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For Immediate Release

DESIRE OBTAIN CHERISH

#undertheinfluence

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Los Angeles, CA / Chicago IL. (March 1, 2013) - KM Fine Arts, is pleased to present the debut solo show of Desire Obtain Cherish: *#undertheinfluence* on view at the gallery's 814 North La Cienega, Los Angeles space. The exhibition will feature over 20 works selected by the artist, comprising a seminal presentation of his renowned pill works, paintings, resin and mixed media sculptures.

Jonathan Paul is a provocateur who uses sleek, shiny, and accessible imagery that engages and tempts viewers - where they ultimately succumb to their primal instincts to take ownership of the object. A dance and ritual that is played out whenever someone's eyes fall upon his work. Assuming the pseudonym Desire Obtain Cherish, Paul's body of work entitled *#undertheinfluence* may refer to drugs, sex, pop culture, Hollywood, or the myth of Los Angeles itself. Or it just may be the artist's influence on those that fall prey to his siren song.

At first glance, the imagery is exciting. The candy coated colors and textures resemble an apple freshly dipped at the county fair. The aesthetic perfection of this tasty goody is frozen within so many of DOC's works. The color glistens and seems to represent absolute perfection. I am instantly reminded of the minimalist work of John McCracken, whose plank sculptures resemble diving boards leaning against the wall. However, it was the surface treatment of these objects that made them outstanding. The fiberglass planks were always one bold color complete with a highly polished resin surface. The result transformed a banal rectangular shape into something special. DOC much like McCracken embraces materials that are reminiscent of southern California. Yet DOC takes it one step further by using common and populist imagery. This is a combination that makes them unfairly desirable and tugs at our emotional intelligence.

The objects make you happy and you wonder why? It's as though several of your favorite things have been enlarged and rendered impossible yet at the same time they fulfill their inner purpose of tempting you. You live in anticipation because they are not real objects and will never ultimately satisfy your hunger.

The series of "Designer Drugs" is a good example because they signify brands that evoke strong reactions. Names like Louis Vuitton, Yves Saint Laurent, and Chanel each respectively replace pills that typically read Advil or Tylenol. They are enlarged and packaged beautifully to highlight the familiar logos. These are drugs that typically reduce pain and other ailments, however these new designer drugs appear to aid misguided ambitions like status or identity through materialism. It's a shopper's "high" neatly packaged for easy consumption.

DOC's larger than life sculptures have ranged from ice cream cones, lipstick tubes, to giant suckers. All are cultural symbols that are easy to read, which makes them equally dangerous because there is an entry point for everyone into this trap. The motto "sex sells" certainly applies. Glistening, moist, and overtly reminiscent of subliminal advertising, these objects are safe and sensual, a dangerous combination.

Based in Los Angeles, DOC clearly has a mixed relationship with the city. The red carpet that greets visitors into the exhibition serves to mimic the gluttony of award shows and caters to the self-importance of the everyday person. Its presence makes one feel special because of its association with celebrity. Underneath the carpet are lines of gold bricks that each have Desire Obtain Cherish stamped onto the surface. Woody Allen quipped in his movie *Annie Hall* that L.A. is so clean "...because they don't throw their garbage away, they turn it into television shows." DOC embraces this playful attitude as he manipulates Hollywood's symbols of wealth, fame, and power for his own purposes.

Desire Obtain Cherish is not a naïve or a self-taught artist. In fact, this graduate of Parson's School of Design is highly educated in art theory and has rebelled against this aristocratic means of communicating. He instead credits his education in an ad agency for helping him understand real work and people. Art is vehicle of communication and not a theory to DOC. It must be understood immediately or the viewer is lost. DOC's series of celebrity portraits that died from overdoses communicates this efficiency. The likeness of the celebrity combined with the mythic personalities of Michael Jackson, Jim Morrison, or Marilyn Monroe immediately cement an emotional connection. Upon closer investigation, the detailed works are composed of thousands of individually wrapped pills. It's a gruesome detail that is packaged for celebration.

The sparkle of Los Angeles exists in an ideal state and DOC appears to manipulate its characteristics like a composer leading his orchestra. Randy Newman ironically addresses the myth of the American Dream in his song "I Love L.A." While the song highlights the wonderful characteristics of Los Angeles including the mountains and trees with its upbeat tempo, it then continues sarcastically by also calling attention to the bum on his knees. Desire Obtain Cherish succeeds in the same manner by tempting his audience with lush materials and eye candy. We accept it and become part of a microcosm of consumerism, sex, and hype that feels particularly good when we are under the influence of this artist.

G. James Daichendt, Ed.D.

Jim Daichendt is an art critic and professor of art history at Azusa Pacific University. He is author of the books *Stay Up! Los Angeles Street Art*, *Artist Teacher*, and *Artist Scholar*.

About KM Fine Arts

With locations in Los Angeles and the world - renowned John Hancock Center on Chicago's magnificent mile, KM Fine Arts showcases the very best in modern, postwar and contemporary paintings, sculpture and works on paper.

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Los Angeles Gallery Hours: Tuesday through Saturday 11:00 AM to 7:00 PM