition will open in fall 2009. Miner holds an M.F.A. in painting and mixed media from Queens College, CUNY (2000) and a post-graduate certificate in museum studies from the George Washington University (2006).

For further information, please contact Victoria Reis or Marissa Long at: [info@transformergallery.org](mailto:info@transformergallery.org) or 202.483.1102.

EXHIBITION HOURS: Wednesday - Saturday, 1-7 pm & by appointment

---

**TRANSFORMER** is a Washington, D.C. based 501(c) 3 non-profit, artist-centered visual arts organization that connects and promotes emerging artists locally, nationally and internationally. Partnering with artists, curators, art spaces and other cultural entities, Transformer serves as a catalyst and advocate for emergent expression in the visual arts. Transformer's 2007/2008 exhibition series is supported by The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, The DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities/NEA, the Morris & Gwendolyn Cafritz Foundation, The Eugene and Agnes E. Meyer Foundation, and The Visionary Friends of Transformer.