

# HIONAS GALLERY

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## **CHRIS WYLLIE: *JUST PAST HAPPY***

Curated by Vaughn Massey

January 12 – February 11, 2012

Opening reception: Thursday, Jan. 12, 6:30-8:30 PM



*She's 22* (2011). Oil on found object, 52 x 35 in.

**New York, NY (December 15, 2011)** - Hionas Gallery is pleased to announce *Just Past Happy*, an exhibition featuring **Chris Wyllie's** paintings on found objects, comprised mostly of new works created in 2011. The paintings, although figurative, evoke the minimalistic feel of a pin-up girl silhouette, allowing the eye to rest on a subtle outline or clean curve. Wyllie leaves enough negative space in and around the feminine form so that one's focus leans toward the texture and traces of the faded object.

In the mixed-media painting, *She's 22*, his subject's sensual, voluptuous body creates space for the chips and cracks of the found object to break through. Meanwhile, the painting's words – "She's 22, smokes pot every day, & has a drinking problem" – and the weathered door on which they reside, reveal the temporal and fading state of her seeming perfection.

Wyllie is a nostalgic creature in both art and life. Among his collection of found objects and miscellanea are an old copy of the *Newport Daily News* from 1948, a set of antique Frigidaire refrigerator doors, pick-up truck tailgates, car doors, rooftops, and other ephemera. According to the artist, "these objects create a sense of nostalgia without pinpointing [their] exact source." When this nostalgia inevitably comes through in his paintings, one can see the appropriation of a particular time period.

*Just Past Happy* is curated by Vaughn Massey. According to Massey, "Chris is very much connected to the past and to the way things change. The residue. The traces. The beautiful silhouette of a female nude on something discarded and old, remind the viewer that nothing is permanent. 'Everything we do right now is going to fade,' Chris once remarked to me. This, I believe, speaks to the ephemeral quality of life and happiness. The object may already be faded, but a new history is created once transformed by Wyllie's hand into something more beautiful."

There will be an **opening reception** for the artist from 6:30 to 8:30 PM on **Thursday, January 12, 2012**.

#### **About the Artist:**

Before committing to becoming an artist, Wyllie worked professionally throughout two decades in film, graphic design, and decorative painting. One can trace the evolution of his graphic design in many of his pieces. Chris Wyllie's work is in the permanent collections of **The Whitney Museum of American Art**, New York; **The Fisher-Landau Center for Art**, New York; **The Rock and Roll Hall of Fame**, Cleveland, as well as many private collections. He has also been a featured artist at the 2008, 2009, 2010, and 2011 Whitney Annual Art Party. Chris Wyllie splits his time between Newport, RI and New York City.

*Legacy: The Emily Fisher Landau Collection*, at the Whitney Museum of American Art, featured Wyllie's painting *Girl on Doors 2* (2009). The catalog for this exhibition praises Wyllie's work in the following: "Wyllie's voyeuristic presentation of a nude women, in a style reminiscent of comic books, links the work to Pop Art of the 1960s, specifically paintings by Tom Wesselmann and John Wesley, as well as more recent paintings inspired by Japanese manga. Wyllie's depiction also recalls images from American popular culture: kitsch pin-up girls of the 1930s and 1940s, as well as recent comic art and television shows."

#### **About Hionas Gallery:**

Hionas Gallery is a 500 sf. exhibition space located at 89 Franklin Street, in a classic TriBeCa storefront. The gallery invites contemporary and emerging artists, working in all variety of

media, to participate in monthly solo exhibitions to showcase their latest work and artistic vision. The gallery space doubles as the storefront for the personal fitness studio, Peter Anthony Fitness, owned and operated by Peter Hionas. Over the years, Hionas has personally trained hundreds of celebrities and other high profile figures, including a number of artists and art world luminaries. This list includes the artists Marina Abramović, Terry Winters and Dan Colen, collector Adam Sender, architect David Rockwell, and P.S.1 founder Alanna Heiss, among many others.

Gallery owners Peter and Maria Hionas officially opened the gallery in June 2011. “We have been avid collectors of contemporary art since 1991,” says Peter Hionas. “It’s a modest storefront we have here, but also really spacious and versatile. I see us as operating in the tradition of the old Betty Parsons Gallery in midtown, or the original White Cube in St. James’s; small spaces that just show great art.

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For more information on Hionas Gallery please e-mail Maria Hionas at [mariahionas@gmail.com](mailto:mariahionas@gmail.com) or visit [www.hionasgallery.com](http://www.hionasgallery.com)

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