

With Kelley Walker boasting an *Artforum* cover on his CV, and Wade Guyton an appearance in *Parkett*, their composite ego, Guyton/Walker (b. 2004), surely has the capital of an artworld Traveling Wilburys. It's a harmonious marriage because both are formalists of the photocopier. Guyton is perhaps more so, with his predilection for fierce blackness reminiscent of Ad Reinhardt; Walker less, with his frequent excursions into sculpture; but both get kicks from playing with the errors of print technology – colour bleeds, failures of register and the like.

Celebrating their common enthusiasm, the concept of their new show is that of the artists'-studio-as-Kinko's: the gallery is a tidy litter of sunny, semi-abstract images juiced with fruit motifs; images which employ techniques of painting, silk-screening and digital ink-jet printing, often simultaneously. Some, printed on drywall, are stacked against the gallery walls in piles or arranged in felicitous but apparently informal arrays; a few are fixed to the armatures of drywall-lifting equipment; the rest, printed on canvas, are hung in conventionally respectful fashion, spaciouly, on the wall. There is printed 'architecture' and furniture, too: a barrier formed from picture crates hung with monochromes; a chequered panel wrapping around the central pillar of the gallery; and chunky Formica tables printed on their legs and surfaces with apparently no regard for their three dimensions. Above one of those tables hangs a 'chandelier' of lightbulbs with sockets made of white-painted coconuts. And scattered below, throughout the gallery, are paint pots printed with labels bearing the motifs that appear in the images: coconuts, lemons, zebra stripes and, most inventively, a paint pot that has been scanned and distorted such that it is splayed out like a long, low, wheeled platform.

All this – uniformly untitled – is satisfyingly jazzy work. When the first thrills pass, listlessness threatens, but Guyton/Walker stave that off with sparky contrasts and quirky ideas. The best is perhaps an implausibly thin Formica table bearing a photograph of the back of a zebra: the image of the animal's coat does not in fact interfere with one's sense of the table's form, though the image suggests such huge scale that it clashes with the table's brevity – it's rather as if, just as one might shrink a window on a PC desktop screen, Guyton/Walker had instantly shrunk the table. Jazzy indeed; yet behind the scrim of playfulness and technological novelty, there's a problematic here about flatness and three-dimensionality, the pictorial and the real, which is entirely cubist – antique, frankly. There's unreconstructed Duchamp here, too, in the paint pots which present colour-as-readymade. All round, there is more tradition than innovation. Influence and derivation aren't a problem in themselves, but here it is as if, in performing their professional marriage, Guyton and Walker had left at the altar the souls that give their individual practices the spark of life. All that is left are the terms of agreement. *Morgan Falconer*

Guyton/Walker

Greene Naftali, New York
30 June – 7 August

Guyton/Walker, 2009
(installation view).
Photo: Gil Blank.
Courtesy Greene Naftali,
New York

