

## MARKUS MÜLLER, SAM PORRITT, ALEXANDER WOLFF

**Venue:** Cafe Gallery, by the lake, Centre of Southwark Park, London SE16 2UA  
**Travel:** Jubilee Line to Canada Water  
**Exhibition:** 14 May – 15 June 2008  
**Open:** Wednesday, Thursday, Friday & Sunday 11 – 6pm; Saturdays 12 – 6pm  
**Preview:** Sunday 11th May 2 – 5pm  
[www.cafegalleryprojects.org](http://www.cafegalleryprojects.org) tel: +44 (0) 20 7237 1230

Natural and domestic forms are pushed beyond the point of practical purpose in the works of Markus Müller, Sam Porritt and Alexander Wolff. The materials used and sculptural assemblages presented are rarely what they seem. (Mis)appropriated DIY, design or art-historical details may bring to mind a real-world function or context, but in each work the production standards of the physical entities implied have been contravened. While we are unlikely to be duped into believing that these hybrid manifestations could be anything other than art objects, there is a level of trickery to each artist's material play that encourages questioning of personal assumptions about many familiar structures.

Müller, based in Basel Switzerland, makes large-scale sculptures out of the basic stuff of construction – plywood, chipboard, polystyrene– then gives them a painterly makeover to create illusory props that appear to defy scientific principles or any pre-specified purpose. The physical improbability of these structures – whether geometric union of tree stump and rock, or Gulliver-sized sections of bone on Formica plinths – sets up a painful comic tension between the classic sculptural issues of weight, density and the monumental.

London-based Porritt offers equally playful comment on the function of objects through exploration of their usage. His pared down forms, crafted from a wealth of low-key materials, often feature ambiguous details that could be practical facets or decorative extras. Porritt's recent 'Untitled (wood box)' placed on the gallery floor, offered few practical solutions as neither step nor container. It's grooved, uniformly pretty ply exterior appeared, from certain angles, a close-to-exact tonal match for the hardwood it was sat on implying some kind of architectural anomaly.

Painting provides the patterned route from 2- into 3-D for Berlin resident Wolff. His wall-paintings and hung objects might be constructed from any number of found, hand-stitched or adhered elements that together describe an informal love of tangible matter and a formal respect for the compositional demands of the canvas and the strictures of craft. As in the works of Müller and Porritt, the transformation of throwaway or basic components appears as wry interpretation of the material status we assign to given objects, determined by the many different cultural contexts we find them in.

Rebecca Geldard 2008

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